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Conseil des Communes  
et Régions d'Europe  
Council of European  
Municipalities and Regions

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2010

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# COUNCIL OF EUROPEAN MUNICIPALITIES AND REGIONS

## EUROPEAN SECTION OF UNITED CITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

2010 will be a year of change, within Europe and also for CEMR itself.

As regards the European Union, the Treaty of Lisbon finally enters into force (as of 1<sup>st</sup> of December), and the new Commission and Parliament will start their work in earnest.

Moreover, the whole of Europe will be affected by the developments (positive or negative) in our European and national economies.

We can also be sure that in many parts of Europe, public sector budgets, and notably those of local and regional government, will be under a lot of pressure as national governments seek to reduce budget deficits.

This will pose tough new challenges for all of CEMR's members in the coming years.

CEMR will have a new Secretary General who will commence his mandate in early 2010. Moreover, at the end of 2010, new elections will be held for all of the political mandates within CEMR (Presidency, chairs of committees, political Rapporteurs...). In addition the Policy Committee will be renewed, and for the first time the new gender balance rules (set out in the Rules of Procedure) will come into effect.

This draft programme is set out under 4 broad objectives:

- To strengthen the role and contribution of local and regional governments in European governance, active citizenship and the development of democracy;
- To contribute to and influence the development and implementation of European legislation and policy, and to promote good practice and mutual learning;
- To strengthen the contribution of Europe's local and regional governments in the international arena, for democracy, development, peace and understanding;
- To strengthen CEMR as an effective organisation on behalf of its member associations, representing the interests of Europe's local and regional governments.

Under each of these, a series of Aims is set out, followed by the relevant activities to be conducted during the year.

## CEMR'S 2010 WORK PROGRAMME

A. Objective: to strengthen the role and contribution of local and regional governments in European governance, active citizenship and the development of democracy

*Aim A1: To exchange information and draw conclusions on developments in regional and local government and democracy across Europe*

- Organise conference on trust in government, in cooperation with the VNG
- Continue to monitor the impact on local and regional government and their national associations of the financial and economic crisis (including proposals for structural change), and taking any agreed initiatives
- Exchange information on measures to enhance efficiency and reduce negative impact of reductions in finances of local and regional governments
- Conduct survey on the legal and financial status of local and regional representatives and officials/civil servants across Europe, as well as on election and appointment procedures

*Aim A2: To assess and publicise the results of the Treaty of Lisbon (once in force) for local and regional authorities and their citizens*

- Provide member associations with communication material explaining the important points of the Treaty, notably for local and regional authorities.
- Keep the implementation process under review, ensuring that those parts of the Treaty and its protocols which have a direct impact on local and regional authorities and their citizens are given effect in ways that enhance Europe's multilevel governance

*Aim A3: To help local and regional governments to take effective action for gender equality*

- Continue to promote the European Charter for Equality of women and men in local life, particularly in countries where the charter has not yet gained a large number of signatures
- To organise exchanges of experience on actions to implement specific articles of the Charter
- Take forward work on indicators and support for action plans for the Charter's implementation, in particular via seminar in Sweden with SALAR.
- To bring the voice of women elected representatives to the new European Commission and the European Parliament (possibly via hearings) to strengthen European policy for equality.
- Cooperate with the European Gender Institute

*Aim A4: To promote high quality town twinning and other transnational citizenship initiatives as a means of enhancing understanding and a stronger European citizenship*

- Organise three regional seminars (Estonia in February, Malta in June, Germany in October) in order to effectively prepare the next major European twinning congress, planned for 2011, aimed at the renewal and modernisation of twinning and partnership actions of European local authorities and other actors, as well as the future of the European active citizenship programme post-2013.
- Promote ideas set out in CEMR's position paper on modernising and strengthening twinning as an instrument to enhance European citizenship, in particular towards the European Commission and the European Parliament
- Close ongoing cooperation with European Commission, DG Education and Culture and Executive Agency, giving feedback and participating in structured dialogue in relation to the Europe for Citizens programme
- Open dialogue with the members of the European Parliament on the future of the active European citizenship programme (in particular local authority twinning and partnerships) and with a view to ensuring adequate financing for the future.
- To work with our national associations in order to make the Twinning website an effective tool for partner search and dissemination of information/good practice.

