

## Timiș Declaration on Democratic Resilience

*We, the representatives of the regions of Europe; the members of the Assembly of European Regions (AER), and its partner organisations gathered in Timiș, declare our collective commitment to strengthen Europe's democratic resilience in the face of multiplying threats.*

In an era marked by rapid technological transformation, it is clear that our democracies face evolving and interconnected challenges. Artificial intelligence (AI), information manipulation and interference, and disinformation are reshaping public discourse; eroding institutional trust and societal cohesion across Europe, and in our wider neighbourhood. This demands a collective response.

*To address these new challenges, regions must stand together, and take strong, forward-looking action to restore the trust of our citizens in democracy.*

- **We reaffirm** our unwavering commitment to democracy, human rights, and rule of law as the essential foundations of peaceful, prosperous, inclusive and resilient societies.
- **We recognise** that artificial intelligence is a powerful driver of innovation, but also a potential means of exploiting systemic vulnerabilities. Generative media, automated manipulation and digitally amplified disinformation undermine the integrity of democratic debate; eroding citizens' confidence in democratic institutions and processes.
- **We understand** that citizens' trust in democracy is linked to their regional realities; to the quality of services and economic opportunities, social cohesion and civic representation in urban and rural communities.
- **We underline**, therefore, that democratic resilience cannot be sustained solely through national or supranational means. Democracies rooted in subsidiarity and proximity to citizens are better equipped to build trust. Regions, as the level of government closest to citizens, are central to safeguarding democratic culture; promoting information integrity, ensuring equality of representation, and strengthening civic engagement.
- **We reaffirm** the political priorities of Europe's regions, notably our unwavering commitment to promoting democratic values, inclusion, participatory governance and active citizenship as cornerstones of resilient societies.

*We further highlight democratic resilience as a key focus area for the 2025-2030 period, emphasising our collective responsibility to:*

- Protect and reinforce democracy, human rights and the rule of law;
- Foster resilient local, regional, national and European democracy;
- Strengthen subsidiarity and multilevel governance;
- Safeguard media freedom, counter disinformation and emerging forms of digital manipulation;
- Promote equal representation of all citizens to improve policy-making;

*Regions are not merely administrative structures; they are democratic actors, laboratories of innovation, and guardians of societal cohesion.*

In this spirit, we:

- **Affirm the fundamental role of regions as pillars of democratic stability**, trust, and participation: recalling that subsidiarity and multilevel governance are fundamental to Europe's democratic resilience;
- **Commit to strengthening regional capacities** to protect citizens from disinformation, AI-related risks, and polarisation;
- **Call for ongoing involvement of local and regional authorities** in the development and delivery of key democratic resilience initiatives, with specific regard to the New Democratic Pact for Europe, and the European Democracy Shield;
- **Call for reinforced cross-border, interregional, and intercultural dialogue**, as vital safeguards of democratic cohesion;
- **Encourage structured cooperation and collaboration between European regions**, facilitated through interregional networks like the Assembly of European Regions (AER) and European institutions;
- **Support initiatives that empower citizens to learn about and practice democracy** through formal and non-formal education initiatives.
- **Encourage ethical, transparent, and human-centric use of emerging technologies**; harnessing new technologies to improve accessibility, trust and engagement of citizens, where appropriate;
- **Commit to ongoing, structured exchange of knowledge**, best practices, and policy innovation among regions, with particular regard to promoting replicable policies that foster inclusion, and renew trust in local and regional democracy.



TIMIȘ COUNTY  
COUNCIL

*We emphasise that empowered and cooperative regions reinforce Europe's democratic fabric, enhance institutional adaptability, and contribute to sustainable, resilient and inclusive societies.*

**Adopted on Tuesday, 2 June 2026 in Timiș, a county embodying civic courage, democratic renewal and openness. Signed on behalf of the Assembly of European Regions (AER) and Timiș County Council:**

**Lukas Mandl MEP**  
**AER President**

**Alfred-Robert Simonis**  
**Timiș County President**