



## **RESOLUTION ON THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION WHITE PAPER ON THE FUTURE OF EUROPE (REFLECTIONS AND SCENARIOS FOR THE EUROPE OF TWENTY-SEVEN IN 2025)**

Regarding the *White Paper of the European Commission on the Future of Europe: Reflections and scenarios For the Europe of Twenty-seven in 2025*, the *Conference of European Regional Legislative Assemblies*:

1. Thanks the Commission for its valuable contribution on the future of the European Union through the publication of the "*White Paper of the European Commission on the Future of Europe: Reflections and scenarios For the Europe of Twenty-seven in 2025*" and takes note of each and every reflection and scenario. CALRE is at the disposal of the Committee of the Regions and the European Commission to contributing both locally and regionally to the space for reflection and debate open with this document, and it commits itself to promote the debate on the different scenarios in the regional assemblies and parliaments that make up CALRE.

2. Recalls that the Declaration of Rome in March 2017 highlights the role of the principle of subsidiarity in the real progress of the EU; it would, then, be desirable to emphasize the prominence of the regions and local bodies of the Union in the Commission's White Paper, and in all the discussion documents on the future of the European Union.

3. In this regard, as CALRE welcomes the proposal made by the President of the Commission, Jean Claude Juncker, in his speech on the State of the Union last September, to create a working group to ensure full compliance with the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality. CALRE considers that the European cities and regions should be represented in such group through both the committee of the Regions and CALRE itself. For this reason, CALRE asks to participate in the Working Group with two of its representatives.

4. Will continue to work to locate the different regions at the centre of the European policy, and it supports the idea of a Europe built from the bottom-up. For this reason, the regional bodies should play a key role in the European legislation and drafting of the EU policies, while following the principles, upheld by this Conference ever, of subsidiarity, multilevel governance, and of interparliamentary cooperation. These singular elements should be explicitly recognised in the White Paper and in all the discussion documents on the future of the European Union, and applied to all the European policies to achieve a more democratic and efficient EU; the cities and regions must be partners in the decision-making at a Community level, rather than being mere recipients of European programmes and projects. Therefore, CALRE members call on the European institutions to analyse the introduction of a "green card" procedure in order to allow a legislative proposal to be made, provided that a sufficient number of national or regional parliaments request it.

5. Expresses its concern that the scenarios do not include an express reference to the consequences entailed by each of them for the European regions. In particular, it expresses its concern about the content specifically included in "Scenario 4 - More efficiently". In this regard, CALRE wishes to contribute constructively to the debate and not to take a step backwards from the cohesion policies, which are an essential tool for the development and growth of both the territories and the socioeconomic environment of the Regions and Local Authorities of the European Union.

Reaffirms the need to maintain a strong and efficient cohesion policy in all the regions after the year 2020; therefore, its full financing must be ensured. This element should be included in the White Paper and in all the discussion documents on the future of the European Union since we need to enhance the investment capacity of the local and regional authorities, while maintaining the principle of sound and balanced public finances.

6. Understands that the scenarios set out in the White Paper are a wake-up call for all to decide about the future of Europe; however, it supports the idea expressed by the Committee of the Regions that a multidirectional Europe should be avoided. Hence, CALRE is and will be in favour of more and better integration. Only together will we be able to defend efficiently our values and interests: only Europe can provide us with a capacity for action in the face of the great and global challenges of the Twentieth Century.

7. Deems it necessary to promote and develop a stronger representative European democracy, favouring the citizens' participation in the European legislative process, and allowing us to progress towards a more participatory democracy, in particular through an ambitious reform of the European Citizens' Initiative, and by promoting also forums for public debate throughout Europe, and especially at the local and regional level, to recover both the citizens' opinion in favour of the European project, and their confidence in the community institutions.

8. Expresses its conviction that growth, job creation and reduction of inequality must guide the EU action since these are the best way to ensure sustainability. Europe must be instrumental in guaranteeing work conditions, public services and solidarity between the citizens, which means progressing towards a more social Europe. As such, CALRE welcomes with satisfaction the adoption of the key principles of the European Pillar of Social Rights by the European Commission, as well as the adoption by the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs of the European Parliament, of the legislative report on the review of the Posting of Workers Directive within the European Union. Both events are important first steps towards real equal treatment with common rules for all European workers.