*Aim A5: To develop CEMR's work in relation to south-east Europe, helping to strengthen the European capacity of the national associations of the region*

- Cooperate effectively with NALAS, including participation in events and advice on relevant local government/democracy themes.

- Work with the national associations of the western Balkan countries, eg. on European integration issues and effective participation in the EU twinning programme.

*Aim A6: To promote local democracy in Eastern Europe*

- To organise a meeting in Ukraine, with the Association of Ukrainian Cities, on the state of local and regional democracy together with the meeting of the Secretaries General and Directors
- To develop dialogue for local democracy with partners in Belarus

*Aim A7: To promote democracy and good governance in partnership with (a) the Council of Europe and in particular the Congress, and (b) the Committee of the Regions*

- Work on issues of common interest with the Congress, and as appropriate the CDLR, including follow-up to the Utrecht conference of Local Government Ministers, and promote and publicise Local Democracy Week.
- Implement cooperation agreement with the Committee of the Regions, identifying areas of common interest for specific joint actions.

*Aim A8: To enhance cooperation at European level between local and regional government and civil society organisations*

- Organise meeting with representatives of European civil society organisations with a view to enhancing cooperation and increasing the participation of citizens in European debates and issues, including in preparation for our Twinning Congress
- To continue our dialogue with Concord in order to strengthen the cooperation of NGOs and Local authorities for international development (see section C below) and in relation to development education in Europe

*Aim A9: To begin preparations to mark the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2011 of CEMR, its work and its principles*

- Agree the general concept for the event, and begin planning the thematic content

**B. Objective: to contribute to and influence the development and implementation of European legislation and policy, and to promote good practice and mutual learning**

*Aim B1: To promote an ambitious European cohesion and rural / urban development policy, with adequate resources and involving all the EU's regions, together with their local governments*

- Contribute to the debate on the future of cohesion policy and rural development post 2013, as well as to the debate on the future of the EU budget framework, its spending priorities; for this purpose, adopting a policy paper on the future of the EU cohesion policy
- Participate in the inter-governmental activities on the implementation of the Territorial Agenda of the EU and of the Leipzig Charter on sustainable European cities, in particular in the preparation of a European Reference Framework on Sustainable Urban Development
- Exchange experience about the implementation of the current Structural Funds operational programmes
- Monitoring of the implementation of the Baltic Sea Strategy as a new macro regional approach and similar strategies in other macro regions like the Danube.
- Cooperate closely with the Urban Intergroup of the European Parliament

*Aim B2: To contribute to and influence legislation, policy and good practice on sustainable development and climate change*

- Promote the local and regional perspective in the decision making process on legislation, such as waste (modification of the WEEE directive and the awaited proposal on biowaste), noise (review of the noise directive), soil (directive on soil protection).
- Contribute to the implementation of the White Paper on adaptation to climate change and further activities in the area of climate change, following the UN Copenhagen conference in December 2009.
- Contribute to debate on the future of the EU Sustainable Development Strategy.

- Co-organise and participate in the next Sustainable Cities and Towns Conference in Dunkerque (19 – 21 May) on “Delivering sustainable cities – the local leadership challenge”.
- Contribute a sustainability dimension to the debate on the future of the Lisbon Strategy, in particular on a eco-efficient and low-carbon economy
- Participate in relevant initiatives on water, such as the organisation of the ‘Local Governments’ Day’ at the next Congress of the International Water Association (September 2010) in Montreal and facilitate the exchange of experience with partners on implementation of the water framework directive and Istanbul Water Consensus.
- Contribute to relevant energy initiatives, in particular the new EU energy efficiency action plan (2010 – 2014), the revision of the energy performance of buildings directive, the use of renewable energy and the Covenant of Mayors.
- Contribute to the reflections on the Future of the European Transport policy and in particular the relation between transport and climate.
- Follow up the action plan on urban mobility and implementation of (a) the regulation on public passenger transport services and (b) the directive on the promotion of clean and energy efficient vehicles.

