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| **RESOL-VII/13** |
| **145th plenary session, 30 June - 1 July 2021** |

**DRAFT RESOLUTION

on the European Committee of the Regions' proposals in view of the European Commission Work Programme for 2022**

**Submitted by the Political Groups EPP, PES, Renew Europe, EA and Greens**

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| **Deadline for tabling amendments: 23 June 2021, no later than 3 p.m. (Brussels time)****Amendments to the resolution are to 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/**](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/>Number of signatures required: 6 |



**Draft Resolution on the European Committee of the Regions' proposals
in view of the European Commission Work Programme for 2022**

THE EUROPEAN COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS (CoR),

having regard to:

* the Protocol of Cooperation with the European Commission of February 2012,
* the CoR Resolution on the European Committee of the Regions' priorities for 2020-2025[[1]](#footnote-2),
* the contributions of regional parliaments with legislative powers received in the framework of the CoR-CALRE cooperation agreement

*Recovery and Cohesion*

# As the implementation of the Next Generation EU will be a fundamental priority of the European Commission Work Programme for 2022, the CoR calls on the Commission to ensure that local and regional authorities are involved in the implementation of the National Recovery and Resilience Plans (NRRPs), which is key to reaching the objectives of the Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF), to ensuring better coordination with the cohesion policy's programmes and to preventing potentially low absorption rates. Also highlights the need to involve LRAs in the European Semester processes, as the majority of country-specific recommendations have a local and regional dimension;

# Reiterates its call to the Commission to integrate the Sustainable Development Goals within a reformed European Semester, map them in the NRRPs, and on this basis integrate them into the next cycle, starting with the Annual Sustainable Growth Survey. The CoR also expects a EU multi-stakeholder platform on SDGs to be set up to support and advise the Commission on the timely implementation of the SDGs;

# Calls on the European Commission to put forward a proposal to extend until the end of 2022 the current exceptional flexibility measures under the Coronavirus Response Investment Initiative Plus, such as the possibility of a 100% EU co-financing rate, and to consider a temporary increase of the *de minimis* state aid threshold in order to continue supporting sustainable investments for the same period;

# Urges the Commission to take all the necessary measures to ensure the full implementation of the legally binding roadmap to introduce new own resources in the course of the current MFF, including by making timely legislative proposals;

# Calls on the Commission to take into account the reality and the needs of local and regional authorities, as well as the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on debt and deficit levels in its relaunch of the review of the European economic governance framework, notably with regard to public investment at all levels of government;

# Commits to participate in the design and implementation of the EU strategy for the Outermost Regions;

*Environment and Sustainability*

# Welcomes the Commission`s proposal to establish Zero Pollution monitoring jointly with the CoR and, at a later stage, a *Scoreboard* of EU regions' *green* performance within its zero-pollution action plan; proposes to work together to monitor the progress and impacts of all Green Deal policies, including the implementation of climate action and Green Recovery, at regional level; asks to be involved in the organisation of the European Year for Greener Cities, if confirmed for 2022;

# Calls on the Commission to integrate into the European Green Deal an Ocean Law as an overarching strategy with measurable targets and deadlines to protect the marine environment, reduce pollution and reverse biodiversity loss, while protecting and promoting small-scale fishing operators;

# Joins the European Parliament's call for the Commission to present a legally binding Biodiversity Law by the end of 2022. This should be accompanied by a monitoring mechanism with indicators and which formally involves LRAs;

# Calls on the Commission to review the Governance of the Energy Union regulation, with a view to making it fit for the implementation of the Green Deal, strengthening the integration of subnational contributions in national plans and aligning the National Energy and Climate Plans (NECPs) with the national plans to implement the UN 2030 agenda and the SDGs framework; proposes a framework for subnational action to be formally taken into account in the UNFCCC framework and the ensuing EU climate governance;

# Expects the Commission to start mainstreaming the gender dimension into its policy processes: in the Green Deal, in the NRRPs and in the Partnership Agreements under the EU structural and investment funds, notably by putting forward, in line with Article 16(f) of the Interinstitutional Agreement (IIA) and no later than 1 January 2023, a methodology assessing the gender impact of EU programmes;

