



Four Motors for Europe Strategy for an Enhanced Governance

Chapter 1 30 years of cooperation

In 1988, in a Europe under construction, the regions of Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes, Baden-Württemberg, Catalonia and Lombardy united around their strengths in economy and research and a common vision of the role of the regions in Europe. The "Four Motors for Europe" were born.

At the time, when only a few interregional networks existed, it had become necessary to strengthen the position of regions in Europe, to contribute to their internationalisation and to promote their role within the European Institutions. Today these objectives have been partly achieved. With more than a thousand young apprentices completing an internship each year in a partner region, with more than one hundred interuniversity agreements actively and financially supported by the regions, with strong cooperation among the actors in the area of economy, mobility, health, agriculture, environment, research, industry, education, institutional and economic joint missions in EU and non-EU countries, and, last but not least, with the four Brussels representations developing joint position papers and events every year, the cooperation has reached a preeminent level. In order to prepare the network for the future it is now necessary to redefine the self-concept and goals of this cooperation and to focus on the current challenges.

Economic competition has become global and more intense. This leads to significant societal changes and often to a loss of orientation and guidance for citizens. This is why, in an ever more globalized world and in a Europe standing at a crossroads, the Four Motors for Europe reaffirm their willingness to collaborate closely and wish to make this cooperation a model of economic development which is attached to the well-being of their citizens. Europe was founded on common values and a shared destiny to maintain peace and its position in the world. Today it must take action to restore and revitalise its values while tackling major challenges in the interest of its citizens.

The Four Motors for Europe will focus on building one of Europe's leading economic and industrial partnerships, in the conviction that together these four major European regions will be able to contribute to the development of competitive European economic sectors of the future.

30 years after its inception, the Four Motors for Europe network is firmly determined to move to a new level and to aspire to new ambitions. Together the Four Motors for Europe represent 36 million inhabitants and 9% of the European GDP (1,364 billion Euros). This translates into considerable political weight which legitimizes ambitious goals.

All this considered, this document pursues the purposes of

- renewing the commitment of the four regions within the network;
- reaffirming their willingness to implement common actions in different fields;
- agreeing on enhanced governance principles.

Chapter 2 Defending common interests and learning from each other

The ambition to strengthen the visibility, competitiveness, internationalization and prosperity of the four regions lie at the heart of the cooperation.

The Four Motors for Europe understand themselves as a unique institutional cooperation network acting within a broader ecosystem. They are frontrunners among the European regions, determined to remain at the helm. Global trends like climate change, new disruptive technologies, demographic change, migration flows, as well as economic recovery beneficial for all, are key challenges and determine the momentum of change in our age. At the same time they represent an opportunity to improve the legitimacy of our democratic institutions and deepen European integration. In this sense, the Four Motors for Europe will serve the interests of their citizens and thus contribute to the future of the European Union debate through enhanced means of citizens' participation and trust-building initiatives as well.

With these challenges ahead, it appears clear that the Four Motors for Europe need to renew and foster their modes of cooperation. This document sets out the way the partners commit to cooperation and work on joint solutions.

As far as the defending of common interests of the regions and their citizens is concerned, the Four Motors for Europe will define and voice joint positions *vis a vis* the European institutions as a group of strong European regions, by regularly addressing position papers on key European policy initiatives. They will reflect key questions at any European or international event which the Four Motors for Europe consider appropriate, as well as in the framework of any other multilateral initiative where objectives coincide. The European Week of Regions and Cities, the Vanguard Initiative, the EU Strategy for the Alpine Region (EUSALP), the Association of European Regions for Products of Origin (AREPO) or the Under2 Coalition, as well as the European Committee of the Regions are some examples of initiatives and networks that have proven very beneficial for the association. The Four Motors for Europe are also open for cooperation with other regions in Europe and beyond. Since their founding days, the Four Motors for Europe have cooperated in the realm of economy, innovation, research, environment, education, culture and sports and still regard these fields as central defining areas of the network. They will thus support and facilitate collaborative projects among regional stakeholders such as clusters, economic agencies, research centres, universities, schools and associations, and initiate new areas of cooperation in line with the fast global changes. Notably, the four regions consider that it is necessary to largely, but not exclusively, concentrate actions on the following key sectors:

- Economic Development;
- Research and Innovation;
- Training and Higher Education;
- Climate and Environment;
- Transport and Mobility;
- Health;
- Agriculture;
- Civil Society and the Arts.

Chapter 3 Key of success - enhanced governance

The Four Motors for Europe express their joint ambition to lift their cooperation to a new strategic level. The partners acknowledge the achievements of the network in the past 30 years while equally stressing the need for an enhanced governance of the network.

To this aim the Four Motors for Europe hereby agree on key governance principles to facilitate long-term coherence when approaching the afore-mentioned challenges. These principles are meant to be complementary to the existing structure of the network and facilitate of the functioning of the working groups.

Furthermore, the Four Motors for Europe strongly reiterate their commitment to maintain their political influence through political declarations and positions of the presidents alongside political meetings of the presidents or line ministers.

Each Presidency will take into account the above mentioned principles considering the on-going thematic cooperation and planned activities deriving from pilot projects while at the same time taking up, if necessary, additional priorities that enable the Four Motors for Europe to maintain the necessary flexibility.

To ensure efficiency and continuity, each Presidency shall adequately consider the work of the previous presidencies in its presidential work programme. At the end of its term each Presidency will present a report.

The Four Motors for Europe reaffirm the overall coordination of the network through the Coordinators Committee while supporting the bottom-up framing of joint initiatives and the implementation of common projects. In order to support the Coordinators in the European affiliation of this governance, the regular exchange of the Representations of the Four Motors for Europe in Brussels has proven to be effective to this end.

The thematic priorities are developed and implemented by working groups or similar structures as deemed necessary, each chaired by one region. The Four Motors for Europe commit to provide these working groups and committees with the required political guidance and sufficient resources and staff to enable them to pursue the implementation of joint initiatives. With the aim of enhancing governance, collective learning and synergies within the network the Four Motors for Europe will take the following measures:

1. The network will meet in “Working Group Days” at least once during each Presidency. The Working Group Days are intended to identify synergies and enable more efficient work on crosscutting issues. This approach will be accompanied by annual meetings of the Coordinators and the chairs of the working groups.
2. The Four Motors for Europe will work towards facilitating the exchange of experience and cooperation by implementing a job shadowing programme within the regional administrations. This programme will allow regional officers to reflect and exchange their knowledge with their counterparts in another region or to jointly develop a solution for a common challenge.
3. In order to better voice common interests the collaboration among the Brussels offices will be intensified. This group will meet regularly to identify possible relevant policy initiatives and to offer support to the Coordinators. The group of Brussels offices will nominate a chair who will oversee and steer the work of the group.
4. The Four Motors for Europe intend to conduct a systematic review of EU funding programmes. The goal is to develop joint projects in key thematic priorities of the European Union.
5. With regards to European Structural Funds the Four Motors for Europe will explore the possibilities of supporting and facilitating the matching of synergic projects under the Operational Programmes and respective provisions for interregional cooperation in these Programmes. as well as under nationally or regionally financed programmes, in order to allow for possible joint projects.
6. The Four Motors for Europe emphasize the importance of communication and visibility of the network, in particular through digital means. In this sense Baden-Württemberg will take care of the hosting and maintenance of the website until the end of 2021. The content management will be ensured by each Presidency.
7. In order to further inform and involve the society of the four regions, every presidency will implement at least one further measure of communication targeted at its citizens during its term.




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