



European Committee
of the Regions



Cantabria speaks to Europe. The future is in your hands



Event type

Local dialogue

Date

8,9,10 September
2021

Initiating member

Paula Fernandez
Viaña (ES, Renew)

Audience

Representatives of the Cantabrian institutions and
civil society

Organiser

Government of Cantabria, Regional
Ministry of Presidency, Internal Affairs,
Justice And External Action

Partners

Parliament of
Cantabria
Bertelsmann Stiftung

Themes

The role of regional parliaments, the role of local
authorities, the EU recovery plan, rights and values.



Speakers

- **Apostolos Tzitzikostas**, CoR
President
- **Paula Fernandez Viaña**
(ES/Renew)
- **J. Gomez Gomez**, President
Parliament Cantabria
- **Revilla Roiz**, President
Cantabrian Government



Key messages

Speakers and participants in this local dialogue discussed the necessity to deepen the protection of fundamental rights and strengthen judicial cooperation.

They highlighted the role that case law of the European courts plays in the protection of fundamental rights and freedoms. This case law should be more widely disseminated so that citizens are aware of it, so that they feel close to the possibility of obtaining the protection of their rights in cases that affect them.

It was noted that the creation and enlargement of the European Public Prosecutor's Office is a significant milestone in the history of European integration.

The Next Generation Europe Recovery Plan was celebrated and numerous speakers said it is an opportunity to trust in Europe, to reconnect Europe with its citizens. It shows the importance for Spain and for Cantabria of being part of the European Union and will greatly support undertaking a green, digital, social and cohesive transition.

The necessary social aspect of the European Union was raised alongside the corresponding need to respect the Pillar of Social Rights.



Press/Social media coverage

Media coverage

[COR Press Release](#)

Website

[FutureofEurope](#)

[Europa Press](#)

Social Media

[#EU_CoR](#)



Citizens' Discussion Days on the Future of Europe

Santander hosted **Citizens' Discussion Days on the Future of Europe**, a project that aimed to make the voices of cities and regions heard throughout the Conference on the Future of Europe (CoFoE).

Organised by the **Cantabrian government** in cooperation with the regional parliament and the support of the European Committee of the Regions (CoR), several plenary sessions of dialogue and debate were held so that regional institutions, associations and civil society could express their views on the most topical issues of concern to citizens such as economic recovery and the implementation of the National Recovery, Transformation and Resilience Plan, the issue of demographic challenge, the fight against depopulation and the new European rural agenda.

The protection of fundamental rights, the new European social framework for industrial relations, the future of the common agricultural policy, the fight against climate change and the implementation of the Green Deal in Cantabria, including the safeguarding and preservation of the region's resources and values, were also issues addressed during the debates.

Speakers raised the importance of research, of innovation, of alliances between universities in order to build a European identity and a European area of higher education in which respect for the values that are the basis of the European project are promoted.

The importance of solidarity, of making progress in achieving the area of freedom, justice and security was a running theme throughout the event.

It was proposed to strengthen regional cooperation, to demand greater weight for the regions in the Europe of the future.

President Tzitzikostas welcomed the initiatives of Cantabria in holding such citizen's event, and underlined that the Conference on the Future of Europe can only succeed if it genuinely and concretely includes local communities. Then he added local politicians and CoR delegation to the CoFoE have a common objective: Strengthening all elements of our House of European Democracy and bringing Europe closer to its citizens.

Initiating CoR member, **Paula Fernandez Viaña** stressed that the organisation of events in Cantabria, in the framework of the Conference on the Future of Europe, is a "unique opportunity" for the participation of citizens in the region. It will allow them to play a part in determining the priorities that will shape the future of the EU.

Outcome of the Citizens' Discussion Days – Manifesto of Cantabria

All the ideas were collected in forms of session diaries from which extracted messages will be sent to the Conference on the Future of Europe. The collection of outcome called "**Manifesto**" that the Government of Cantabria wishes to convey towards the Conference on the Future of Europe.

The slogan for this conference was "Cantabria speaks to Europe" even more Cantabria must and will continue to speak to Europe and the Government of Cantabria is committed to listen and to be the voice of its citizens at the Conference on the Future of Europe.

