

## Independence, employment and big events: these are Fontana's commitments to Lombardy Council

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The programme covers independence, the simplification of regional bureaucracy, close collaboration with those who run the territory, employment, welfare and big events, starting with the Olympics.

As usual, **Attilio Fontana** has presented, **to the Regional Council, the programme** for his next five years as leader of **Lombardy Region**.

**He said**, “I’m going to bring the practicality of the mayor to the Region. The mayor is the first level in the relationship between the people and the institutions, the public administrator the people first turn to. As Governor, I want to start a path that will bring the Region and the people closer, that will make the relationship with the communities in Lombardy simpler and more direct, that will make trusting this organisation natural.”

### INDEPENDENCE

Fontana spoke about what many see as the first commitment of the new regional council: independence. This theme is linked to the final deeds of Maroni’s administration, and to the **referendum**, and, in fact, is a challenge that, in many respects, is indirectly supported by the Regional Council.

“We have to work to achieve virtuous independence, in which the value of our Region to be able to govern our resources freely is highlighted,” **Fontana claimed**. Independence, supported by value, is a

rewarding mechanism for the regions that are able to govern well: making regions compete means starting a process of evaluating performance, which genuinely takes into account the abilities of the regional councils to make the most of their characteristics. With a common sense revolution, we can overcome the structural gap that defines the differences between regions in the north and those in the south, for example.”

## **THE STRUCTURE OF THE STATE NEEDS REVIEWING**

“The unfinished reform of the structure of the State has caused severe damage to the institutional bodies, which have now collapsed,” Fontana added. “Resources have been taken away from the provinces and their imminent suppression was planned. However, the provinces are still there, they have important roles and they must once again play their part as the meeting-point between regional planning and the council. Finally, in the last few years, the councils, which are the first source of support for the people, suffered a process of reducing freedom: consistent cuts reduced the action of those who more frequently and directly deal with the people. This must change.”

## **THE HEALTH SYSTEM: A REFORM TO MAKE**

“Among the objectives that need to be highlighted in the action of the Regional Council,” Fontana explained, “there is the evolution of the regional health and socio-medical system, whose structure (which was recently modified by Regional Law No. 23/2015) allows for a period of realisation and consolidation, aimed at maintaining the excellence of the system, which is the important strategic point for the new legislation.”

## **EMPLOYMENT AND COMPANIES**

“The Region is the driving force of this country, and the policies for economic growth are strictly linked also to the development of employment policies, for businesses and for innovation. This,” Lombardy Regional President said emphatically, “will be another strategic area for the legislation. Growth will be sustainable and will be characterised by the support of public investment, because infrastructure is a key point for development, particularly if it respects the territory and the environment.”

## **BIG EVENTS AND THE OLYMPICS**

This program includes many of the things announced during the election campaign, with a commitment also to nominating Milan for the Winter Olympics. “Following the success of Expo 2015,” the President said, “I consider optimising big sports events, that boost the local economy and promote the territory, to be a strategic focus for the legislation.”

di Translated by Carraro & Tremolada (Reviewed by Prof. Rolf Cook)