



VIER MOTOREN FÜR EUROPA
QUATRE MOTORS PER A EUROPA
QUATTRO MOTORI PER L'EUROPA
QUATRE MOTEURS POUR L'EUROPE

The Four Motors for Europe

**Lombardy
Presidency
Program
2024-2025**

FOUR MOTORS FOR EUROPE 2024-2025

LOMBARDY PRESIDENCY PROGRAM

In continuity with the focus of Baden-Württemberg's presidency on the transformation and transition of economy, technology, and climate, during its presidency, Region of Lombardy wants to pay attention to the topic of **communications and connections, and to their evolution in relations with the new technologies**.

Infrastructures and physical communication routes are intertwined with virtual ones. Data and information travel alongside goods. The "terrestrial" economy is joined by the Space Economy. Human intelligence is joined by artificial intelligence.

Thus, starting with the issues related to communication routes and mobility, our program of work would like to propose both reflections on the optimization of physical infrastructure as well as moments of work on how we use data and information and how we prepare ourselves – also with regards to artificial intelligence – to seize the opportunities that these new technologies offer. The perspective of sustainability, understood from all points of view: environmental, economic, and social, will always have to be taken into consideration in all reflections and combined with the goals of growth, development and progress.

We will also focus on how this impacts the world of education and work, because the Four Motors regions must prepare for the professions of the future, many of which do not yet exist today. Therefore, we will have to imagine and anticipate new training paths for our young people.

These issues will also be addressed in light of EU regulatory developments, raising the question of what the role of the regions should be in European governance and how subnational governments can be given more authority and voice. This theme will also be addressed in a Presidency Position Paper.

Furthermore, considering that the Lombardy presidency of the Four Motors coincides to a large extent with the Italian presidency of the G7, particular attention will also be given to overlapping themes of both presidency programs, such as the reflection on artificial intelligence.

1. COMMUNICATION ROUTES, ADVANCED AIR MOBILITY, SPACE ECONOMY

We cannot overlook the impact on our economies of the development of communication routes and physical infrastructure. Both those that affect us directly and those that affect us indirectly. So, the reflection will touch on both the infrastructures that connect our regions and those that – though far away – are indispensable to our development. Thinking about the issue of waterways, by way of example, it is necessary to consider in this perspective not only those that insist on or lap the territories of the Four Motors, but also those that are fundamental for international supply chains and trade. Consider, in this sense, the impact that the Red Sea crisis is having on vast sectors of the European economy.

We will try to work together to answer questions such as:

- What policies do we want to propose to the EU in order to design a future where communication routes and tools are a stimulus to the European entrepreneurial fabric? From this point of view, some of the choices that the European Commission has made in recent years pose questions to our regions, precisely because they are developed regions, as they seem to lay the groundwork for a weakening of our entrepreneurial fabric.
- What changes will occur in the automotive sector (in terms of emissions, sustainability, autonomous driving...)?
- Urban Air Mobility, i.e., the use of vertical take-off and landing flying vehicles for city travel and transport, is an increasingly near future. How will these technologies impact public mobility, private mobility, and the transportation of goods and people?
- The Space Economy - the value chain that, starting from the research, development and implementation of space infrastructure through to the generation of innovative products and services (telecommunications, navigation and positioning, environmental monitoring, weather forecasting, space exploration, etc.) - represents one of the most promising development trajectories of the world economy in the coming decades. How can the Four Motors regions seize the opportunities in this sector?

2. BIG DATA AND ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

In context of the European Union, subnational governments face a dual scenario of opportunities and challenges in using big data and artificial intelligence to support the economic growth of their territories and keep them globally competitive.

The advent of big data offers European regional governments an unprecedented wealth of information. By collecting and analyzing data from a variety of sources, such as urban sensors, financial transactions, sociodemographic and health indicators, etc., local authorities can gain a detailed understanding of the economic, social, and environmental dynamics that characterize their territories. Data, however, becomes information when interpreted. And in this sense, artificial intelligence comes to the rescue, further amplifying the potential of big data, enabling the development of predictive models and advanced algorithms to optimize resource management, improve public services, and anticipate the needs of citizens and businesses.

Along with these opportunities also arise significant challenges. First, subnational governments must address the technical and organizational complexity associated with large-scale data collection, storage, and management. Second, it is essential to invest in secure and robust digital infrastructure, as well as to develop specialized skills in data analytics and artificial intelligence.

But there are challenges of another order as well: ethical and regulatory issues, privacy and the protection of personal data, interoperability, digital inclusion and the accessibility of technologies, the ability to train the technicians of the future and to accompany people through the turning points of the digital age.

We will ask questions such as:

- How can Big Data and artificial intelligence help subnational governments in strategic foresight to serve their health, social, economic, educational, environmental, etc. policies?
- With regards to data poisoning, how can we continue to ensure the trustworthiness of data in a world increasingly linked to A.I. and data interoperability, in order to shape, for example, climate change adaptation policies and cope in a swifter manner with extreme weather phenomena (such as droughts, heat waves, floods, coastal erosion, etc...)

- How do we use data to optimize infrastructure and improve mobility in territories?
- What can artificial intelligence do to make our economies and our industrial and manufacturing sector more competitive? How can we support our companies to increase the usage of artificial intelligence?
- How can Europe, as a whole, keep up with other major global competitors and avoid being dependent on strategic technologies, software and hardware, produced outside the continent?

