

Decision n. 34 of 18th June 2024 unanimously approved by the Regional Legislative Assembly

Subject: Resolution “European session 2024. Policy lines for the participation of the Friuli Venezia Giulia Region in the EU law-making process”.

THE REGIONAL LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

HAVING REGARD TO

- Art. 117, para. 5 of the Italian Constitution, which recognizes the participation of Regions in EU law-making process;
- Protocol No. 2 to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, which recognizes Regional Legislative Assemblies’ entitlement to monitor the compliance of EU legislation with the subsidiarity principle;
- Art. 24, para. 3 and Art. 25 of Italian Law No. 234 of 24th December 2012 (General rules on Italy's participation in EU law-making process and for the implementation of EU legislation and policies), governing the participation of the Regions in the EU law-making process and in particular the role of regional Legislative Assemblies in monitoring the compliance of EU legislative projects or proposals based on Art. 352 TFUE with the subsidiarity principle;
- Art. 9 of Italian Law No. 234/2012, governing the political dialogue of Regions and Regional Legislative Assemblies with the national Parliament and EU institutions;
- Friuli Venezia Giulia Regional Law No. 17 of 18th June 2007 (concerning the Region’s institutional framework and electoral system, in accordance with Art. 12 of the Statute of Autonomy), Art. 17, which provides for the participation of the Region in the EU legislative process;
- Art. 169 ter of the Internal Regulation of the Legislative Assembly of Friuli Venezia Giulia, providing for the ‘European Session’, during which a joint examination of the European Commission’s annual Work Programme and of the annual Italian Government’s Report to the Parliament on its relationship with the European Union, as well as of the Friuli Venezia Giulia Report on the compliance of the regional legislation with the EU law is carried out;

HAVING EXAMINED the European Commission Work Programme 2024 (ECWP) - ‘Delivering today and preparing for tomorrow’ - set out in the Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, to the European Council, to the European Economic and Social Committee and to the Committee of the Regions, COM (2023) 638 *final* and related annexes, dated 17th October 2023;

TAKING INTO ACCOUNT that in its session held on 26th January 2024, the Regional Government approved in its Minutes No. 122/2024 the document ‘Participation of Friuli Venezia Giulia Region to the EU law-making process. Identifying relevant initiatives for the Region in the 2024 ECWP’, in which it highlighted the EC 2024 initiatives that are deemed as most relevant to Friuli Venezia Giulia and which it intends adopting;

GIVEN THAT on 12th February 2024 the Presidents of the relevant Assembly commissions have been assigned the ECWP, the Report on the Compliance of regional legislation with the EU law for 2023, and the Communication of the Regional Government identifying the initiatives within the ECWP for 2024 considered of interest for the Region Friuli Venezia Giulia, for all of them to be examined according to the

Legislative Assembly's internal regulation;

CONSIDERING that on 1st March 2024 the President of the Regional Legislative Assembly opened the 'European session', asking the commissions to examine, within the respective areas of responsibility, the topics that are considered as most relevant for Friuli Venezia Giulia, and subsequently transmitted the documents to the main regional stakeholders, in order to favour their participation in the process;

THAT the European session of the Regional Legislative Assembly can be viewed as the starting point of its participation in the EU law-making process and of its political dialogue with the EU institutions. From this moment the Assembly, taking account of the priorities identified by the Regional Government, can express its choices with regard to the ECWP initiatives that are deemed as the most interesting and having the greatest impact for the regional territory;

THAT such right is granted to the Regional Legislative Assembly by Protocol No. 2 to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, and by the national Law No. 234/2012, both providing for the participation of Regional Legislative Assemblies in the very first stages of the adoption of EU legislative and non-legislative proposals, enabling them to monitor the compliance of EU law with the subsidiarity principle;

THAT the European session of the Regional Legislative Assembly, which represents a moment of joint discussion on EU policies relevant to the Region, can further generate guidelines for the Regional Government's activities within the debated areas, in accordance with Art. 169 ter of the internal regulation of the Legislative Assembly;

HAVING EXAMINED the above mentioned European Commission Work Programme 2024 'Delivering today and preparing for tomorrow', which groups the planned activities under the 6 following priorities:

- I. A European Green Deal;
- II. A Europe fit for the digital age;
- III. An economy that works for the people;
- IV. A stronger Europe in the world;
- V. Promoting our European way of life;
- VI. A new push for European democracy.

THAT each of the above mentioned priorities includes single initiatives, which are expected to be adopted in 2024;

CONSIDERING, according to the provisions of the Assembly's internal regulation concerning the European session, appropriate to hold the stakeholders' hearings within the 5th Assembly commission with the aim of collecting the requests, proposals, reports and recommendations of stakeholders, local institutions and the 'FVG system' as a whole on the issues, among those listed in the ECWP and its annexes, deemed of greatest importance for the region and its economic, productive, social and cultural fabric;

TAKING INTO ACCOUNT the outcome of the public hearings that were attended, in presence or online, by the University of Udine; the Regional School Office and the representatives of the Student Council of Friuli Venezia Giulia; the National Institute of Oceanography and Experimental Geophysics (OGS); the Regional Environment Protection Agency of Friuli Venezia Giulia (ARPA FVG); the Experimental Zoophylactic Institute - IZSve; the International Centre for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology - ICGEB; the Scientific and Technological Research Area of Trieste - Area Science Park; the North-Eastern Adriatic Port Network Authority - AdSPMAO; by various trade associations of the region, including Confindustria Udine (Confederation of Manufacturing and Service Companies), Confartigianato Gorizia (Confederation of Craft Trades), the League of Friuli Venezia Giulia Cooperatives (Legacoop FVG), the Confederation of Cooperatives (Confcooperative), and Federdistribuzione; by the trade union UGL FVG (General Union of Workers); by the FVG Agrifood & Bioeconomy Foundation; and by the representatives

of local public institutions, such as the National Association of Italian Municipalities (ANCI) and the Italian Association of the Council of European Municipalities and Regions (AICCRE FVG). These public hearings took place on 3rd June 2024, in the Legislative Assembly Chamber in Trieste;

TAKING INTO ACCOUNT the written contributions sent by the University of Udine, ARPA FVG, Confcommercio FVG (General Confederation of enterprises, professions and self-employment), Confagricoltura FVG (Confederation of Italian agriculture), Federdistribuzione, Confartigianato Imprese, AIAB FVG (Italian Association for Organic Agriculture FVG), OGS, IZSVe, Area Science Park, the Agrifood & Bioeconomy FVG Foundation, AdSPMAO, the Student Council of Friuli Venezia Giulia, ANCI FVG and AICCRE FVG;

- and the opinions received by the 5th Assembly commission from the Presidents of the other Assembly commissions, which, according to their respective areas of competence, heard at a hearing the Regional Minister for Local Autonomies, Local Authorities, Security, Immigration, Fellow Countrymen Abroad and Minority Languages; the Regional Minister of Labour, Training, Education, University, Research, and Family; the Regional Minister for Environment, Energy and Sustainable Development; the Regional Minister for Production Activities and Tourism and the Regional Minister for Agriculture and Food, Forestry, Fishery and Mountain Resources;