# Calls on the Commission to open a structured dialogue with LRAs on the design and implementation of the "Fit for 55" package;

# Supports the targets put forward by the Farm to Fork strategy, which remain to be transposed into the legislation of the common agricultural policy. Also calls on the Commission to put forward schemes for fair nutritional labelling, as well as labels for the origin and methods of production of animal products;

# Calls on the European Commission to ensure that the European Rural Agenda is implemented across all policies and has ambitious and concrete political objectives to strengthen the innovative dynamics of rural territories, organise smart inter-territorial cooperation, and stimulate citizen action in local development strategies;

*Digital transition and Industry*

# Calls on the Commission to integrate digital cohesion as a complementary dimension to the economic, social and territorial cohesion concept and thereby prevent a "double digital divide" caused by a lack of infrastructure, IT literacy and skills;

# Asks the Commission to take into account regional and local differences and related indicators in the eGovernment benchmarking report, as the urban-rural divide in terms of the use of e-government services is widening;

# Calls on the Commission to provide for a structured dialogue with Europe's cities and regions on how to strengthen regional industrial ecosystems, clusters and interregional alliances during the implementation of the industrial strategy, as the place-based approach is largely missing in the Communication on "Updating the 2020 Industrial Strategy";

*Cross-border cooperation and Mobility*

# Welcomes the Commission's commitment to come up with a Single Market Emergency Instrument and calls for the creation of legislation that ensures minimum European standards and procedures guaranteeing open internal borders, also during crises;

# Underlines the need for an EU policy framework to allow for the efficient establishment and management of cross-border public services; also encourages the European legislator, Member States, regions and local authorities to further develop and promote tools for participatory cross-border democracy that contribute to the involvement of citizens in the European integration process on the ground;

# Deeply regrets that the discussions between Member States on the proposed European Cross-Border Mechanism (ECBM) failed; as legal and administrative obstacles place serious limits on cross-border cooperation and on the quality of life in border regions, the CoR calls for a new Commission proposal for a ECBM regulation;

# Calls on the European Commission to follow-up with concrete guidelines on the new urban mobility framework, which will make urban mobility more sustainable and reduce its impact on people's health;

# Welcomes the inter-institutional agreement on the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF). Hopes that co-financed projects on the trans-European transport network (TEN-T) and trans-European energy infrastructure (TEN-E) will contribute to eliminating missing links, especially in cross-border regions, and reminds the Commission of the need to dedicate a sufficient budget to the co-financing of projects on the comprehensive network;

# *Social protection*

# Suggests establishing a regional social scoreboard in order to capture the full extent of the social challenges in the EU and to ensure that the European Pillar of Social Rights (EPRS) is implemented at all levels;

# Calls on the Commission to support and monitor Member States' implementation of the European Child Guarantee and facilitate the exchange of best practices in this regard;

# Expects the Commission to come up with an ambitious proposal on Improving Working Conditions for Platform Workers;

# Invites the Commission to feed the CoR's recommendations into the Initiative on Long-term Care, given its strong link with severe skills shortages in this field and demographic change, which are especially acute in regions with an ageing population;

# Commits to play an active role in the European Platform on Combating Homelessness, which should be complemented by a Commission proposal for an EU framework for national homelessness strategies;

# Calls on the Commission to pay special attention to reinforcing the recovery and resilience of the cultural and creative sectors in light of the COVID-19 pandemic and to address the precariousness of artists' working conditions by establishing a 'European artist' status, which would facilitate mobility and the mutual recognition of their status;

*Security and Migration*

# Calls on the Commission to include the CoR as a full partner in the EU Pledge on Urban Security and Resilience, and in the new Cities against Radicalisation and Terrorism initiative;

# Calls on the Commission to ensure progress towards establishing a European framework for migration and asylum management, under the New Pact on Migration and Asylum; reiterates that the local and regional dimension of migration should be taken into account and supported by the new partnership between the CoR and the Commission on integration;

*Health, Civil Protection and Tourism*

# Reminds the Commission that any review of the Schengen legal framework must take into account the views and needs of the cities and regions close to the internal borders; asks to be consulted at an early stage, in accordance with Protocol No. 2 on the Application of the Principles of Subsidiarity and Proportionality;

