



**European Committee
of the Regions**

RESOL VII/003

138th plenary session, 11-12 February 2020

DRAFT RESOLUTION

on the Conference on the Future of Europe

Submitted by the EPP, PES, Renew Europe, EA and ECR Groups

Deadline for tabling amendments: 11 February 2020 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://mempportal.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://mempportal.cor.europa.eu/>.

Urgent resolution submitted in accordance with Rule 45(3)(b) of the Rules of Procedure, to be discussed on the second day of the plenary session, 12 February 2020. It will be removed from the plenary session agenda if not approved by the Bureau on 12 February 2020.

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)

Whereas;

- a) The democratic legitimacy of the European Union lies with the trust of citizens in their representatives elected at European, national, regional and local levels;
- b) Representative democracy is the foundation of the EU project; the increased voter turnout in the 2019 European elections has demonstrated citizens' keen interest in shaping EU affairs; all levels of government need to respond to new challenges and develop new ways of engaging citizens;
- c) Elections are held every year in the EU Member States at national, regional and local level, and those elections represent an opportunity to communicate to citizens how European policies affect all levels of governance, and thus help to strengthen the credibility of the EU in the eyes of the citizens;
- d) The crucial role of local and regional authorities is demonstrated by the fact that they are responsible for half of all public investment, one-third of public expenditure and one-quarter of tax revenue in the EU;

The European Committee of the Regions (CoR);

1. Welcomes the initiative by the European Commission, the European Parliament and the Council to set up the Conference on the Future of Europe and looks forward to contributing to achieving concrete results and taking action with tangible benefits for EU citizens;
2. Believes that the Conference is an opportunity to identify measures that the EU needs in order to increase its capacity to deliver and enhance its democratic functioning in line with the new principle of active subsidiarity;
3. Underlines that the more than one million elected local and regional representatives across the Union should be involved both in shaping EU policies and in linking the EU with its citizens; to increase the visibility of the process, the CoR commits to promoting debates on EU issues in regional parliaments and municipal councils;
4. Welcomes the proposed measures to reach out to citizens and underlines the importance of open and extensive thematic debates; fully supports the idea that important elements of the conference should be decentralised to involve areas and populations beyond the European and national capitals. To this end, the CoR will provide support for its members in organising local events focusing on the Conference's themes and will develop tools to collect and communicate the results and suggestions from these debates to the Conference;

5. Stresses that pluralism must be ensured in the process when selecting participants to take part in the conference's activities; insists that all programmes must be balanced and ensure that a great variety of different viewpoints are presented, reflecting the diversity in Europe, in order to stimulate a profound debate;
 6. Suggests that the Conference should integrate input from existing participatory democracy tools at local and regional level to complement representative democracy channels;
 7. Considers that, even after the end of the Conference, the EU must continue to engage directly with its citizens, building on a wealth of experience derived from participatory models to establish a permanent structured mechanism for dialogue at grassroots level;
 8. Shares the view that a particular focus on young people is necessary to underline the future direction of the European project and stresses that all proposals made by the Conference must be sensitive to the concerns of future generations;
 9. Calls for a bottom-up debate on the topics covered by the conference, including, but not limited to: EU institutional aspects and the role of regional and local democracy, environmental and climate challenges, digital transformation, social equality, economy and jobs, and territorial cohesion;
 10. Welcomes the proposed Conference plenary formed by members of the European Parliament, the European Commission, the EU27 governments, national Parliaments and the European Committee of the Regions; calls for the CoR to be represented by at least eight members with full voting rights;
 11. Calls for the Conference Steering Committee to ensure political and institutional balance between all levels of governance, including one member of the European Committee of the Regions who could be supported by a CoR staff member seconded to the joint secretariat;
 12. Welcomes the proposal to also involve local and regional representatives from the EU candidate countries in discussions on the future of Europe;
 13. Calls on the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission to incorporate the principles outlined in this resolution into their joint declaration and indicates its intention to become a signatory to that declaration;
 14. 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 Croatian presidency of the Council.
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