TAKING INTO ACCOUNT the debates held in the 5th Assembly commission's meetings on 13th and 18th June 2024, and within the Assembly on 18th June 2024;

STATES its interest in taking part in EU law and policy-making and therefore in monitoring the European Commission's initiatives, with regard to the priorities set out below, on which it expresses some **preliminary remarks** also in the light of the worrying evolution of the international situation, characterized by great tension and geopolitical instability;

REQUESTS that the European institutions take all appropriate diplomatic and political steps to achieve a ceasefire in all current theatres of war, in particular those closest to us, to achieve peace and support the civilian populations affected by these conflicts;

HIGHLIGHTS how the distortive effects caused by the ongoing conflicts, such as the alteration of the global freight traffic as a result of the difficulties on the Asia-Europe route due to bottlenecks in the Suez Canal, significantly affect the economic and productive fabric of the regions of the northern part of the Adriatic Sea, including Friuli Venezia Giulia;

SUPPORTS every effort and initiative by the Commission and the EU to provide investments aimed at strengthening industrial development and value chains so as to limit dependence on supplies from non-European markets for energy, critical and semi-finished raw materials, strategic technologies, thus strengthening European autonomy, sovereignty and economic security;

LOOKS FORWARD to a concerted approach by the European Commission and all other EU institutions in all policy areas whose regulation is set to have long-term effects on European citizens, businesses and territories (such as the energy transition, decarbonisation, AI, digitalisation, the fundamental topic of education and talent mobility that directly interfaces with the increasing difficulties for companies to find the workforce they need on the labour market, the Green Deal): the first and necessary step for shaping the future 'rules of the game', of which regional authorities have to be an active part, must necessarily be the involvement of stakeholders, companies and industry associations;

RECOMMENDS in particular that the EU institutions continue their efforts to improve the quality of legislation and active subsidiarity, also sharing the strategic foresight methodology with regional and local authorities. Shifting the decision-making process to the closest possible level to the territory, and a good-quality legislation are essential elements for the functioning of European democracies, including at sub-national level, especially in view of the green and digital transition, and of the above mentioned strategic challenges. Moreover, the better regulation Agenda is an essential element in supporting

sustainability, by integrating the SDGs into impact assessments, and including strategic foresight in the law-making process and the future evaluation of legislation;

CONSIDERS necessary to strengthen the application of the subsidiarity principle, according to which national parliaments and regional and local authorities can contribute to the formation of European law from the pre-legislative phase, as enshrined in the Treaties and as reaffirmed in the panels and debates held at the Conference on the Future of Europe, that took place from 9th May 2021 to 9th May 2022;

CONSIDERS, with specific reference to better regulation, of fundamental importance to act in support of SMEs, which are the core of the productive fabric of Friuli Venezia Giulia and of many other European regions. The adoption of transparent and easy-to-understand regulations and the elimination, or at least the significant reduction, of excessive administrative and bureaucratic burdens are essential to allow companies to unleash their creative energies, to the benefit of their development and of the socio-economic and employment progress of the territories in which they are established;

RECKONS therefore necessary, in a context marked by the principle of better regulation, that any legislative activity, especially if it will regulate aspects of primary importance in the lives of European citizens, must necessarily be based on scientific, evidence-based data collected with clear, transparent, verifiable and usable criteria. Since knowledge does not reside in a single database and is not prerogative of a single source, it is needed to create interoperable systems and develop existing ones, to allow the exchange of validated information and, intercepting the real needs of the territories, to facilitate the creation of technical support frameworks to identify the regulatory solutions that are, from time to time, more appropriate;

WISHES for the European, national and subnational institutions to adopt a systemic approach in pursuing the objectives of EU legislation, taking into account the interactions between the different social, economic and environmental realities on which EU regulation insists. In fact, the actions of the Commission intersect multiple levels and can therefore lead to situations in which the benefits gained in certain areas can turn into difficulties and disadvantages in other contexts, with a consequent decrease in the efficiency of governance at the local level.

In view of the above, the Friuli Venezia Giulia Regional Legislative Assembly expresses the following observations on the ECWP for 2024:

ON THE NEW INITIATIVES

I. With regard to priority 1. 'A European Green Deal'

CONSIDERS of interest to the Friuli Venezia Giulia Region the initiatives of the European Commission Work Programme that are included in policy objective No. 1, '**Wind power package**', with particular reference to the 'European Wind Energy Plan' launched by the Commission in its COM(2023) 669 *final* of 24th October 2023, which sets out a series of actions that EU institutions, Member States and stakeholders, primarily businesses, must take together in order to ensure that the clean energy transition goes hand in hand with industrial competitiveness;

ACKNOWLEDGES that the sector has great potential for innovation and offers fertile ground for the development of new skills, although the regional territory does not have areas that are particularly fit to the use of wind energy;

DEEMES therefore appropriate, also in the light of the systemic approach mentioned in the preliminary considerations, to highlight that at European level it is needed to identify regulatory pathways that clearly set the priorities to be achieved, as well as any potential exceptions, in order to rationalise and optimise the use of this energy source, the importance of which it is fully recognised;

CONSIDERS of the utmost interest the plurality of initiatives covered by policy objective No. 2 '**2040**

climate target', meaning that the green and digital transition that aims to make the European Union climate neutral by 2050 constitutes a compass for the coming decades, especially taking into account the purpose of legislative and regulatory proposals aimed at pursuing the decarbonisation of the European economy;

HIGHLIGHTS and shares the importance of the approach chosen by the European Commission on this issue, based on dialogue with stakeholders and public participation, with the direct involvement of businesses, associations and citizens, with a view to transparency;

RECALLS how this approach has been adopted for some time by the Friuli Venezia Giulia Region, which in recent years has followed an action method based on discussion, consultation and listening to identify the best choices for the benefit of citizens, businesses and the entire regional community;

WISHES FOR the multiplication of opportunities for multilevel meetings between local, national and European authorities, aimed at preventing the so called *rebound effects* potentially arising from EU regulations that are not sufficiently aware of territorial specificities;

POINTS OUT at Communication COM(2024) 63 *final* of 6th February, in which the European Commission, on the basis of the results of a very detailed impact assessment, recommends a net reduction in greenhouse gas emissions of 90% by 2040, compared to 1990 levels. The Communication identifies eight building blocks for achieving the 2040 target, including 'infrastructure to supply, transport and store hydrogen and CO₂';

RECALLS that the Friuli Venezia Giulia Region has chosen to invest in the hydrogen supply chain with a leading role, deploying innovative tools to support companies in the process of self-production of energy from renewable sources;

