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| **RESOL-VII/011** |
| **144th plenary session, 5-7 May 2021** |

**DRAFT RESOLUTION

on the Conference on the Future of Europe**

**Submitted by all political groups**

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| **Deadline for tabling amendments: 5 May 2021 no later than 4 p.m. (Brussels time)****Amendments to the resolution must be submitted, preferably in English, French or German, through the online tool for tabling amendments (available on the Members' Portal:** <https://memportal.cor.europa.eu/>**).**The Helpdesk (+32 (0)2 546 96 97, email: helpdesk@cor.europa.eu) is at your disposal to provide you with any assistance you may need. In addition, a user guide is available at <https://memportal.cor.europa.eu/>.Urgent resolution submitted in accordance with Rule 45(3)(b) of the Rules of Procedure. It will be removed from the plenary session agenda if not approved by the Bureau on 4 May 2021.Number of signatures required: 6 |

**Draft Resolution of the European Committee of the Regions
on the Conference on the Future of Europe**

THE EUROPEAN COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS (CoR)

1. fully supports the need for a broad, genuinely inclusive, transparent, geographically and politically balanced, and decentralised debate on the future of the European Union;

1. welcomes the much-awaited launch of the work associated with the Conference on the Future of Europe, despite continued challenges due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and looks forward to contributing to the achievement of ambitious, far-reaching and lasting results with tangible benefits for all EU citizens;
2. takes note of the Joint Declaration signed by the European Parliament, the European Council and the European Commission and welcomes in particular its clear references to regional and local authorities, regional parliaments and the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality; reiterates its call to become a signatory to the Joint Declaration;
3. points out that there are approximately one million elected representatives at local and regional level in the EU, who work on behalf of their citizens in nearly 90 000 subnational authorities, making up the largest level of democratic representation in the EU, and who are collectively responsible for half of public investment in the EU and for implementing well over half of European legislation, thus significantly contributing to the attainment of the EU's political objectives;
4. reaffirms the positions outlined in its resolution from 12 February 2020 and reiterates that most topics selected for debate during the Conference, including the climate, the environment, health, education, migration, digital transformation and a stronger economy, fall within the competences of regional and local authorities; therefore underlines that it will not be possible for the Conference to deliver concrete proposals unless a substantial part of these proposals emerge from active dialogue and consultations with the subnational level;
5. considers the Conference to be an opportunity to bring Europe closer to its citizens and to strengthen their sense of ownership in the European project through the "European House of Democracy", with local and regional authorities as its foundations, Member States as its walls and the EU as its roof; commits to playing an active role in examining various political avenues for enhancing multilevel governance and promoting further integration in Europe;
6. believes that, in light of the current pandemic, it has become vital to strengthen democratic principles and the pivotal role of cities and regions in providing credible answers to people, and to emphasise the importance of working together across all levels of governance and across borders to face common challenges;
7. intends to play an active role in the Conference through the participation of its members in the Executive Board and as delegates in the Conference's plenary deliberations; commits to providing thematic input to the Conference on matters of key concern for local and regional authorities, including through a number of local citizens' dialogues that the CoR will organise throughout the EU; calls for the participation of young people and of people representing the diversity of our societies as a prerequisite to holding comprehensive discussions;
8. considers that the Conference plenary should be built on solid democratic foundations and should therefore include among its members an appropriate number of representatives of regional and local parliaments and councils, alongside their counterparts from the European Parliament and national parliaments;
9. welcomes the launch of the multilingual digital platform for the Conference on the Future of Europe and commits to promoting and contributing to it by organising participative dialogues and delivering relevant feedback;
10. notes that the CoR has already started organising debates in its plenary sessions and commission meetings, and adopting opinions on topics relevant to the Conference's work. Furthermore, major CoR events – such as the EU Week of Regions and Cities, the annual EuroPCom Conference and local citizens' dialogues and consultations, as well as events organised by the Committee's political groups – will be focused on the Conference;
11. highlights its ongoing initiative to consult citizens through local dialogues hosted by CoR members, with a series of successful events already conducted before the launch of the Conference. These events facilitate citizens' interaction with politicians across all levels of government and demonstrate that the debate on the direction in which the European Union is heading matters significantly to Europe's regions and cities;
12. values inter-institutional cooperation and increased synergies in the roll-out of such activities and will facilitate other outreach activities by cooperating with its partners, such as: regional parliaments through the Conference of Regional Legislative Assemblies of Europe (CALRE), the RegHub network and the Cohesion Alliance network; young elected politicians through its own dedicated programme; regional and local politicians in charge of Europe Direct centres; and the "Building Europe with Local Entities" (BELE) pilot project;
13. will continue to strengthen its cooperation with European and national associations of local and regional authorities, with communities of stakeholders from regions and cities, and with other actors;
14. commits to increasing the Conference's impact and outreach, and to promoting and using innovative forms of participatory democracy. Local and regional authorities have a proven record in feeding citizens' input into the political decision-making process;
15. calls for the establishment of a permanent European dialogue with citizens to strengthen democracy at all levels of government and to encourage citizens' participation and ownership of the EU project, as stipulated in its opinion *Local and Regional Authorities in the permanent dialogue with citizens*[[1]](#footnote-2), adopted in October 2020; considers that citizens' dialogues should not be a one-way communication exercise, but should feed into EU policy-making;
16. underlines that the follow-up to citizens' contributions, and in particular the final recommendations of the Conference, are as important as the method of input; stresses that this follow-up should be carried out in a coordinated and inclusive manner, and should also fully involve the CoR; further considers that the Conference should be granted sufficient time to present concrete proposals for improving the EU's institutional framework; recognises that, as much as the Conference can gain public trust, it can also lose that trust if the promise of delivery and inclusiveness of views expressed is not kept;
17. stresses that, in order to support its political and institutional mission, for the duration of the Conference, the CoR has set up a High-Level Group on European Democracy[[2]](#footnote-3), chaired by former European Council President Herman Van Rompuy, which will stimulate discussions about the CoR's vision of European democracy and on how to reinforce the impact and influence of local and regional authorities and the CoR in the European decision-making process;
18. looks forward to working with the Slovenian Presidency of the Council of the EU and to presenting local and regional authorities' contributions to the EU's future at the 9th European Summit of Regions and Cities, to be held during the French Presidency of the Council of the EU;
19. instructs its President to forward this resolution to the President of the European Parliament, the President of the European Commission, the President of the European Council and the Presidency of the Council.

Brussels,

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| The Presidentof the European Committee of the Regions Apostolos Tzitzikostas |  |

1. CDR 4989/2019 [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. The High-Level Group is chaired by President Emeritus of the European Council Herman Van Rompuy and comprises six other members: former European Commissioners Joaquín Almunia and Androulla Vassiliou, former Members of the European Parliament Rebecca Harms and Maria João Rodrigues, the President of the European Youth Forum, Silja Markkula, and Tomasz Grosse, Professor of the University of Warsaw. They all hold important active roles in their respective fields, notably in the academic world. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)