



CEPLI Resolution

Local Intermediate Authorities:

“Safety net for citizens in the fight against the Covid-19 crisis“

Political Resolution of the 11th CEPLI Political Conference

November 20th, 2020

CEPLI Resolution on Covid-19

With over 11 million infected people and more than 276,000 deceased (source: European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC)), the coronavirus pandemic hit Europe hard.

We are now facing the second wave of infections and many European countries are taking tough measures to curb the further spread of the virus.

This sanitary crisis highlighted the essential role of Local Intermediate Authorities in delivering public services as close to citizens as possible. They are at the forefront of the fight against Covid-19 and manage all necessary sanitary measures, e.g. concerning quarantine measures and tracing the infected people.

CEPLI, in its capacity as the largest European confederation of local intermediate authorities (1.167 counties, provinces, departments, and all similar local authorities) in the European Union, and in light of their great European experience, the members of CEPLI :

- realise that the European institutions were not sufficiently prepared for the pandemic and its consequences at the beginning of the crisis.
- also regret the uncoordinated border closings by the EU member states with regard to the European Fundamental Freedoms.

- welcome the extensive measures implemented in the field of state aid as well as in the sector of public procurement, which has been established by the EU Commission in the shortest possible time.
- are convinced that the successful fight against a global pandemic can only be achieved through a coordinated, joint European approach and active solidarity. This includes the cross-border accommodation of intensive care patients, the exchange of necessary sanitary material, experiences and knowledge.
- welcome the agreement reached between the Parliament, the Commission and the Council to adopt the Next Generation EU package and the 2021-2027 MFF, in order to soften the negative impact of the crisis on European economy.
- note that the Covid-19 pandemic has triggered a dramatic change of modern workplace in terms of digitalisation and home office solutions; this implies a better reconciliation of family and professional life and shows the great importance of comprehensive broadband network infrastructures particularly in rural areas.
- consider that Local Intermediate Authorities are meeting the major challenges. By virtue of their proximity to the citizen, they implement concrete measures on the ground and collaborate with the various levels of administration.
- are convinced that with the current second wave of the Covid-19 pandemic, local and cross-border approaches to the management of the crisis are best able to provide solutions that correspond to the actual needs of the citizens
- remember that a Europe without local, intermediate and regional governments is a Europe without its citizens and territories, an empty project without a future.

Calls on the EU member states and European Institutions

1. to coordinate the actions across the EU and set up adequate financial support and hire necessary medical personnel for local intermediate and regional authorities to efficiently respond to the Covid-19 crisis,
2. to give Local Intermediate Authorities direct access to the new funding opportunities under the Next Generation-EU in order to contain the enormous socio-economic effects of the Coronavirus crisis
3. to allocate at least 10% of the 2021-2027 Cohesion funds for municipalities and Local Intermediate Authorities as they must lead the governance of the green, digital and social transition that Europe needs for its recovery
4. to give all its intervention power to the ESF + by supporting the local authorities which are implementing the inclusion competence. Local Intermediate Authorities must be fully involved in its implementation, as their proximity to the people and to the territories allows them to identify the actual needs at the local level. The allocated financial resources must be proportional to the stakes at play.

5. to reduce the bureaucratic burden of all European Funds related to the Coronavirus crisis management
6. to foster European solidarity projects at all local level and to start a dialogue with Local Intermediate Authorities about best practices implemented to tackle the Covid-19 crisis
7. to reinforce the political and institutional role of the European Committee of the Regions as the EU-Treaty-based political assembly of local, intermediate and regional authorities in order to bring the EU closer to its people
8. to assign a substantial role to Local Intermediate Authorities in the Conference for the Future of Europe and to include them in the future negotiations on the EU Health Union.