UNDERLINES how, again with a view to greater energy and industrial efficiency and autonomy, through the National Recovery and Resilience Plan funds the Regional Administration published at the beginning of 2023 a EUR 14 million call for funding for investment projects that provide for the conversion of abandoned industrial areas for the creation of hydrogen production and distribution centres, where hydrogen must be produced using only renewable energy sources. Last summer, the measure granting funding to the winning project, presented by AcegasApsAmga S.p.A. and located in the area adjacent to the Trieste waste-to-energy plant, was approved. The investment must be implemented by 30 June 2026;

HIGHLIGHTS the strategic nature of the initiative, that will be integrated with the greater cross-border project of the North Adriatic Hydrogen Valley. This project, the first of its kind at European level, originating from the agreement between Friuli Venezia Giulia, Croatia and Slovenia, will make our Region a fundamental energy hub in Central Europe and the Balkans;

COMMITTS itself, in accordance with its institutional role and in agreement with the Regional Government and the competent structures of the Administration, to identify, promote and implement any solution that can contribute to the transition to an integrated ecosystem capable of involving the energy, industry and transport sectors, with particular reference to an upgrade of the regional hydrogen strategy, with the aim of strengthening its introduction into the industrial system, starting from the most mature sectors; to support industrial research and create a territorial specialisation that responds to the vocation of the numerous scientific centres and research institutes based in FVG; to attract private investment and create new employment and productive opportunities; to strengthen the international collaboration already in place between scientific bodies and industrial players, also with the aim of connecting our Hydrogen Valley with other similar realities;

RECOMMENDS, however, an approach based on scientific rigour, validated- and consolidated data in the definition of policies and investments, with a view to a right balance between costs and benefits and the ability to effectively forecast and adjust the effects of the technologies used;

UNDERLINES how the succession of European rules, analyses and impact assessments on climate neutrality, starting with the identification of the Green Deal priority and arriving, through other documents such as the Climate Action Progress Report 2023, until the aforementioned COM(2024) 63 *final*, has a particularly significant impact on agriculture, which is a key sector for the economy and social fabric of Friuli Venezia Giulia;

HIGHLIGHTS how, at regional level, many of the objectives of the European Green Deal are already fully defined in the regional Rural Development Plan and in the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). For example, here are some of the interventions that follow this direction: reforestation practices, sustainable forest management and sustainable agricultural practices such as intercrops and fallow land;

AGREES with what stated in the COM(2024) 63 *final* of the EC, that European farmers and foresters offer essential services for the EU society, environment and economy: they ensure the production of primary food and bio-based materials, are at the core of the bio-economy and the food system's value chains and have a vital role in ensuring food security. As managers of the land, they are also essential to ensure ecosystem services such as biodiversity protection and restoration, carbon removals or adaptation to climate change;

STRESSES that the primary sector is particularly exposed and the first to suffer the damages caused by the increasingly recurrent extreme climatic events: droughts, floods, saline wedges and soil depletion are interlinked phenomena which, worsening, influence each other and exponentially increase their harmful effects;

NOTES that, at the time being, the proposed Framework for Sustainable Food Systems (FSFS), one of the pillars of the EU 'Farm to Fork' strategy, which was due to be presented by the end of 2023, seems to have been removed from the European Commission's agenda;

POINTS OUT that food safety and security, understood as resilience of the system and ability to produce healthy and sufficient food for a growing population, without overexploitation of natural resources, are the absolute priorities. With a view to strategic foresight and be fit for future scenarios, we can no longer take for granted the assumption that the availability of safe food for all will always be certain;

OBSERVES, therefore, that the path towards food sustainability and the protection and restoration of soils is unavoidable, and in this regard stresses the need to think of agricultural policies not as single initiatives: on the contrary, they must be conceived as interconnected with an agriculture-fisheries-forestry-water resilience-energy efficiency strategy that considers the primary sector as an indispensable player in the green and digital transition, and as a driver for innovation and the reduction of polluting emissions;

RECOMMENDS to broaden the debate with all regional stakeholders, including local institutions in a necessary perspective of subsidiarity, in an attempt to define a proposal on FSFS shared by the whole 'FVG system', to be then conveyed to the competent institutions, starting with the European ones. The temporary removal of the initiative by the Commission must not make us forget that, in terms of strategic foresight, the aim to be pursued is the development of an environmental, economic and social sustainability model that puts local supply chains at the forefront, to ensure at the same time the achievement of mitigation and adaptation objectives, and the resilience of territories and communities, protecting their distinguishing characteristics;

CONSIDERS that the diversification of agricultural production, obtained by rediscovering ancient crops, selecting new production varieties and spreading agro-ecological principles and conservative agriculture will allow to effectively support local- and proximity supply chains, reducing waste and environmental impacts, optimizing production in quantitative and qualitative terms and contributing to the development of the different areas of the regional territory, including the most internal and marginal ones. The application of new technologies and the dissemination of scientific knowledge are key to

promote precision farming: in this regard, the recent funding for Agritech, the National Centre for Agricultural Technologies, in which the University of Udine also participates, together with 27 other national universities, 3 public research bodies and 15 companies, is very welcome;

IDENTIFIES the following key points on which it considers important to commit to, together with the Regional Government and the other actors and stakeholders involved, in an action aimed at pursuing objectives such as food security, the support to companies towards climate neutrality, carbon sequestration, the production of energy with renewable sources: to conduct in advance an appropriate survey on the status quo of the single territories, in particular those with a strong agricultural vocation, and implement some step-by-step interventions and policies to be carried out; to support local supply chains and promote the construction of a network that can generate positive impacts on the territory; to enhance native species and regional heritage in the agri-food sector, by implementing actions to reduce food waste and product recycling whenever possible; as FVG is characterised by various niche farming areas, to reflect on the development of conservation techniques to respect the land with a view to reducing the use of pesticides; this action must, however, be matched by appropriate technological, training and financial support and support for farmers; considering the large number of institutes, research centres and scientific bodies of absolute excellence based in FVG, which already cooperate with each other in numerous situations, to promote a network specifically dedicated to the issue, with a view to sharing information and consulting stakeholders, to allow the benefits resulting from the use of new technologies to fall on the entire supply chain;

RECOMMENDS to put in place development and support pathways for livestock entrepreneurs, in particular for SMEs, to help them to adapt to European and national legislation, thus enabling them to enhance the territory and its products and safeguard the added value generated at local and regional level;

EXPRESSES appreciation for the activity aimed at reducing the use of antibiotics in aquaculture, carried out within the network of Experimental Zooprophyllactic Institutes, which also includes the reference one for Friuli Venezia Giulia, the IZSVe: these institutes prepare the so-called 'herd-specific vaccines' on the basis of the peculiar needs of small and medium-sized companies in the sector. Preventive action carried out by vaccines prevents the occurrence of diseases spreading in the stocks of farmed fish, thus avoiding the need to use antibiotics;

