



REGIONE AUTONOMA
FRIULI VENEZIA GIULIA

consiglio regionale

Conference of European Regional Legislative Assemblies
“Better regulation and Policy evaluation”



**CALRE Working group activity report
2021**

Introduction

The first CALRE working group on Better regulation, chaired by coordinator Mr Piero Mauro Zanin, President of the Legislative Assembly of Friuli Venezia Giulia autonomous Region, took place on 12 November 2021. In his introduction, President Zanin conveyed the greetings of the President of CALRE, Mr Gustavo Matos, who couldn't attend the meeting due to unforeseen commitments.

The opening meeting of the working group was held remotely, and had as its main theme *“Better regulation as the driving force of recovery. Best practices in the experience of legislative assemblies and new proposals”*.

The meeting was attended by Presidents and officers of various regional Parliaments belonging to CALRE (Castilla y León, Azores, Wallonia, French Community of Belgium, Aosta Valley, Lombardy, Sardinia, besides the hosting Friuli Venezia Giulia), and was joined by three experts that gave their contribution as speakers:

- Ms Antonina Cipollone, European Commission – DG General Secretariat – Head of Better regulation Unit;
- Ms Fabiana Scapolo, JRC – Joint Research Centre of the European Commission – Head of Foresight Unit;
- Mr Stephen Taylor, Acting General Manager and Director of the Innovation and Complex Systems Division at Area Science Park Trieste (Italy).

The experts explained, among other things, the set of legislative tools used by the European Commission and EU institutions; these instruments make up the so called “toolbox” of Better regulation.

During the meeting the coordinator, Mr Zanin, highlighted the core points of the opinion on Better regulation of which he is rapporteur for the European Committee of the Regions. The opinion should be adopted during the CoR Plenary assembly, scheduled for 1 December 2021. President Zanin's speech was the starting point of the discussion, to which the interventions of various participants followed. A major contribution to the debate was provided by: Mr Carlo Borghetti, Vice-President of the legislative Assembly of Lombardy Region; Mr Michele Pais, President of the Legislative Assembly of Sardinia autonomous Region; Mr Luis Fuentes Rodriguez, President of the Regional Parliament of Castilla y León (since he couldn't attend the meeting live, he sent a video of his speech); and Mr Sebastiano Callari, Regional Minister for Heritage, Property and Administrative Simplification of Friuli Venezia Giulia Region.

Presidents of Regional Legislative Assemblies and their delegates

Name	Regional Legislative Assembly	Country
Piero Mauro Zanin	Friuli Venezia Giulia	Italy
Luis Fuentes Rodriguez	Castilla y León	Spain
Michele Pais	Sardinia	Italy
Carlo Borghetti	Lombardy	Italy
Mathieu Daele	French Community of Belgium	Belgium
Benjamin Hurard	Wallonia	Belgium
Alberto Bertin	Aosta Valley	Italy

Experts

Antonina Cipollone	European Commission – DG General Secretariat – Head of Better regulation Unit
Stephen Taylor	Acting General Manager and Director of the Innovation and Complex Systems Division at Area Science Park Trieste (Italy)
Fabiana Scapolo	Joint Research Centre of the European Commission – Head of Foresight Unit

Regional Legislative Assemblies officers

Name	Regional Legislative Assembly	Country
Ana Machado	Azores	Portugal
Alicia Maria Romero Sota	Castilla y León	Spain
Mehdi Abidat	French Community of Belgium	Belgium
Costanza Gaeta	Italian Conference of the Presidents of Legislative Assemblies of Regions and autonomous Provinces	Italy
Michele Sias	Sardinia	Italy
Isabella Molina	Lombardy	Italy
Elvira Carola	Lombardy	Italy
Roberta Lupi	Lombardy	Italy
Cherie Faval	Aosta Valley	Italy
Francesco Stuffer	Aosta Valley	Italy
Fanny Codarin	Friuli Venezia Giulia	Italy
Dora Lo Giudice	Friuli Venezia Giulia	Italy
Angelo Paulon	Friuli Venezia Giulia	Italy

Agenda of the meeting

BETTER REGULATION AS THE DRIVING FORCE OF RECOVERY: BEST PRACTICES IN THE EXPERIENCE OF LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLIES AND NEW PROPOSALS

Meeting online | Friday 12 November 2021 | 11.00 A.M. – 1.00 P.M. (CET)