9. Considers there is a need to join efforts for improving competitiveness and achieving a stronger and more stable Economic and Monetary Union. In this regard, more public investment is necessary to fostering job creation and investing in the productive sectors which are most promising. The regional parliaments with legislative powers urge the European Union to distinguish between the necessary fight against public deficits and the financing of essential investments. They want the European budgetary space to help to relaunch investments at the different levels of government. This is the reason why CALRE welcomes the willingness of many Member States to develop a common system for fairer taxation of Transnational Digital Companies (GAFA) and gradual convergence of tax rates, which CALRE members have been asking for.

10. Believes that we should work together more efficiently and intensify parliamentary cooperation to improve the common security and defence policy (CSDP) and protect our citizens against terrorism, protect our borders, make our voice heard and have a decisive influence internationally, including under a European Defence Policy. In this respect, it is essential to apply automatic exchange of information concerning the persons linked to terrorist offences, between the security forces of the European countries, and to create, as soon as possible, a European Public Prosecutor's Office (included in the Treaties since 2009) responsible for the cross-border processing of terrorist offences. Moreover, we should consider the desirability of reinforcing common EU action, the expansion of the powers of the European Union Agency for Network and Information Security, "*Cybersecurity*" (ENISA), creating a single intervention force, a cybersecurity agency and a common defence budget.

11. Highlights the need to consolidate the European commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals (Agenda, 2030) as well as to the planet, the Environment and climate change, and its effects on natural disasters and on the prevention of the risks of natural disasters, but also towards technology and innovation; that is, turning our continent into a competitive Europe based on smart growth, as well as a sustainable, green Europe. To this end, we should learn from successful experiences in different European cities and regions (recycling, use of clean energies, mobility, sustainable housing and urban-

planning) so as to study and transfer them to other EU regions in the framework of a common strategy for sustainable development in European regions.

12. Supports the need to establish a common foreign policy and for Europe to strengthen its action and help build peace in the Middle-East, Africa and Latin-America. To this purpose, it is desirable to strengthen the European Development Fund in favour of these countries, especially in the countries of origin and transit, by acting and improving life expectancy, and step up efforts towards the refugees and comply with the regulations that we have adopted. The EU countries should comply with hosting commitments, and insist on the need to resettle the migrants, in accordance with the principle that belonging to a community carries both honour and financial burden.

13. Considers that, in order to address the problems listed above, the European Union should have a modern, functional budget in line with the challenges of the 2030 Agenda.

14. Expresses its conviction about the essential role of the European regional assemblies as disseminators of Europeanism among the citizens, which would help increase participation in the election process for representatives. We should endeavour to increase our neighbours' knowledge of European policies and their impact on everyday life, and encourage them to behave as active citizens. Hence, for future elections in 2019, we should see the convenience that European political parties should present programmes which include proposals and objectives of a European nature, and the possibility to elect the candidates for the position of President of the European Commission.

15. Reminds member countries that the EU treaties and laws must be complied with and that all Member States must comply with the Law and honour the commitments adopted by each and every State when joining the EU. For this reason, it rejects the measures that some countries, such as Hungary or Poland, have implemented, aimed at lowering democratic standards, and urges the Commission to take the relevant steps to guaranteeing the Rule of Law by using its capacity to impose sanctions.

16. Reaffirms the need to construct a common European identity united in the diversity of its territories, expressed through the mobility of its students, by encouraging the learning of foreign languages, by creating European universities and using the instruments that make us participants in our common history in diversity: cinema, theatre, literature, and art in general. In this regard, it expresses its support to the celebration, in 2018, of the European Year of Cultural Heritage as approved by the European Parliament and the Council of the European Union. CALRE considers it is a great opportunity for enhancing and valuing the European cultural heritage as a shared resource, for raising awareness about our common history and values, and for strengthening our sense of belonging to a common European area. In this regard, CALRE shares the opinion of the President of the European Committee of the Regions, Karl-Heinz Lambertz, who argued that the diversity and richness of Europe are "an

asset for the EU and not an argument to separate the territories and come back to nationalisms which are obsolete and will not allow to meet the challenges" in Twenty-first Century Europe.