STATES therefore, that the possibility of producing these vaccines in small and medium-sized laboratories should be strongly defended at EU level and hopes that the EMA (European Medicine Agency) will issue rules that encourage their use and production;

and in this regard it is concerned about the risk that the EMA may issue excessively strict rules on the requirements of vaccine manufacturing plants, which could result in the vaccines themselves to be no longer available to aquaculture companies;

RECALLS, with regard to local supply chains and the resilience of the regional agri-food system, the integrated territorial marketing brand 'IO SONO FRIULI VENEZIA GIULIA', at the base of which is the same collective agri-food brand, which gathers around five hundred companies and a thousand products. This is an example of an internationally recognized best practice, also viewed as a tool for resilience in a future perspective;

HIGHLIGHTS that the contribution of the agricultural sector in mitigating the effects of climate change cannot be separated from an adequate and well-timed financial benefits for companies in the sector, with specific reference to encouraging business investments oriented towards training and technological and digital efficiency, key elements in risk management;

EXPRESSES appreciation for the recent political agreement between the European Parliament and the Council on a legislative proposal to develop a regulatory framework for the certification of carbon

removals, a potentially very interesting tool for the agricultural sector;

DEEMES essential that the EU supports a carbon farming certification framework that covers all agri-food, livestock and forestry activities that generate carbon removals and/or reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. Companies that agree to follow the protocol should be allowed access to a system of contributions based on a combination of implemented actions and actual achievement of verified results;

UNDERLINES, in the context of the 'European Green Deal', the relevance of the potential impact for citizens, businesses and public administrations of the very recent Directive (EU) 2024/1275 'Energy Performance of Buildings Directive' (EPBD) on the energy performance of buildings, published in the Official Journal of the EU on 8th May 2024 following the approval of the European Parliament and of the Council. The Directive entered into force a few days ago and introduces a roadmap for the energy upgrading of buildings, setting some intermediate emission reduction targets for 2030 and the final objective of reaching climate neutrality by 2050;

GIVEN THAT, in the European panorama, the building heritage of Italy, and consequently also the regional one, is a unique and completely peculiar situation that has no equal in the rest of the continent. It distinguishes itself, among other things, by the presence of historical buildings, sometimes even hundreds years old, which must be protected and cannot just be subject to renovations and interventions that can damage their prestige and their historical, artistic and cultural value, only for the fact that they are included in the less performing energy classes;

CONSIDERING that, also as a result of the various changes that the text of the EPBD has undergone during its long inter-institutional process, from the first proposal of the European Commission in 2021 to the political agreement between the European Parliament and the Council and then to the final version, the numerous impact analyses of the Directive carried out by a many actors still do not allow definitive and certain data to rely on. There are still uncertainties on the real total number of buildings involved, on the actual costs of the renovation measures, and on estimations of potential positive effects in terms of economic growth and employment, in particular in the building sector;

CONSIDERING also that the energy efficiency of buildings should lead to a reduction in emissions and consumption, and therefore in the medium and long term also in savings in bills for owners, tenants and public administrations, but that at the moment it is not possible to quantify them with an acceptable estimation;

IS AWARE that the Directive does not specify how Member States will have to meet the new targets for reducing emissions from buildings, and above all does not clarify how energy efficiency measures will have to be paid for. Each State will therefore need to adopt a national plan that provides for the gradual reduction of the energy consumption of buildings, in order to implement the directive, at the same time providing forms of support for citizens that do not have the economic strength to carry out efficiency interventions on private buildings;

EXPRESSES, in view of the above, the belief that the process towards the ecological transition must be consciously guided, regulated and governed, in order to promote regulatory solutions for the benefit of the regional community;

RECOMMENDS to analyse and evaluate the application of the Directive in the various EU countries, also with a view to a possible shared strategy that, in spite of the uncertainty about the economic resources necessary to support the costs of requalification, identifies a realistic timetable for the implementation of the rule as well as for concrete funding channels;

CONSIDERS that this Directive, because it has just entered into force and due to the exceptional importance of its content, constitutes an ideal opportunity for the Legislative Assembly of Friuli Venezia Giulia to act as a stimulus to other political, economic, social and institutional actors in the area, also making full use of the regional speciality, to achieve shared policy solutions. These should be the outcome

of an extensive and documented debate with all stakeholders, and therefore conveyed also at national level as a common position of the entire 'FVG system';

COMMITTS therefore, together with the Regional Government and the other competent bodies within the Regional Administration of Friuli Venezia Giulia, in line with the principles underlying Regional Law No. 4 of 17th February 2023 ('FVGreen' law), to identify, develop and propose balanced solutions that, thanks to a common work between the various actors, encourage investments that combine environmental-, economical- and social progress aspects, and give coherent answers to the various interests involved. The goal is to balance the necessary and equally important aspects of energy saving, on one hand, and of safeguard and protection of the building heritage of Friuli Venezia Giulia on the other;

EXPRESSES in a firm way the guiding principle that, beyond any other consideration, citizenship must be placed at the centre of sustainable development, which must be shaped by the needs of territorial communities. The interactions between social, economic, environmental, cultural and institutional issues mean that the main actors in this process are precisely the citizens, with a view to intra-generational and intergenerational equity, and therefore the conditions must be created for their active and conscious participation in the life of democratic institutions, first of all local and regional authorities;

REPRESENTS the Friuli Venezia Giulia Region's interest in the initiatives of the European Commission Work Programme which are covered by policy objective No. 3, '**Water resilience**', and which aim to increase the Union's water resilience against extreme climate events;

REMARKS how water is a fundamental resource for Europe, both in terms of competitiveness and of strategic autonomy;

SHARES the vision of the European Commission for 2050, aimed at providing a framework that reduces the risk of competition between European socio-economic actors in the field of water, which identifies the following objectives: building a water-smart European economy, ensuring clean and affordable water and sanitary services for all, restoring and protecting the interrupted water cycle;

WELCOMES the initiative adopted in October 2023 by the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC), which in a Declaration tried to define a comprehensive Union strategy on water, calling on the other European institutions to adopt a European 'Blue Deal' as a policy similar to the Green Deal, and to consider water as a strategic resource to be integrated across all European policies for the 2028-2034 programming period and beyond;

EXPRESSES therefore its concern for the fact that, given the relevance of the issue, the initiative on water resilience has apparently been removed from the Commission's political agenda without any statements being made in this regard. As well as other institutional actors, including the EESC itself, the European Committee of the Regions and the European Parliament's Water Group, and numerous stakeholders have underlined, water must be placed at the heart of Europe's economic, social and environmental sustainability in the light of increasing pressures on the continent's water resources and increasingly frequent extreme events;

WISHES FOR, therefore, the issue of water resilience to be brought back on the main European institutions' agenda as soon as possible, and hopes that it will be one of the top priorities of the next Commission and within the renewed political-institutional EU cycle that will open immediately after the elections of 8th and 9th June 2024;

HOPES moreover, for the purposes of water resilience and the restoration of the original capacity of the reservoirs, that the gravel removing activity is supported also through a revision of the legislation. Regulations should be aimed at standardising the rules and therefore make it possible to ease the carrying out of these works;