# Calls on the Commission to present bold proposals for the development and production of essential medicines in the EU, in order to ensure the EU's strategic autonomy by reducing dependency on third countries; expects the Commission to also propose concrete and robust measures to stimulate access to generic and biosimilar medicines and also to ensure access to pharmaceuticals in times of crisis;

# Supports a review of the European Union's role in public health policy in the context of the Conference on the Future of Europe, bearing in mind that health policy is a primary competence of the Member States and is often dealt with at the subnational level;

# Expects its opinion on the rights of patients in cross-border healthcare, as well as the results of the 3rd RegHub consultation to be reflected in the 3rd report on the operation of the Directive due in 2022;

# Looks forward to contributing to the Commission's proposal for a European vaccination calendar and card to ensure all Europeans have the right to – and proof of – protection offered through inoculation, regardless of where they live;

# Urges the Commission to move ahead with the establishment and development of Union disaster resilience goals in the area of civil protection, as non-binding objectives to support prevention and preparedness actions, while emphasising that this needs to be done in cooperation not only with national governments but also with local and regional authorities; is also looking forward to the full implementation of the Union Civil Protection Knowledge Network and urges the Commission to include disaster management expertise that is also available at subnational level. Furthermore, expects a clear plan for long-term commitment and financial reinforcement of the EU Civil Protection Mechanism and its instruments, such as rescEU and the European Medical Corps;

# Reiterates its calls for a new strategy for European tourism and asks the Commission to come forward with a European Agenda for Tourism 2030/2050, in order to support the green and digital transitions of the European tourism ecosystem and to strengthen its competitiveness;

# *External cooperation*

# Regrets that the Trade and Cooperation Agreement signed on 24 December 2020 between the EU and the UK does not provide for any specific or structured involvement for local and regional authorities; however, the CoR will, in particular through the political work of the CoR-UK Contact Group, reflect on ways to ensure the continuity of our cooperation with the UK's devolved administrations and local governance; also calls on the Commission to closely monitor the involvement of local and regional authorities in the implementation of the Brexit Adjustment Reserve;

# Calls for the establishment of sustained and structured support by the Commission for peer-to-peer cooperation between local authorities in the Western Balkans and their counterparts in the EU Member States, in close cooperation with the CoR, and in particular through its joint consultative committees with Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia, as well as the working group for the Western Balkans;

# Welcomes the decision to launch the Eastern Partnership Academy for Public Administration, and the local and regional authorities' reinforced role in the implementation of Eastern Partnership policies, strategies and flagship initiatives;

# When implementing the renewed partnership with the Southern Neighbourhood, urges all the EU institutions to consider local and regional authorities as key partners for sustainable development and programming, in order to create new dynamics for decentralisation reforms;

# Calls on the Commission to recognise the role that local and regional authorities can play in contributing to peace and prosperity in third countries, with initiatives such as the Nicosia Initiative – a concrete example of peer-to-peer cooperation, which has been contributing to creating trust and keeping an internal dialogue open among regional and local authorities;

*Subsidiarity and Future of Europe*

# Reiterates its call on the Commission to step up its work and its engagement with citizens and local and regional authorities in the framework of the Conference on the Future of Europe and beyond, and to provide the appropriate tools to follow up on the recommendations from the Conference; invites the Commission to step up cooperation between its representation offices in the Member States and the CoR on organising local dialogues beyond capitals;

# Calls on the Commission to follow up on the legislative and non-legislative measures outlined in the European Democracy Action Plan, while including in their scope regional and local elections, local media and countering disinformation at the regional and local levels;

# Remains committed to implementing the recommendations of the Task Force on Subsidiarity, Proportionality and 'Doing Less More Efficiently' and the concept of 'active subsidiarity'; calls for the systematic use of the Subsidiarity Assessment Grid;

# instructs its President to forward this resolution to the EU institutions and the Presidencies of the Council of the EU.

Brussels,

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| The Presidentof the European Committee of the RegionsApostolos Tzitzikostas |  |

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1. COR-2020-01392-00-00-RES-TRA. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)