

Made in Asia or made in Europe?

Outdoor industry supply chains in uncertain times

The growing demand for technical clothing, footwear and equipment is encountering globally sensitive supply chains that are increasingly fragile. If it wasn't clear already, the pandemic has demonstrated that we are all in this together. From suppliers to customers in stores, we've all experienced how conflicts and crises can bring normally trouble-free supply chains to a grinding halt.

Climate change also poses major challenges for the outdoor industry – how do the boom and sustainable action fit together? How can global companies live up to their local social responsibility? And why is so much high-quality apparel and technical equipment produced elsewhere in the world in the first place?

At the Oberalp Summit on 10 May in Igls/Innsbruck and the Oberalp Virtual Convention – online from 12 May – the Bolzano-based Oberalp Group is looking for answers to these burning issues. And not just for its six proprietary mountain sports brands. In a four-part video documentary series, the Oberalp Group, suppliers, industry associations, NGOs and well-known competitors will be evaluating the opportunities, challenges and risks facing the industry. The idea is to explore common solutions. After all, the outdoor industry can only really be successful if it pursues a common ethical and sustainable business model. "Anyone who motivates people to move outdoors in nature, must also be committed to conserving nature," says Christoph Engl, CEO Oberalp Group.

See what the outdoor industry has to say. The four-part documentary series "Made in Europe - Made in Asia" goes online from 12 May at <https://convention.oberalp.com/de>. The four episodes are about 8-minutes each.

Episode 1: Which is the best manufacturing location?

Mountain boots from Romania, jackets from China, T-shirts from Bangladesh and knitwear from Italy – the first episode in the series looks at why products are manufactured in certain countries. It shows how the technical skills and experience of the people involved are more important than the costs.

Episode 2: Why invest in the quality of manufacturing locations?

Being committed to Corporate Social Responsibility is more than just a cost factor. Investing in sustainable behaviour and fair working conditions is a sign of quality and guarantees high-quality products. In the outdoor industry in particular, there are increasingly effective alliances to pursue this goal together. Individual brands and companies are working on common initiatives, aside from the competition, to achieve major objectives.

The second episode in the series investigates how powerful cooperation improves conditions at all levels of the supply chain, shows successful projects and looks at the important next steps.



This year's topic of the Oberalp Convention and Summit: Made in Asia or made in Europe?

Episode 3: Why do goods never seem to arrive on time?

You can only sell what you have in stock. Retailers in particular have had a tough time with recurring supply shortages over the last two years. And the punctuality of ordered goods was an issue and a challenge even before.

In the third part of this documentary series, product managers, designers and producers have their say and provide an insight into the complex processes behind bringing a new outdoor collection to market – right the way through to the individual points of sale. What are the factors involved in developing and manufacturing a new product? Why does the process take so long? And what are the traps and pitfalls?

Episode 4: What can we expect in years to come?

These days, it's no longer about making products and collections and moving them to the market as quickly as possible. Instead, it's

important to be able to identify the long-term trends and new customer requirements at an early stage. Acting sustainably means, above all, designing longer-lasting products, researching and developing better materials and more intelligent sourcing. To do this, we need to explore completely different approaches, says Ruth Oberrauch, Executive Board Member of the Oberalp Group, outlining a clear direction: "Innovations that are not sustainable, are not innovations."

Oberalp Virtual Convention on-line from 12th of May at 17:00 p.m.: <https://convention.oberalp.com/de>.

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The Oberalp Group is a family-owned and management-led company with headquarters in Bolzano, northern Italy. Heiner Oberrauch founded the company in 1981 and today the group employs roughly 700 people, runs 10 subsidiaries in Europe and the United States, and serves 3,500 customers in over 60 countries worldwide. In addition to the development and production of mountain sports articles, the company also operates as a distribution partner of sports-based brands. The formerly Munich-based SALEWA brand has been part of the Oberalp Group since 1990. Over the years, the group has acquired the brands DYNAFIT, POMOCA, WILD COUNTRY, and EVOLV. In 2022, the group launched the new mountain brand by women for women LaMunt. The family business relies on the courage to break new ground, continuous innovation in products, processes, and thinking. A conscious, sensible approach to the environment and resources and a passion for sport and mountains are the foundation of a living corporate culture. Since 2019, the Oberalp Group's sustainability report "Contribute" has been published simultaneously with the balance sheet figures. For the fifth time in succession, the company was the only enterprise in Italy to be awarded the „Leader Status“ of the NGO „Fair Wear Foundation“.