CALLS also, in line with the above, to the Regional Government and the competent regional structures to

act in all the appropriate fora to promote the adaptation and harmonisation of the European water regulatory system, which still has significant inconsistencies. For example, the Water Directive (2000/60/EC) and the Nitrates Directive (91/676/EEC), although they share the basic objective of fighting pollution and protecting water quality, do not always lead to coherent actions and monitoring;

UNDERLINES that, also with reference to water quality, the publication of the evaluation on the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (Directive 2008/56/EC, Marine Strategy) is planned during 2024. The Directive required Member States to develop strategies to achieve 'good environmental status' for clean, healthy and productive seas by 2020. The evaluation will examine the results and shortcomings of the framework and the effectiveness of marine strategies, including monitoring, evaluation and reporting obligations, focusing on possible scope for simplification, streamlining and harmonisation of activities;

WELCOMES the fact that in the context of the Directive, that splits European marine waters into four macro-regions and a number of sub-regions, the Friuli Venezia Giulia Regional Environmental Protection Agency ARPA FVG is actively engaged in the implementation of the OPA (Operational Activity Plan) of the Adriatic Sea sub-region, of which Friuli Venezia Giulia is part. Among the many activities of detection of descriptors and parameters and monitoring of marine species and habitats carried out by ARPA FVG, it is of particular significance the acquisition of an ROV (remotely operated vehicle) equipped with an underwater camera, which could film and photograph the seabed, making it possible to detect impacts due to fishing activity; and the use of a special net called 'manta' (*Italian for 'manta ray'*) that allowed to collect small fragments of plastic, less than 5 mm, floating on the surface layer and that could enter the trophic chain if ingested by fish or birds. It was also possible to make the first analysis on the quantity and quality of beached waste that is dragged by currents and deposited on the shoreline;

STATES that the data collected through these highly scientific analyses are a key factor in being able to design, prepare and implement innovative measures that facilitate the activities of reduction and recycling of waste present at sea, in order to progress towards climate neutrality;

NOTES how pursuing water resilience also means developing systems that allow to simulate and track the pressure sources acting in an integrated way on this resource, between the different sectors and areas, even in the aquifers; and to understand where micro-plastics or pollutants such as nitrates, PFAS, forever chemicals, etc. come from. All this, in order to carry out actions that can be verified on the field, and therefore be modified or modulated according to their real effectiveness;

CONSIDERS therefore, in view of the above, to propose the study and evaluation of new initiatives for the recovery of the material present in our seas, through the implementation of specific European, national or regional economic incentives. The goal is to have seas in 'good ecological status', and achieving it will make it possible to protect human health from the effects of pollution by developing an efficient circular waste economy that promotes their recycling into reusable materials, and, at the same time, to create local jobs;

SUGGESTS that the global Copernicus system, strongly supported by the European Commission and which currently provides the most comprehensive and sophisticated real-time environmental monitoring services on the planet, should be further integrated with land-based detection- and information systems in order to achieve an even better responsiveness to the needs of individual local and regional ecosystems (marine environment, territory, emergency and natural disaster management);

RECALLS that among the primary objectives of the European Green Deal there is the need to promote the transition to a circular economy and to improve waste management. On this issue, the definition and the application field of the concept of 'by-product', as conceived according to Article 5 of Directive 2008/98/EC, is particularly important;

POINTS OUT that, in the discussion about the concept and definition of by-product, it is significant the debate on the possibility of applying this classification also to residues deriving from services,

maintenance, extraction, demolition and consumption activities, as well as to unsold agricultural or food products, as they are no longer intended for the market or for human consumption and used in other production cycles, including energy;

HAVING EXAMINED the recent dialogue between the national Ministry of the Environment and Energy Safety and the Directorate-General for the Environment of the European Commission on the management of mowing and pruning resulting from the maintenance of public and private green areas, from which it emerged that:

- the material resulting from mowing and pruning would seem to be subject to the obligations arising from Directive 2008/98/EC;

- green maintenance may not be considered a 'production process': therefore, its residues would not qualify as 'by-products' even if destined for the production of compost or biogas

LOOKS FORWARD, also in light of the case-law of the European Court of Justice which endorses a position towards a broader definition of 'production residue', to starting a reflection on the issue, with the aim of drawing up a possible revision of the EU rules on waste management, in order to combine development of circular economy and promotion of the use of renewable energy sources, with a view to encouraging sustainability and a wider application of the 'Do No Significant Harm' (DNSH) principle.

II. With regard to priority 2. 'A Europe fit for the digital age'

EXPRESSES its interest for the policy objective No. 5, '**Artificial intelligence to serve European innovation and competitiveness**', that should be shaped in a multilevel governance approach geared towards driving and managing change, progress and innovation, in order to exploit the digital transition as a driver for the transformation of economy and society, and as an opportunity for the development of businesses, especially SMEs. It especially underlines the importance of open source software systems which could avoid over-reliance on a small group of multinational companies, and could also prove significant as a source of entrepreneurial initiatives able to create employment opportunities;

WELCOMES the recent approval of the Artificial Intelligence Regulation ('AI Act'), a historic step and the first attempt in the world to regulate the management and use of AI systems. With this act, the EU is at the forefront on a global scale, taking a leading role in governing development processes;

APPRECIATES, in particular, the classification of AI systems into multiple categories through a horizontal *risk-based* approach: the higher the risk coefficient linked to the use of a system, the stricter the regulation will be;

NOTES that the European Commission launched, in January this year, a package of measures to support European start-ups and SMEs in developing reliable artificial intelligence. Among these, it considers especially interesting those initiatives, such as 'AI factories', specifically aimed at creating open ecosystems, formed around European supercomputers, to develop generative AI models that can also be easily accessed by start-ups and SMEs;

RECALLS that in March 2024, the Friuli Venezia Giulia Regional Legislative Assembly addressed the use of AI in decision-making and administration by organising and hosting a conference entitled 'Artificial Intelligence. Challenges to politics and public administration', which was attended by various experienced academics and stakeholders from the business, economic and health sectors, as well as an MEP who was appointed as rapporteur for the 'AI Act';

COMMITTS the Regional Government, given the strategic importance of this technological field in constant and fast evolution, to carefully follow all the next legislative developments, at European and national level. The top priority at the moment is to ensure a safe application of AI-based technologies,

but the principles of competitiveness and research postulated by the European Commission can already be translated into concrete actions to support innovation and the digitalisation of the productive fabric of Friuli Venezia Giulia;

SUPPORTS resolutely, therefore, the path already taken by the Regional Administration towards: the creation of a territorial ecosystem supportive of digital transformation, that enables companies' access to tools and consultancy services; the planning of development actions; the implementation of pilot initiatives to promote innovation and digitalisation; the empowerment of digital infrastructure, to make it safe and sustainable;

