

CALRE 2011 PRESIDENCY

Abruzzo Regional Council Programme

This document represents the work programme of the Abruzzo Regional Council for the CALRE 2011 Presidency.

First and foremost it collects the heritage of the previous presidencies as far as the continuation and strengthening of the institutional relations and the implementation of the results achieved in the previous years are concerned.

Secondly, it ratifies the obligations arising from the Trento Declaration.

Finally, the programme states the specific goals of the 2011 Presidency.

After the Treaty of Lisbon came into force on 1 December 2009, an important step towards cooperation opportunities among all government levels in Europe was made. At the same time this milestone marks an arrival point and a new challenge for the Conference of the European Regional Legislative Assemblies (CALRE).

1. GENERAL OBJECTIVES

- *Subsidiarity and Participation in the creation and implementation of the European Union Law.*

The Treaty of Lisbon stresses the importance of the implementation of the subsidiarity principle – which states that the decisions need to be taken by the government level which happens to be the closest to citizens – as well as the importance of the role of the regional assemblies which, explicitly, are called to perform surveys ensuring that the subsidiarity principle is met in all projects regarding the legislative acts of the European Union. The treaty, indeed, contemplates a direct involvement of the "Regional Parliaments having legislative powers" in the surveys aimed at ensuring that the principle of subsidiarity is met (art. 6, protocol 2); to this end the national Parliaments will consult the regional ones in the so called ascending phase, during a period of eight weeks which will be dedicated to the analysis of the legislative proposals of the Union.

The Regions, then, through the Regions Committee, might resort to the Court of Justice to obtain the cancellation of a normative act issued by the Union - for whose acceptance the Treaties contemplate the consultation of the Committee itself - in case it were to break the principle of subsidiarity (art. 8, protocol n. 2). In detail, the two above mentioned evaluations on one hand enable the regional legislative assemblies of the member States to declare their opinion - several have already started doing so -

regarding the legislative proposals of the Union. These happen to be related to the member States legislative power matters, both exclusive and concurring (with the due distinctions in the meaning that the use of those terms implies depending on the national regulations). Thus, it will be possible to intervene before the potential proposal which might prejudice their competences is created. On the other hand, it will induce the Regions Committee to ask for the cancellation of the procedure once the same procedure has already come into force.

As far as subsidiarity is concerned, CALRE will have to rely on the valuable work carried out by the designated workgroup and, at the same time, will promote subsidiarity surveys within the CALRE member Parliaments, while the long term cooperation with the Regions Committee will still be maintained.

- **Europe 2020**

Europe 2020 is the name of the strategy launched by the European Committee in order to direct the Countries within the Union out of the crisis and in order to harmonize the economy for the next decade.

In order to reach the above mentioned objectives, through the individuation of three growth drives – defined as intelligent, sustainable and inclusive - it would be very appropriate to establish a solid governance framework which will allow the use of the available means in a way that will guarantee an efficient realization within appointed terms.

Thus, CALRE will give its contribution following up on the suggestions stated in the Trento Declaration. Therefore it will support the outcomes and the suggestions of the Barca Report at European level and will promote the necessary involvement and the explicit recognition of regional demands during the preparation and implementation of the national programs aiming at overcoming the crisis.

- **Territorial cohesion**

The Treaty of Lisbon, for the first time, explicitly recognizes the principle of the regional autonomy of the EU member States and gives a greater importance to regional levels in the light of subsidiarity; it also ensures that the creation of the new EU legislative texts will take place while a careful evaluation of the impact of each proposal, on the regional and local institutions, is being performed.

For these reasons, the CALRE Presidency will commit to carry the demand for a higher involvement of the regional entities in the development of politics having a strong “local” impact, as affirmed in the “Barca Report” and as reaffirmed in the Trento Declaration, to a European level.

- **EU budget reform**

The reform of the Union budget – a main priority in absolute terms – becomes even more important in a historical period characterized by a strong economic and financial crisis and by a low economic growth, if any. The budget is the central, vital element of the European Union, reflecting – both from a cost and a revenue perspective – the whole politics of the Union itself. The debate regarding the potential development of the dynamics of the Union budget is at this point being influenced by the dimensions and the possible span of the economic and financial crisis.

The CALRE Presidency will represent, at a broader European institutional level, the need of regional involvement in current debates, the Regions being co-financiers in the European regional politics as well as controlling bodies of the same politics through their Parliaments.

2. INTER-INSTITUTIONAL DIALOGUE

The relation with the European and National institutions is fundamental in order to achieve a greater institutional legitimation of the Assemblies as institutional interlocutors in the democratic governance system of the Union.

- ***European Commission***

CALRE has been participating in the "Structured Dialogue", which is to say the systematic political dialogue between the European Commission and the associations representing the local and regional EU institutions, for several years now. This dialogue, inspired by the White Book on European governance, has become a necessity to creating a bridge between EU citizens and institutions.

The CALRE participation in the "Structured dialogue" is important because it will not only show the opinion of the regional Assemblies regarding important politics in the regional environment but it will also establish their position as a regional European key interlocutor within the European Commission.

