

FRANCE ANNOUNCED PLANS TO SAVE ITS MOUNTAIN TOURISM



Last week, the French Prime Minister launched the "Avenir Montagnes" plan to build a more diversified and sustainable tourism offer in the mountain ranges. The plan includes the creation of an ad hoc investment fund. This plan could result in the mobilization of up to 1.8 billion euros, based on public funds to be released.

Jean Castex will not come empty-handed to Savoie to present his plan for the French mountain tourism. The Prime Minister, who quarreled this winter with elected officials and professionals by deciding not to open the ski lifts, which resulted in a "blank season", **wants to put all his efforts into building a more diversified and sustainable tourism offer in the mountain areas.**

The "Avenir Montagnes" plan, which has been drawn up in recent weeks in consultation with the political and economic circles concerned, could result in the mobilization of up to 1.8 billion euros, according to government sources, based on the public funds to be made available.

Three Main Areas

This plan, which aims to go beyond the emergency and recovery aid of more than 5.4 billion euros already paid, has three main components: to promote the diversification of the offer and the conquest of new customers; to accelerate the ecological transition of tourism activities in the mountains; and finally, to revitalize recreational real estate and stop the formation of "cold beds", out of the market economy.

In terms of engineering missions, the aim is to support "around sixty territories " with two waves of invitations to tender, the first of which will allow a selection of around thirty applications in autumn, and the second planned for the beginning of 2022.

Concerning the cold beds, the government intends to make the right of pre-emption of the operators of tourist residences on the apartments of the investors-private individuals transferable to the benefit of new real estate companies, in order to maintain the park "in active management". This technical change will be made as part of the "4D" bill (decentralization, differentiation, deconcentration and decomplexification), which will reach the Senate in early July and will be examined by the National Assembly in autumn.

Acquire 5,000 Homes per Year

Caisse des Dépôts, which is already active in this area to the extent possible, will be involved in the financing via its Banque des Territoires. 25 million of equity per year for five years, in the context of "diversified rounds of financing". The stated objective is to acquire 5,000 homes per year.

In addition to these major decisions, the Avenir Montagnes plan includes various measures. The investment fund must commit 10 million euros to support local "sustainable mobility" projects, such as "valley elevators". In addition, **a sum of the same order of magnitude has been allocated to develop or restore 1,000 kilometers of mountain trails.**

In addition, the plan has a "youth" chapter through several measures. For example, the "learning

camps" program will be extended to the mountains, with the aim of reducing the cost of stays in the framework of a concerted effort by all concerned (camp organizers, transporters, local authorities, etc.). Similarly, the Ministry of National Education, Youth and Sports must work to develop efficient cooperation with schools in mountain regions.

Finally, the focus will also be on the promotion of mountain tourism supported by the investment of the French State Agency Atout France, that is, 8 million for the period 2021-2024.

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