11.00 A.M. – OPENING AND INSTITUTIONAL GREETINGS

- **Piero Mauro Zanin**, Vice-president of CALRE, President of the Legislative Assembly of Friuli Venezia Giulia autonomous Region
- **Gustavo Matos**, President of CALRE, President of the Parliament of the Canary Islands
- **Sebastiano Callari**, Regional Minister for Heritage, Property and Administrative Simplification, Friuli Venezia Giulia Regional Government

11.15 A.M. – SPEECHES

- **Piero Mauro Zanin**, Coordinator of CALRE working group on “Better regulation and policy evaluation” and rapporteur of the CoR opinion on Better regulation
- **Luis Fuentes Rodriguez**, President of the Regional Parliament of Castilla y León
- President of the Legislative Assembly of Trentino Alto Adige-Südtirol autonomous Region (**T.B.C.**)

11.45 A.M. – EXPERTS CONTRIBUTIONS

- **Antonina Cipollone**, European Commission – DG General Secretariat – Head of Better regulation Unit
- **Fabiana Scapolo**, JRC – Joint Research Centre of the European Commission – Head of Foresight Unit
- **Stephen Taylor**, Acting General Manager and Director of the Innovation and Complex Systems Division at Area Science Park Trieste (Italy)

12.15 P.M. – DIALOGUE WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF THE EUROPEAN REGIONAL LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLIES

12.45 P.M. – CONCLUSIONS

- **Piero Mauro Zanin**, Coordinator of CALRE working group on “Better regulation and policy evaluation”



The President of the Legislative Assembly of Friuli Venezia Giulia Region, Mr Piero Mauro Zanin, and the Regional Minister, Mr Sebastiano Callari



The Vice-President of the Legislative Assembly of Lombardy Region, Mr Carlo Borghetti



The President of the Legislative Assembly of Sardinia Region, Mr Michele Pais



The President of the Regional Parliament of Castilla y León, Mr Luis Fuentes Rodriguez

Working group meeting outcome

The debate that took place during the working group underlined a series of main issues, on which both the CALRE members attending and the experts joining the meeting substantially agreed. That means there is a common deep feeling among the various territories and local communities across Europe; regardless of their geographical location, regions share some important request and demands, and a vision on how legislation deeply affects their activity and their social fabric's life and work.

The outcome of the discussion can be summarized in the following key points:

- ✓ The European Commission communication on Better regulation¹ is not only related to instruments and tools the EC adopted to improve its own legislative regulation process; it is in itself an opportunity through which the EC approaches Local and Regional Authorities (LRAs), to work together in a coordinated way to build the European institutional architecture of the future, and to make Europe closer to its citizens.
- ✓ Regional Legislative Assemblies cannot miss this appointment: it is necessary to join forces to make better laws, as per the European Commission communication title. **LRAs** know very well the negative impact created by unnecessary burdens that originate from over-regulation and “gold-plating”: therefore, they **must be given a stronger role in the process of qualitative improvement of the legislation**, and in the democratic functioning of the EU. The function of the elected politicians, the real decision-makers, is fundamental as well: they must take their responsibility in driving change and in giving it a clear direction. A real democratic transition is needed, aside of the green and digital ones, already declared objectives of the EU.
- ✓ LRAs' contribution to the shaping of “future proof” legislation can be achieved through a **bottom-up** approach, by participating to EC's organized consultations about laws, and taking part in the monitoring and impact assessment activities. LRAs can contribute also through a **top-down** approach, by transposing into regional laws the same “toolbox” used by the European Commission: this way LRAs could assess the quality of their European Directives-implementing regulation. Only acting this way, it will be possible to consistently achieve the political goals set at European level; otherwise we will have separate entities that, even if faced by the same challenges, will prove themselves unable to have a mutual constructive dialogue.
- ✓ **Stakeholder consultations** that took place at regional and local level in various areas of the EU highlighted that very often the complications in implementing the EU law are not a consequence of Regulations and Directives in themselves. Instead, they originate mainly from the **stratification** and the non-harmonization of European, national and regional legislation. An **excess of regulation** overburdens Public Bodies and enterprises, and ends up as being ineffective for companies and citizens, **slowing** economic growth and **recovery**.
- ✓ Therefore, now more than ever the contribution of LRAs is crucial: Better regulation, aimed at administrative lessening and simplification, can and must become the **driving force of recovery and of a new economic and social growth**.
- ✓ We have to make ourselves ready to face the challenges of the future, in order to solve current problems, and also the ones that will arise from new phenomena that we still don't know well, but already anticipate the coming changes. In this perspective vision, **it is essential to link Better regulation**, in all its aspects, **to science**. Legislation can be high-quality and “fit for future” only if it is evidence-based; **gathered data must be scientifically-proven, concrete, transparent** (in terms of explaining both the evidence-gathering process and how this evidence is transmitted to the