RECALLS the high quality of the projects of the scientific and technological parks, supported by the Administration, based in FVG. It is satisfying to note that in the field of research, development and innovation Friuli Venezia Giulia has been recognised, for three consecutive years, as a 'strong innovator' at European level. Among the many initiatives carried out by the FVG Region, the support for the European Digital Innovation Hubs EDIH (IP4FVG) project, coordinated by Area Science Park and already awarded the 'Seal of Excellence' label as part of the evaluation of the second call for proposals of the Digital Europe Programme. It also welcomes the fact that the new agreement for the construction of the #INNOVATION HUB FVG, a continuation of the ARGO system, which ended in 2023 and has already been identified as an operational tool aimed at generating productivity and employment gains, is being signed with the MUR (Ministry for University and Research) and the MIMIT (Ministry for Enterprises and Made in Italy);

CONSIDERS it necessary to continue to plan and support interventions and active policies to back companies in their approach to the digital transition and the development of digital skills, with particular reference to start-ups, micro-enterprises and SMEs, which due to a combination of organisational, dimensional, economic and skills factors are less inclined to change;

RECOMMENDS therefore the continuation of the already fruitful interaction, on the FVG territory, between the academic, research and business worlds, including through the development of testing centres on enabling technologies or applied to strategic sectors of the regional economy. The digitalisation opportunities must be made more accessible to less structured enterprises and service companies, possibly by expanding the field of technologies and processes eligible for aid, or by implementing dedicated funding lines (such as the one for SMEs in the tourism sector for the construction and redevelopment of accommodation facilities through innovative and digital solutions, careful of environmental, social and safety sustainability aspects: a regional call is expected to be launched by 2025);

WISHES FOR, in a forward-looking view, the activation of further high-quality innovative digital development paths looking at the interaction between logistics, the circular economy and advanced industry, also through partnerships between public authorities, scientific and research institutions, the business world and the integrated system of FVG ports. The growing importance of the Adriatic-Ionian corridor as a maritime gateway to the EU continental market, the development of the manufacturing economy in Central and Eastern Europe, the advantages arising from opportunities offered by rail connections and intermodal services make the Eastern Adriatic area very attractive, in the perspective of shortening production chains which are increasingly located close to the main logistics hubs;

HIGHLIGHTS that Friuli Venezia Giulia is an excellence in the field of digital processing of health data, in research and in the diagnostic and prognostic area, while recalling that important research institutes based in the region, such as the International Centre for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology (ICGEB), are very active in the field of health surveillance for emerging diseases;

UNDERLINES the need, with regard to the digitalisation of the public administration, to constantly encourage the training and upskilling of officials in all local authorities. It is important to adapt the organisational systems of local and regional institutions to the digital transition, in order to ensure its

effectiveness;

RECALLS, finally, the interesting initiative, the first of its kind in Italy, promoted by fifty-five schools of the region, led by the 'Stellini' classical high school based in Udine, that established a network, designed and, last May, presented some guidelines for the use of artificial intelligence in schools. It expresses appreciation in particular for the ability of students to involve school headmasters, teachers, technicians and experts from the academic world in this project.

III. With regard to priority 3. 'An economy that works for people'

CONSIDERS relevant policy objectives No. 6, '**Biotech and biomanufacturing**' and No. 8, '**Green and digital transition, open strategic autonomy**', both in their respective initiatives, including that on advanced materials for industrial leadership, and in their more articulated interconnection with the other issues identified by the Commission, and in particular those linked to the Green Deal and the priority 'A Europe fit for the digital age';

LOOKS FORWARD to the activation of sustainable development models, capable of promoting social cohesion and economic growth, while at the same time reducing poverty and inequality. This objective is closely linked to an economy that truly works for people, with people participation at its core; Friuli Venezia Giulia represents, for historical and cultural reasons, an excellence given the great attention paid to these issues, with particular reference to the policies undertaken in terms of the reintegration of disadvantaged persons into employment. It also recognises the important role played in this regard by the world of cooperation, which by its very nature is particularly inclined to fostering social-, involvement- and participatory processes;

RECALLS that micro-enterprises and SMEs are the backbone of the economy of Friuli Venezia Giulia, as well as of many other territories of the European Union. At EU level, Eurostat figures show that they generate almost 65% of total jobs and create more than 52% of added value;

CONSIDERS, therefore, the difficulties of small and medium-sized enterprises in finding skilled workers on the labour market as a priority to face, and to which it is necessary to find structural and long-term answers, especially given the context of instability in which companies act, as a result of geopolitical changes and ongoing demographic trends;

ACKNOWLEDGES in this regard the importance of measures aimed at facilitating access to the labour market, increasing employment levels and so reducing enterprises' needs, as well as at improving working conditions, in particular for young people, promoting the mobility of skilled workers, and coordinating social security systems;

CONSIDERS it necessary to continue to support families, the core of our society, through a combination of structural interventions on employment contracts, on corporate welfare and on the management of nurseries and kindergartens, and above all on gender equality culture, so that women can free themselves from the dichotomy between motherhood and professional career;

REMARKS it is necessary to reflect on the possibility to adopt policies aimed at relocating European enterprises: the pandemic-related stock disruption, the critical raw materials crisis and, more recently, the increase in transport costs due to international tensions had a very negative impact on EU companies and the EU economy. Thinking in terms of relocation of businesses and shortening value chains, aiming to produce within the Union the energy and raw materials that especially the technology sector cannot do without, will contribute to strengthen Europe's competitiveness and make it less strategically dependent on non-EU markets;

RECALLS that, beyond any other consideration, the regional, Italian and EU economy is largely based on

manufacturing, a key element of growth and development and the first field of application of innovations resulting from scientific and technological research. Industry accounts for the largest share of FVG export: actions must therefore be put in place, also thanks to the aforementioned collaboration with universities and research centres in the area, in order to stimulate production with high added value and thus act as a driving force for the entire regional economic system;

CONSIDERS important the adoption of a plan on advanced materials for industrial leadership and the implementation of strategic technologies needed in a net-zero economy. With regard to advanced materials, it points out that, in accordance with the principles of the circular economy, not only the design and development of these technologies are essential, but also the prediction of the end of their life-cycle and the consequent management of waste from a digital economy perspective;

HIGHLIGHTS the level of absolute excellence of the world of regional scientific and technological research: the wide range of use of advanced materials in many areas, from construction to mobility, from electronics to pharmaceuticals, from agri-food to energy, makes it possible to extend even further the collaboration between institutions, research centres and institutions located in Friuli Venezia Giulia. Just as an example, it should be noted that Area Science Park is investing significant resources in the establishment of a new Electronic Microscopy and Energy Materials Infrastructure (IMAME), a laboratory equipped with instrumentation of the latest generation. A unique example in Italy, IMAME aims at becoming a reference point at national level for the advanced characterisation of materials with a particular focus on those of interest to energy and semiconducting electronics;

