

# SWITZERLAND AND ITALY PLAN TO PROMOTE JOINT TOURISM PROJECT



Upper Valais region, the city of Bern in Switzerland, and the Italian province of Verbano-Cusio-Ossola plan to increase tourism in Lötschberg/Simplon and promote the use of public transport together with the railway company BLS. Representatives recently signed a declaration of intent in Domodossola (I).

According to the statement published by BLS, **the Italian and Swiss tourism officials plan to develop joint day trips and longer excursions departing from Bern, Brig and Domodossola.** On these trips, tourists would get around solely with public transport or walk.

The inspiration for the project is the Lötschberg concept, which BLS has been running for a few years on both sides of the Lötschberg Mountain in the cantons of Bern and Valais.

BLS is also working on a concept for marked improvement of the regional travel options between Brig and Domodossola, which they currently do not operate. Modern regional trains could travel hourly between these two towns starting from the end of 2015 after the renovation of the Simplon tunnel, BLS stated in an announcement.

BLS is also considering an extension of the car shuttle train between Brig and Iselle. **It points to the EU's promise of 580,000 Euros to promote trans-border regional transport and transnational tourism cooperation, under the title Trenino Domo-Alpi.**

The declaration of intent was signed by the representatives of the tourism organizations of Bern and Valais, the province of Verbano-Cusio-Ossola and BLS by the vice president of the town of Brig-Glis, the mayor of Domodossola and the manager of the Lötschberg committee.

The Swiss representatives travelled to Domodossola to sign the declaration of intent exactly 100 years to the day after the Lötschberg line first came into use. They did so with a special journey on a historical train.

The Lötschberg-Simmon line has connected the two Swiss cantons with the Ossola valley for 100 years, reported BLS. The three regions are still strongly connected today, and this cooperation is to be strengthened further.

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