¹ COM(2021) 219 final of 29 April 2021 “Better Regulation: Joining forces to make better laws”.

general public), comprehensive and constantly up-to-date. Data should be used in a *fair²* way; hence, it would be appropriate to involve the scientific community (Research Centres, Institutes, etc.) since the very beginning of the law-making process, from the consultations phase already. Incorporating the “**strategic foresight**” methodology into the policy-shaping process would be pertinent, too. Integrating strategic foresight into the Better regulation toolbox, with particular reference to the impact assessments, could further support the activities aimed at monitoring suitability and effectiveness of legislation.

- ✓ The role of **LRAs** in helping to drive foresight activity and in constantly monitoring the impact of legislation will be **pivotal for the development of a better and more effective regulation, capable of giving new impulse and strength** to European regions’ economies and social fabrics in terms of **resilience** and **recovery**, after the devastating effects of the pandemic.
- ✓ Legislating is a complex, circular process which requires constant monitoring and a feedback loop to allow the possibility to make adjustments. Thus, the importance of evidence-based data on which regulation must be grounded is self-explanatory. In this respect, a major role can be played by digitalization. This is not to be intended as a simple “translation” of the traditional paper documents in an electronic format, or as the possibility to just download files from a website. **Digital growth** requires a change of mind-set, and the capability of re-engineering processes, with the aim of eliminating all the burdens that make the administrative process so heavy that it interferes with development, and giving therefore the possibility to dedicate more time to the quality of the data we input, and on which the whole process is based.
- ✓ It is crucial that, besides the scientific community, also **local actors** are involved and **listened to**, because demands and needs of those who will be directly affected by legislation must permanently be taken into consideration. We cannot underestimate the importance of a direct **link with the production sector** and its **enterprises**, and with professionals, cooperation and union representatives, **individuals**, the **civil society**. All of them, as **territorial stakeholders**, can make their own contribution about the knowledge of the burdens that, by making legislation too heavy, substantially undermine economic recovery. A couple of examples: first of all, the agriculture world, that has been asking for a long time for a simplification of the procedures aimed at reaching the goals indicated in the Green Deal agenda. And secondly, Small and Medium Enterprises: an effective assessment of European laws’ impact on their activity is of the utmost importance, since in many areas of the EU the manufacturing sector is mostly made of SMEs and microenterprises.
- ✓ **Simple and light procedures** will be fundamental to give European businesses the chance to still be competitive in a globalised market. The basic principle is that rules must be produced taking into due account the perspective of those who will later have to implement them (the Public Authorities), and also considering to the needs and requests of those on who the rules will impact (enterprises and citizens). Therefore, a better regulation, aimed primarily at improving the quality of legislation, cannot be postponed anymore. It is necessary to act now, having in mind the post-pandemic economic recovery; and it is also important to pursue the reduction of unnecessary costs, following the “*one in, one out*” approach adopted by the European Commission.
- ✓ To spread knowledge about the innovative tools conceived by the EC, a good **communication** action is needed, so to increasingly involve officers of national, regional and local Public Bodies. At the same time, **investing** more on **human resources and education** will make the Regions’ contribution to the consultations more continuous and structured.

² F.A.I.R. = Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, Re-usable

- ✓ The role of the renewed CoR's **REGHUB 2.0 platform for active subsidiarity** is underlined. Since it implies a **constant monitoring activity** of EU regulations' implementation at regional and local level, the platform places itself very close to citizens, gradually developing a partnership approach that favours cooperation and multilevel governance. RegHub is a concrete example of the good results that can be achieved by strengthening cooperation and solidarity between EU member States, Regions, local authorities and cities. **Collaboration**, and reinforcement of relationships between Regional Legislative Assemblies especially, is the key instrument to rely on, in order to pursue the goal of European economy's recovery.
- ✓ Presidents of the European Legislative Assemblies are being called to join forces and share best practices and the new Better regulation tools, in order to implement legislative reforms capable of meeting citizens' needs at any level: regional, national and European. In other words, it is about **making the regional Parliaments leading actors in the EU policy making process**, through a circular route that starting from participation in law making comes to implementing rules and governing resources. It is time to act, taking the chance provided by the Conference on the Future of Europe to reaffirm the pivotal role of regional Parliaments in building the new European institutional architecture.