WELCOMES the creation of a European Health Union, which through a 'One Health' approach intends to respond to the situation originating from the pandemic and the turbulence of the changing global scenario. The EHU, thanks to the strengthened health security framework (which includes HERA, the new Health Emergency Preparedness and Response Authority) and the proposals to build the European Health Data Space and reform pharmaceutical legislation, is a tool that can ensure that all Member States are prepared for, and able to, respond together to future health crises from a preventive perspective;

REMARKS biotech and biomanufacturing in the EU are key sectors for the industry competitiveness: these technologies can help the Union and its territories in modernising agriculture, forestry, energy, food- and feed industry. By doing so, they can contribute to increase the Union's competitiveness and resilience, while also enabling better healthcare for citizens and progress towards the green and digital transition;

CONSIDERS therefore favourably the set of actions proposed by the Commission to promote biotechnologies and biomanufacturing, in particular those aimed at simplifying legislation to facilitate faster access to the market, promoting of public and private investment, and strengthening skills;

COMMITTS itself to monitor the evolution and impact of the Commission's initiatives in this area, in order to avoid that a standardized and not well-regulated application of these technologies could generate negative effects on the economic and productive system of FVG.

IV. With regard to priority 4. 'A stronger Europe in the world'

AGREES with the premise of the 2023 Communication on EU Enlargement Policy, COM(2023) 690 *final* of 8th November 2023, that states that EU membership is a geostrategic investment in a strong, stable and united Europe based on common values, as well as a tool to promote democracy, the rule of law and respect for fundamental rights. Looking ahead, the admission of the 'enlargement countries' to the EU will be a driver of transformation that will strengthen Europe's collective security and socio-economic

prosperity;

LOOKS with favour at the perspectives of the EU enlargement to all the countries of the Western Balkans area, and hopes that the process can be carried out as soon as possible. The geographical position of our Region and the whole of its historical, economic and cultural relations with the Balkan area gives Friuli Venezia Giulia the chance to push for the role of leading region in some of the integration processes;

LOOKS FORWARD, in a cross-border perspective, to the further consolidation of collaboration with the Western Balkan countries, also in the aforementioned perspective of relocation of production chains. The integrated port system of FVG and its consolidated connections with continental Europe could become a reference point for the commercial integration between the EU and the Balkan area;

STRESSES at the same time, in the light of the current complex and fragmented geopolitical framework, the need to continue monitoring the evolution of the internal political situation of the countries of the Western Balkans, as well as those of the southern side of the Mediterranean Sea.

V. With regard to priority 5. 'Promoting our European way of life'

CONSIDERS that policy objective No. 13, '**A joint European degree**', through which the European Commission intends to gradually remove obstacles that limit or even prevent the mobility of students and workers between different countries, should be followed very closely;

LOOKS FORWARD, therefore, to the fact that the ideal path set out in the recent Communication COM(2024) 144 *final* of 27th March 2024, by which the European Commission released its project for a joint European degree, can be quickly put into practice to enable European students to participate in joint education programmes across the EU, and to obtain a degree that can prove their international experience, academic excellence, language skills and cultural adaptability;

AFFIRMS, more generally, the importance of defining a common set of criteria agreed at European level, in order to reduce bureaucracy and enable different countries' higher education institutions to cooperate across borders, to establish joint programmes and to promote innovation. These values have to be understood as distinguishing features of the modernisation of higher education;

UNDERLINES the important and multiple advantages that, in the medium and long term, would result from the establishment of the 'European degree': for students, to whom it would provide a pathway to excellence, language skills and employability; for national and regional higher education institutions and systems, as it would be a driving force towards transnational cooperation based on shared values; and for employers, who could identify more quickly the talents they need, facilitating contact with qualified professionals able to cope with the current requirements the labour market asks for;

COMMITTS itself, therefore, to monitor the evolution of the legislation and the subsequent steps of its application, and in particular the integration of the joint European degree into Italian legislation. Reciprocal recognition of qualifications can only take place following agreements between Member States and between universities;

RECOMMENDS to implement every initiative aimed at integrating the educational offer in schools in Friuli Venezia Giulia, in particular by strengthening teaching in English and in the minority languages of our region;

WELCOMES, at the same time, the important investments made by the Friuli Venezia Giulia Region in this area, in the framework designed by the European Education Area. These include, for example, the Protocol with the Regional School Office on the EU dimension, the active promotion of opportunities linked to international training mobility, both in the EU and in non-EU countries, through the GO+ LEARN

programmes, the EURES network of public employment services or the Italy-Slovenia EURADRIA cross-border partnership, of which the FVG Region is the leader; the participation of six schools based in our region in the EDURES pilot project of the Council of Europe and UNESCO; the national seminar 'Promoting civic participation through mobility projects' held in Trieste with the National Agency ERASMUS+ Indire on 13th and 14th May 2024;

RECALLS also the Memorandum of Understanding signed between the Regional Legislative Assembly and the Regional School Office, aimed at developing social and cultural projects, initiatives and events of mutual interest, in particular for the region's students of all age and levels;

BELIEVES it important to strengthen territorial cooperation in the field of culture and research, through innovative cross-border post-graduate courses, the promotion of neighbouring countries' languages learning, as well as in the field of cross-border public health, through initiatives, such as the 'Health project' for the integration of a number of health services;

EXPRESSES its appreciation, with a view to EU enlargement policy, for the role of the European Groups of Territorial Cooperation (EGTCs), fundamental instruments for the territorial development of neighbouring areas in order to foster cooperation, mutual knowledge and the consolidation of cross-border links, with particular regard to the health and research sectors;

WELCOMES with great interest two communications from the European Commission of 15th November 2023, and in particular COM(2023) 715 *final*, '**On skills and talent mobility**'; and COM(2023) 716 *final*, which contains a proposal for a Regulation establishing an **EU talent pool**, focusing on the identification of 42 professions and sectors characterised by staff shortages at both EU and national level. This talent pool will have the flexibility needed to adapt to labour market developments;

NOTES that many companies in the Friuli Venezia Giulia area, and in particular SMEs, recognise themselves in the framework outlined by the analyses and evaluations that led the Commission to present the two communications: structural shortages of labour and specific skills in many occupations, and a still excessive complexity in matching labour supply and demand at international level;

UNDERLINES that the mismatch between labour demand and supply, at regional level, cannot be covered by just the entry quotas of non-EU workers in FVG. It considers, moreover, important all the training initiatives that aim at matching the profiles of the personnel that can be employed to the needs of the production system of the territory;

HIGHLIGHTS that the combination of the current demographic trend, characterised by a progressive ageing in the average age of the population of Friuli Venezia Giulia, and a significant outgoing mobility (about 470.000 people under-34 have left the Northeast of Italy in the last ten years) is a matter of great concern in a medium-long term perspective;

