

INTEGRATING PUBLIC TRANSPORT INTO WORLD CUP TICKETS

LENZERHEIDE SWITZERLAND



ABSTRACT

At the 2023 Biathlon World Cup in Lenzerheide, organisers took a bold step by integrating free use of Switzerland's entire public transport network into the event ticket. From 13-18 December, all fans could travel from anywhere in Switzerland directly to the venue without additional cost. This eliminated the need for thousands of car journeys, cut CO₂ emissions in half, and reduced pressure on local infrastructure. Around 60% of visitors used trains, buses, or trams, saving significant parking space and improving accessibility. The initiative not only set new standards for event mobility but also raised awareness for sustainable travel choices. Looking ahead, Lenzerheide will apply similar measures for the 2025 World Championships and complement them with a youth-focused development project.

WHAT WAS THE GOAL?

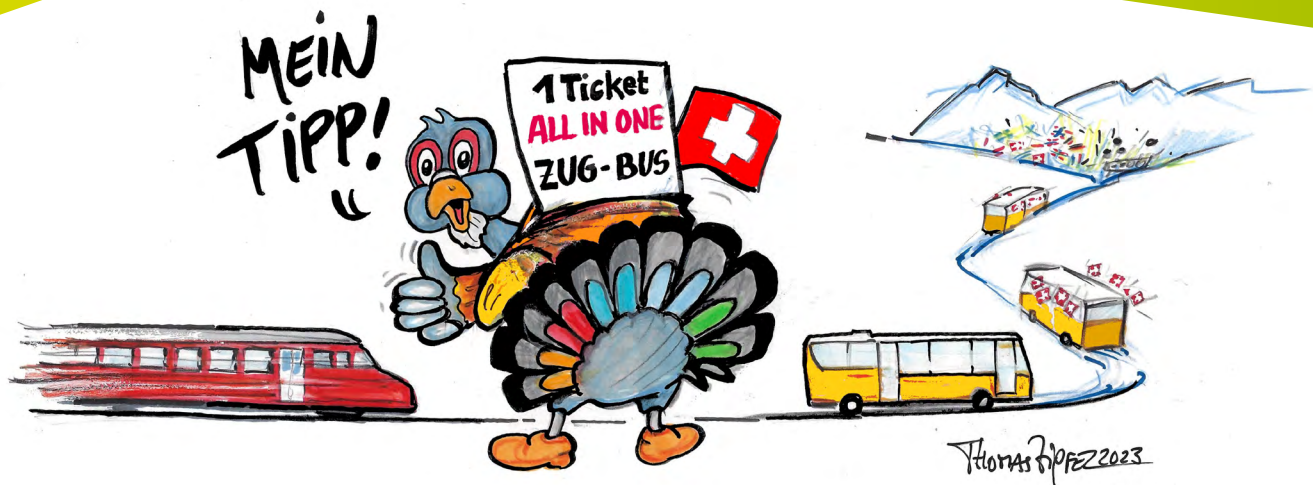
The Organising Committee of Lenzerheide aimed to encourage visitors to travel to the 2023 World Cup using environmentally friendly public transport instead of pri-

vate cars. By doing so, the organisers sought to reduce CO₂ emissions, avoid the need for large parking areas, and align with the IBU Sustainability Strategy's mobility priorities. Another objective was to raise public awareness of sustainable mobility and to provide a comfortable, convenient travel option for spectators.

HOW WAS THE GOAL ACHIEVED?

Between 13-18 December 2023, every World Cup ticket doubled as a valid pass for Switzerland's national public transport network. Fans could use trains, buses, and trams from their place of residence to Lantsch/Lenzer at no additional cost. This arrangement was unprecedented in scope, covering the entire Swiss public transport system.

- **National coverage:** All trains and buses nationwide were included, not just local or regional connections.
- **Ease of use:** Spectators could simply show their event ticket as a valid travel document.



- **Communication campaign:** The initiative was promoted through Swiss Railways (SBB) channels, social media campaigns, banners in the region, and Lenzi cartoons.
- **Partnerships:** SBB offered integrated ticketing on its own platforms, including advertising on apps, websites, and passenger TV screens.

According to surveys, around 60% of the 22,500 spectators chose public transport, supported by two additional long-distance trains and 24 regional trains laid on by SBB. This translated into fewer cars, less congestion, and a much smaller environmental footprint.

WHICH IBU SUSTAINABILITY ISSUES DOES IT ADDRESS?

The initiative tackled several priority areas from the IBU Sustainability Strategy 2020–2030:

- **Emissions from travel & transport** – By achieving a 60% public transport share, CO₂ emissions from travel were cut by around half (from approx. 360 tonnes to 180 tonnes).
- **Lack of consideration of sustainability and landscape in construction of (new) facilities** – Reduced car arrivals meant less land had to be dedicated to parking, limiting infrastructure pressure.
- **Inadequate sustainability awareness** – Fans were engaged through communication campaigns, banners, and Lenzi cartoons highlighting the environmental benefits.

WHAT WERE THE CHALLENGES FACED?

The biggest challenges were financial and logistical. Integrating the entire Swiss transport network into the ticketing system required significant investment and coordination with national and regional operators. Managing large visitor flows smoothly was another hurdle, especially at transfer hubs like Chur and Lantsch/Lenz. Additionally, some locals and season ticket holders criticised the higher ticket prices, arguing that they did not use public transport themselves and therefore felt penalised.

WHAT ARE THE NEXT STEPS?

The success of the 2023 initiative has encouraged Lenzerheide to build on the concept for the 2025 IBU World Championships. Once again, large parts of the Swiss public transport system will be integrated into the ticket. In parallel, the Organising Committee plans to invest in youth development through the “Biathlon for you” project, which brings biathlon ambassadors into schools across Graubünden. This initiative combines sustainable event management with long-term grass-roots growth of the sport.

Lenzerheide has shown how full-scale integration of public transport into event tickets can transform mobility, cut emissions, and inspire more sustainable fan behaviour.