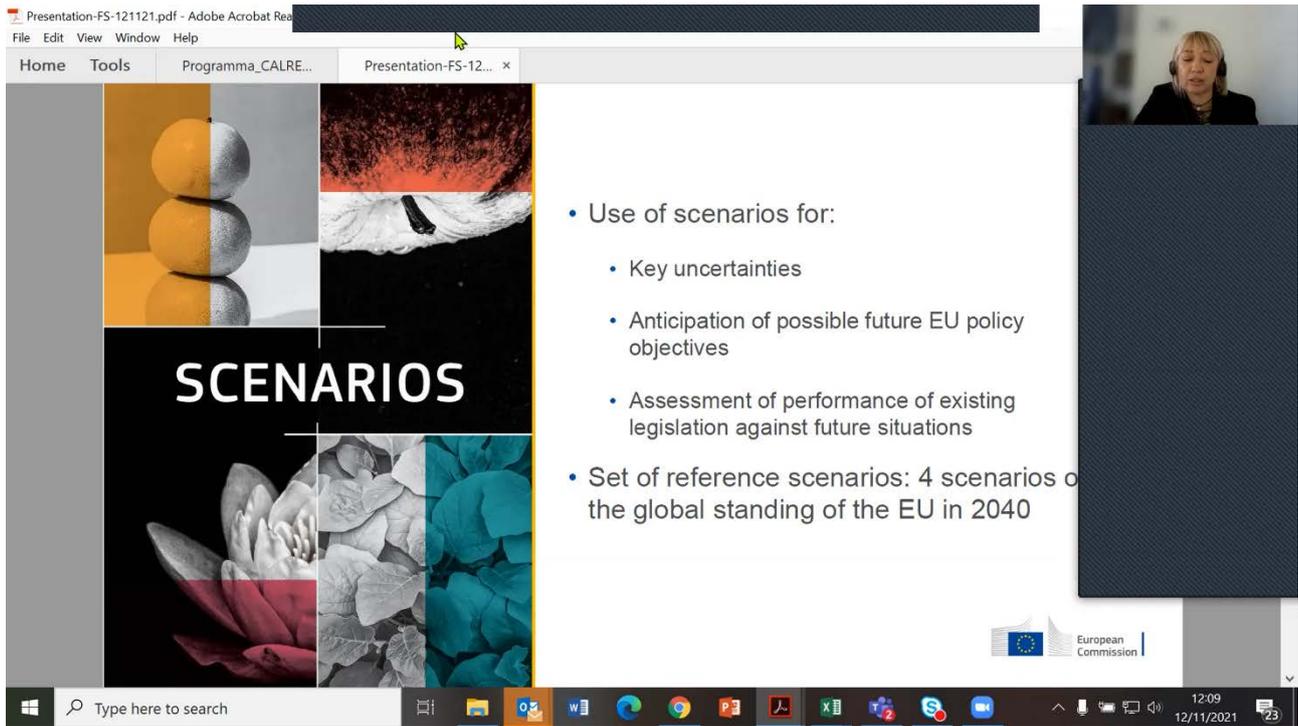
Conclusions

The working group meeting ended expressing the wish for, and the members' commitment to, a further fruitful and mutual relationship between the Regional Legislative Assemblies taking part in CALRE.

This **collaboration** will need to be based on **sharing experiences and best practices**, starting from the next meeting already. The main issue, the need of a special focus on the quality of legislation, is repeated; this concept is to be basically understood in terms of transparency and comprehensibility. It is especially important to lessen the burdens imposed by over-regulation in order to make procedures easier, to favour the entrepreneurial world and, consequently, economic recovery.

The working group underlines once more that it is extremely important for politicians, legislators, administrators, stakeholders and citizens to **share responsibilities**. They all have to play their part, to be a factor in the process of simplification and, therefore, of improving the quality of legislation.

Having that goal in mind, it is deemed as essential to create a **stable network of Legislative Assemblies, scientific institutions, businesses and citizens**. This is intended to be as an inter-institutional alliance that, keeping itself in continuous touch with the EC and the European Parliament, could be able to constantly give a proper feedback on the EC's proposals, and to follow the legislative process until the end. This way it will be possible, also inside CALRE, to develop a synergic collaboration on the issue of Better regulation, to be kept alive and renewed in the course of the successive future working group meetings.



The presentation of Ms Fabiana Scapolo



Mr Stephen Taylor during his speech



The intervention of Ms Antonina Cipollone



The coordinator of the Working Group, President Zanin, during his closing remarks