CONSIDERS therefore that it is essential to implement structural and wide-ranging measures that, with a forward-looking vision, make Friuli Venezia Giulia a territory with an increasingly high quality of life, consolidating the offer of territorial services for individuals and families, capable of retaining and attracting young talents and workers, with various professional skills, indispensable for the competitive development of the regional economy and the social progress of the territory. On the other hand, it is also essential to endorse measures specifically aimed at older people and their changed behavioural style, through the promotion of active ageing and the development of intergenerational initiatives based on the principles of responsibility, equity and solidarity;

EXPRESSES APPRECIATION, in this regard, for the action carried out by the Regional Government, which invests considerable resources (for example, in the current year already 10 million Euros in incentives for companies that hire new staff) to protect and increase employment levels, and for the implementation of work-life balance measures specifically designed to support women's employment. It stresses in particular how, in the field of family policies, resources have been increased and new measures have also

been conceived, specifically the 'Dote Famiglia' (contribution to families to cover some educational and cultural expenses for minors), and how FVG is above the European reference threshold of 33% with reference to coverage of early childhood services (38%);

ENCOURAGES the Regional Government to carry on with other initiatives already undertaken, including the consolidation of public employment services, the strengthening of active labour market policies, and a major plan for training and reskilling workers and unemployed persons, which also benefits from important resources from the European Social Fund;

NOTES, in a perspective of lifelong learning that has long been promoted and stimulated by the European Union, that regional Career guidance services, aimed at all citizens, can play a role of great importance and quality, including by testing innovative models and projects of international relevance to be included in regional programming;

UNDERLINES the level of excellence achieved by universities, research centres and scientific and higher education institutions in our region, as well as their key role, since they have long been integrating the territorial and regional dimensions with the international one. In doing so, they contribute in making their students fully aware of their European citizenship, identity and belonging, based on common values and shared educational experiences in the context of the above mentioned European Education Area;

STRESSES the particular complexity, at this historical moment, resulting from the interconnections between migratory flows, their difficult management (also due to the intensification of international tensions), and the issue of labour shortages for enterprises in the regional economic and productive fabric;

REJECTS human trafficking and considers it to be all the more deplorable when it involves unaccompanied minors, and states that the indispensable fight against it cannot be separated from the transfer of adequate resources, not only financial ones, from the EU to the territories on which the phenomenon has the greatest impact. It is necessary to allow these people, who have human rights, needs and life aspirations, first reception and solidarity, to protect also the dignity of European citizens themselves, and to encourage a more effective overall management of migration flows by the authorities in charge and all the actors involved;

REAFFIRMS strongly, in the end, the need for the EU to manage the phenomenon in a systemic and organised way: it cannot be left to the States that constitute external borders of the Union or, worse, to the regions of arrival of the migratory routes. In addition to the enhancement of new international agreements at European level, a new approach to international cooperation is needed, as well as a more rational and consistent EU policy on redistribution, relocation, language training and employment of legal migrants, intersecting also with the employment needs of single territories and, in particular, of SMEs.

VI. With regard to priority 6. 'A new push for European democracy'

GIVEN THAT the European Commission considered it important to implement policies aimed at strengthening and relaunching a European democracy based on free and fair electoral processes, more resilient democratic systems, media freedom and countering disinformation, with the ultimate aim of raising awareness, empowering citizens and promoting their involvement in both the decision-making process and in building European democracy;

RECALLING that the Conference on the Future of Europe, a key instrument for implementing the above mentioned priority, has spread into a series of panels and debates during which citizens had the chance to discuss about the challenges to be addressed by the EU, as well as the initiatives and policies to be activated to shape its future, focusing in particular on the involvement of territories and younger

generations;

CALLS, also in the light of the findings of the Conference itself, for a necessary strengthening of the role of the European Committee of the Regions within the EU architecture. Being an institution that represents more than one million regional and local elected representatives across Europe, the Committee should be the first place to analyse and discuss proposals from the territories and take a key position in improving the quality of regulation and in building "future-proof" laws. Therefore, the CoR role should be broadened to go beyond its current consultative one, in order to make it more decisive in ensuring greater substantial democracy in EU activities, and actualizing the subsidiarity principle;

AFFIRMS that the concept of 'European identity' is multidimensional and dynamic, and must be addressed with reference to both its institutional meaning and the system of shared ethical-, moral-, historical- and cultural values it originates from. Those contents cannot be separated from a number of contributions, coming from humanistic and scientific disciplinary areas, aimed at updating and redefining the relationship between identity and European citizenship, making it possible to actualize the principle of 'unity in diversity';

WELCOMES in this regard the new Master's degree programme in 'European citizenship, institutions and policies' launched by the University of Udine, designed to train professionals capable of working at European, national and local level, in the public and private sectors, in all situations and activities arising from the implementation of EU programmes;

EXPRESSES appreciation for the many activities carried out by associations and bodies operating in the regional territory, aiming at encouraging the active participation of citizens. In particular, it highlights the involvement of AICCRE FVG in the 'UP2EU Project' aimed at developing a framework for dialogue between public authorities and civil society, with a view to promoting and supporting democracy and EU values. Moreover, with regard to an international dimension that goes beyond EU borders, it points out the participation of AICCRE FVG in the implementation, the first experience of its kind in Italy, of the ELoGE (European Label of Governance Excellence) programme;

HIGHLIGHTS, with regard to the involvement of the younger generations, the worthy initiative of the Regional Student Council of Friuli Venezia Giulia, aimed at creating a 'Consulta d'Europa'. This 'Student Council of Europe' is imagined as a body able to spread consciousness among young people about the issue of democracy and its exercise, promoting responsible citizenship through forms of active participation of the new generations in decision-making processes, so to raise awareness about the importance of representing their peers and having the opportunity to debate topics that directly involve them, in order to achieve concrete and shared solutions.

REQUIRES this Resolution to be sent to the Senate of the Italian Republic and to the Italian Chamber of Deputies, within the political dialogue with EU Institutions, in accordance with Article 9 of the National Law 234/2012;

REQUIRES this Resolution to be sent to the President of Friuli Venezia Giulia autonomous Region, in accordance with Article 24, para. 3 of the National Law 234/2012;

COMMITTS the Regional Government to inform the Regional Legislative Assembly, in accordance with Article 17 para. 2 of Regional Law No.17 of 18th June 2007, on the follow-up to the observations on the European Commission's initiatives and on any position taken by the Region at European and national level, especially in the Italian Conference of Regions and Autonomous Provinces, as well as on any further contribution made by the Region to the European decision-making process;

REQUIRES, furthermore, this Resolution to be sent to the Italian Conference of the Presidents of the Legislative Assemblies of the Regions and of the Autonomous Provinces; and, in order to spread information about the participation of the Friuli Venezia Giulia autonomous Region to the EU law-making process, requires this Resolution to also be forwarded to the European Committee of the Regions, to the Conference of the Presidents of the European Regional Legislative Assemblies - CALRE and to all the stakeholders within the territory of Friuli Venezia Giulia.

THE PRESIDENT
Mauro Bordin

THE SECRETARY COUNCILLOR
Simone Polesello

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL
Stefano Patriarca