

EXPERIENCE EUROPE WITH CEMR
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1951

50 Mayors create
the Council of
European
Municipalities.



Born from the twofold conviction that local democracy is the basis of all States' democratic public life, and that local and regional governments have an essential role to play in the realisation of the European Union, CEMR organises its activities around five main themes:

- shaping the future of Europe,
- promoting local and regional democracy,
- influencing the laws and policies of the European Union,
- exchanging experiences,
- acting in the world.

shaping the future

Today

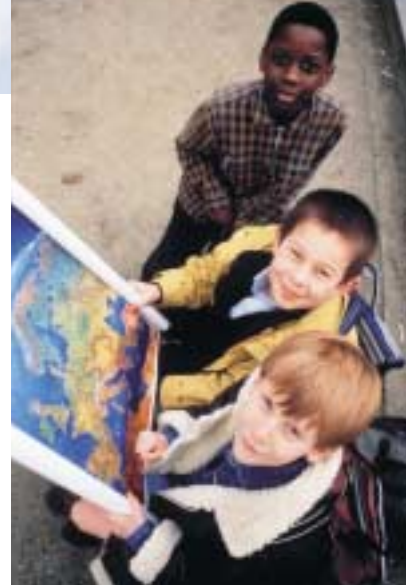
50 years later, the Council of European Municipalities and Regions unites 100 000 local and regional authorities through 44 member national associations in 31 European countries.

The remarkable network of twinnings, initiated by CEMR, remains one of our principal fields of activity: over 26 000 European twinnings are proof of the vitality of a movement that is unique in the world, and which inspires the grass-roots mobilisation of citizens who, for us, must always be the central actors in European construction.

Since its creation, CEMR has always promoted a strong, united Europe that is based on local and regional self-government, in which decisions are taken as closely as possible to the citizen.

As Europe develops its new Constitution, and prepares for its biggest ever enlargement, the role of local and regional government has never been more important.


CEMR strives therefore to ensure that the local and regional role is taken fully into account by the Convention on the Future of Europe and the next Inter-Governmental Conference.



of Europe

At the same time, we work to play our full part in the forthcoming enlargement, and to support local and regional government in the new member states of the European Union.

The new Europe must be, above all, a Citizens' Europe - this explains the priority accorded by CEMR to twinnings and partnerships, which enable real exchanges to take place between citizens across our continent.



As long ago as 1953, in Versailles, CEMR proclaimed the European Charter of Municipal Liberties, which preceded the European Charter of local self-government of the Council of Europe, adopted in 1985 and since then signed and ratified by 34 member States. CEMR furthermore supports the draft Charter of regional self-government.

We believe that our struggle in favour of local and regional self-government is inseparable from our European commitment.

promoting democracy



While the movement in favour of decentralization, and particularly of regionalisation, continues to develop in Europe, CEMR remains vigilant to ensure that these new stages are carried out in a manner that respects the equal dignity of the different spheres of government.

In the same way, the CEMR believes that the partnership between these respective spheres is essential so that governance in Europe functions in an effective way, in the service of our citizens.



The implementation of a substantial proportion of European Union legislation directly involves local and regional governments. It is therefore essential that our point of view is taken into consideration at the point

when Union legislation is being drafted. The Committees and working groups established by CEMR at European level aim, in particular, to study these proposals and prepare common positions.

influencing european union law and policy

CEMR insists that appropriate consultation mechanisms should be established. This is the whole purpose of our proposals in relation to the implementation of the Commission's White Paper on European Governance.

We stress particularly the need to evaluate at the outset the impact, in particular the financial impact, of any Union decision on local and regional governments.



Local and regional governments across Europe are today confronted by the same situations and difficulties. They represent a unique well-spring of

experiences in their different fields of competences: education, employment, environment, security, equal opportunities, urban renewal,

development... CEMR's role is to facilitate at European level the exchange of experiences, the sharing of ideas, best practices and know-how among its members.

exchanging experience

The working groups, seminars and conferences organised at European level meet these aims, and allow local and regional elected officials, and European experts and decision-makers, to formulate common points of view.



This work is even more strategically important in view of the enlargement of the Union.

Our vision of solidarity takes place within a larger geographical context than the European continent alone.

The World Summit on Sustainable Development (Johannesburg) and the Habitat II Conference highlighted the role that local and regional authorities can play on the international scene.

acting in the world

CEMR is committed to close collaboration with the neighbouring countries of the future enlarged Europe, in particular in the Mediterranean sphere, and to the East and South-East of the continent.

Through a network of its associations, CEMR takes part in decentralised co-operation in favour of development.



Additionally, CEMR is an essential actor in the world dialogue of local and regional authorities which will lead concretely, at the 2004 Paris Congress, to the creation of the “United Cities and Local Governments” organisation, resulting from the unification of IULA and the United Towns Organisation.

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