- ***European Parliament***

At European Union level, the introduction of a inter parliamentary dialogue between regional and European elected candidates, might positively contribute to spreading knowledge and information regarding the major European matters having a wide regional impact. In the current context, while the Europe 2020 strategy is being defined and while the reform of the Union budget and the territorial politics are being implemented, this dialogue not only happens to be essential but also strategic.

To this end, the 2011 Presidency will be committed to establishing a periodical system of reports and constant exchanges between all elected candidates of all levels, fully meeting the multilevel governance spirit which has become, by now, a paradigmatic approach.

One of the communication channels can be found in the Italian Joint Committee among Senate, Chamber and Conference, five members of which hold a seat in the European Parliament. Thus, the exchange of views about important and substantial matters regarding the Regions, which, in these last years, fully committed to a European dimension as a strategic means to enhance the development of their own territories, would be promoted.

- **Regions Committee**

The Regions Committee - because of its institutional nature - is one of the privileged CALRE partners. *The 2011 Presidency is determined to agree on a new common Plan of Action. The main steps of the aforementioned plan shall be: the cooperation regarding the subsidiarity principle to be implemented by the regional Parliaments; the participation in the structured Dialogue; the assistance to the work performed by the rapporteurs of the Regions Committee; the organization of shared events.*

- **Council of Europe**

In the last few years CALRE has strengthened its relations with the European Council, especially with the Congress of local and regional Authorities, through the annual renewal of cooperation agreements. The CALRE 2010 Presidency signed a new agreement to improve the cooperation with the Congress of the local and regional Powers, promoting the cooperation among the specific workgroups when dealing with common interest matters.

The relation with the Congress is of great importance because it widens the horizon of the CALRE operative area to all European countries, thus contributing to strengthening regional democracy and to establishing the institutional role of the Regions throughout Europe.

- **Other European and international organizations**

- **REGLEG**

The cooperation with the Conference of European regions with legislative power and the commitment to implement the cooperation agreement recently renewed during the 2010 Presidency, will be pursued.

- **COSAC**

The Conference of the committees of the national parliaments is a fundamental element of inter-parliamentary cooperation. *Thus, one of the tasks of the 2011 Presidency will be ensuring that CALRE will meet the requirements to participate at the periodical COSAC meetings.*

- **UNDESA**

In the past CALRE has worked with UNDESA – the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs. *The participation to the ICT Parliaments platform, promoting new IT and communication technologies, seems to be of interest, also considering that it might help in aiming at a collaborative relation with the group working on e-democracy.*

- ***Institution Building***

Due to the fact that the regional Assemblies having legislative power are more “advanced” in certain regards (participation functions, control, direction), if compared to other European regional realities, not belonging to the Union, the above mentioned Assemblies could pursue a path to improve dialogue and to provide some assistance in creating a more complete regional democracy, especially when dealing with “Institution building”. This project will be pursued by the Presidency in cooperation with the group working on “Regional Democracy”.

3. INTERNAL ACTIVITIES

- ***Internal cooperation between CALRE members***

Due to how the Treaty of Lisbon emphasizes importance of the function of regional Parliaments, the CALRE Presidency believes that, at this point, it is fundamental to foster their cooperation, to share and pursue common projects, to share the knowledge of the institutional and legislative relations systems which regulate them, in order to allow a tangible participation to both the ascending and the descending phases of Union Law.

It is fundamental for all regional Parliaments, being them members of the permanent Committee or not, to pursue – also through the cooperation of the national Conferences – a constant dialogue, aiming at exchanging information and good practices, such as, for example, the shared analysis of the legislative programme, the work programme of the European Commission and the identification of matters of common interest to be brought to the attention of the

Regions Committee and of the European Commission using the tools which are offered by the Treaty. The objective is to enable the regional legislative Assemblies to become the key representatives of the European Union as far as politics processing and their implementation are concerned.

- *Workgroups*

Each workgroup shall inform the Presidency about the trend analysis, the initiatives and the achieved objectives. The Presidency shall ensure its cooperation with the workgroup Coordinators to ensure a better outcome of the activities and an easier attainment of the objectives.

- *Permanent Committee*

The permanent Committee shall have a propelling role. The presence, within the Committee, of coordinators of the national Conferences for each country – still withstanding the linking role differences which each Conference has within the same State – will be used to promote internal surveys within each Assembly so that the heritage of knowledge and activities of each Assembly will become a shared heritage for all CALRE members.

- *Plenary Assembly*

The Plenary assembly will be held in L'Aquila, at a date which will be determined during the meeting of the permanent Committee, which will be held on the eve of the CALRE Plenary assembly in Trento. The Declaration proposal will be discussed and evaluated within the permanent Committee in the spring of 2011.

EVENTS CALENDAR

Permanent Committee

- February 2011 - Bruxelles
- June 2011 - Ancona
- September 2011 - Palermo
- November 2011 - L'Aquila

Plenary Assembly

- November 2011 - L'Aquila