3. EDUCATION AND PROFESSIONAL TRAINING

According to many studies, more than half of today's young people will be doing jobs in the future that do not currently exist yet. In addition, the ongoing transformation process requires adequate reskilling measures for many employees whose jobs will no longer exist in the future. The new technologies of ICT, of BIG DATA management, AI, and SPACE ECONOMY will require professionals of all ages who must be trained today. Europe, and the Four Motors, if they want to continue to maintain a competitive edge in tomorrow's economy, must begin today to prefigure appropriate training paths that give people the tools to find a place in the world of work.

- What are the emerging trends in the labor market related to new technologies, artificial intelligence, space economy, and all the professional fields that are appearing on the landscape of the economy of the future?
- What are the key skills required for the professions of the future (including the green jobs), and how can we ensure that our education and training programs effectively promote them?
- What partnerships and collaborations can be established with the private sector, academic institutions, and civil society organizations to develop cutting-edge and relevant training programs?
- What policies and incentives can be adopted to encourage individuals to choose educational paths and professions related to new technologies?
- Which upskilling and reskilling paths can be activated to foster the transition, more notably for the categories of workers that risk being expelled from the labor market, and to adapt the skill to an ever-changing context?
- How can we ensure that education and training policies are flexible and agile, able to adapt quickly to changes in the technological and employment landscape?
- What initiatives can be put in place to facilitate an effective guidance and properly guide them in their choice of study and career path? How can the education system integrate vulnerable and fragile people in individual training and in the labor market?

PRESIDENCY POSITION PAPER

How to give more voice and authority to subnational governments in European governance.

The role of subnational governments should be made more incisive in the ascendant phase of the formation of EU regulations and should be able to facilitate a more careful calibration of European directives and policies on the basis of the peculiarities, strengths and needs of European territories, which are often very heterogeneous in terms of economic, productive, social and geographical characteristics.

By examining European and national regulations, as well as policy documents (such as the Committee of the Regions' White Paper on Multilevel Governance), the Position paper aims to actualize the reflection on this topic - also in the light of the most cogent issues related to the future of automotive,

green building, air quality, supply chains, etc. - and to launch concrete proposals for an increasingly effective application of the principle of subsidiarity.

FOUR MOTORS AND EUROPEAN UNION

With the aim of fostering this strengthened role of subnational governments in the formation of EU regulations, during the presidency year particular attention will be given to:

- Building a common position on the new Cohesion Policy, the governance of which must remain regionally led;
- Initiating a discussion on the new Common Agricultural Policy, also in light of recent farmers' protests;
- Proposing collaboration on the CHIPS Act and possible shared actions within the European Semiconductor Regions Alliance;
- Supporting the chemical sector, which is crucial for the development of all other sectors, by aiming at creating partnerships with the European Chemical Regions Network – ECRN;
- Starting a discussion on the Four Motors' regulations on climate and climate change mitigation strategies, i.e., *Green Budgeting*, based on the relevant European framework.

Finally, with regards to the cultural sphere, the presidency will encourage a reflection with the other Four Motors regions on the topic of the evolution of libraries and of the library networks, starting with the Council of Europe Recommendation on Legislation and Policy on Libraries in Europe and with a view to including library activities in the general framework of the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development. Additionally, supporting their realization and enhancement also through the European Structural and Investment Funds.

ECONOMY WORKING GROUP

Sharing the European objective of strengthening the economic, social and territorial cohesion among the EU countries, the Four Motors must succeed in defending competitiveness, expertise and competences they have developed. Such skills must receive particular support by the strongest countries, those that contribute the most to the GDP, through an economic strategy that also benefits the youngest and finances the supply chains and ecosystems that boast an important and strategic trade balance for their territories, while taking into consideration Europe's own competitiveness vis-à-vis its major Asian competitors.

With the aim of bolstering the visibility, standing and the very attitude of the Four Motors, it will be necessary to move from a mere institutional consolidation to a genuine European strategy. The Economy Working Group will assist the efforts of the Presidency in drafting a Position Paper aimed at better defining the role of the regions in the European governance and identifying the most suitable instruments for protecting the economic interests of subnational governments.

It is indeed necessary to build joint sectoral strategies and the new European Commission will have to pay more attention to the regions and the most productive areas. By establishing synergies and possible collaborations with other European networks, the chemical (European Chemical Regions Network - ECRN), automotive (Automotive Regions Alliance - ARA) and semiconductor (European Semiconductor Regions Alliance - ESRA) sectors will be supported.

Simultaneously, the development of collaborations between the main international trade fairs of the four territories will be promoted, so that they act as a system and also cooperate, not just compete with each other.

It will be crucial to pursue full technological neutrality, increasing and exploiting precisely the capacity of our territories to innovate, research and be pioneers. The Economy Working Group will continue to support and foster start-ups, digital transition processes and technological innovation by discussing the possibility of the establishment of the “Four Motors Start Cup” award and by making the most out of all the opportunities that the application of artificial intelligence in the most diverse fields will bring forth.

JOINT MISSION

A joint mission will be identified within the 2024 mission program already defined by the RL Presidency.