*Aim B3: In the field of Services of General Interest and public procurement, to promote the principles in our Charter and the protocol on SGIs to the Treaty of Lisbon, and to promote good practice through mutual learning*

- Promote CEMR’s Charter on local and regional services of general interest and continue advancing the key issues in particular in relation to the upcoming mid-term review of the public procurement directives, envisaged for 2010/2011
- Prepare a policy paper on the different Commission procurement initiatives, such as green, social, pre-commercial and innovative procurement and contribute to the European Parliament’s reflections on new developments in public procurement
- Influence the decision-making process on the Commission’s proposal on the recast of the late payments directive
- Exchange experience on the application of the Kroes / Monti package on public service compensation and the issue of state aid in other areas such as education and culture and consider further initiatives
- Promote the exchange of information and experience on ways to increase efficiency of public local and regional services and enhance responsiveness to citizens and service users, including the follow-up of the workshops on benchmarks.
- Follow the decision making process of the directive on cross-border health care services and other relevant Commission’s initiatives on social services, ensuring that the local/regional perspective is advanced and taken into account
- Contribute to the debate on how to improve the functioning of the Single Market, in a manner consistent with the role and competences of local and regional government

*Aim B4: To contribute to and influence legislation, policy and good practice in the economic and social fields, in the interests of citizens and of local and regional governments*

- Contribute to the reflections on the Post 2010 Lisbon Strategy (see aim B2 above)
- Follow-up and respond to Commission’s initiatives on demographic change, on active inclusion, children and migration, social and health care sectors and the revision of the Roadmap on Gender Equality
- Organise exchange of experience on policies and tasks in relation to asylum-seekers including in relation to the implementation of the European Pact on Immigration and Asylum
- Contribute to the European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion
- Assist with the organisation of, and participate in, the 8<sup>th</sup> EISCO (information society) conference in Bilbao, Spain (20 – 22 May 2010), on “Into the new decade: driving innovation and local digital agendas to tackle the crisis in European regions” and disseminate and promote the outcomes of the conference
- Contribute to the debate and the implementation of the future European Information Society Strategy (2010-2015), including the renewed broadband strategy
- Continue to implement the Digital Local Agenda, in particular by preparing a manual for local government associations and their members to design, organise and provide e-services

*Aim B5: To promote the interests of and good practice by local / regional government employers and their workforces, in particular through the European social dialogue processes*

- Contribute to the reflections on the Post 2010 Lisbon Strategy
- In relation to the Commission's reflections on the future of the EU sectoral social dialogue, develop ideas on how to strengthen the role of local and regional government in the European Social Dialogue, and the cooperation with the cross-sectoral partner representing the public sector, CEEP.
- Contribute to the development of an EU multi-sectoral action plan on third party violence (with principles and guidance to support joint actions by social partners to tackle third party violence, and examples of practical measures to be taken).
- Monitor the implementation of gender equality action plans at local and regional level from the employers' perspective
- Study positive measures on the integration of migrants in local and regional government administration and services
- Exchange good practices on concrete measures to better integrate vulnerable groups in the labour market

*Aim B6: In general terms, to enhance CEMR's overall relations and visibility with the European Parliament, and in particular to raise awareness of local and regional issues among its Members*

- Organise with our members a number of meetings in Strasbourg, when the European Parliament is sitting there, on topical political themes

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C. Objective: to strengthen the contribution of Europe's local and regional governments in the international arena, for democracy, development, peace, and understanding

*Aim C1: To play an effective role as European world region of United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG), in co-ordination with the individual members*

- Organise effectively the meetings of the World Affairs Committee including, where relevant, specific meetings of the experts/officers, and meetings for European elected representatives during the UCLG meetings
- Organise efficiently and effectively the European part of the elections to the UCLG governing bodies, with a view to the formal election by the World Council of UCLG at its Congress (Mexico City, November 2010).
- Provide an effective European contribution to the content and programme of the UCLG Congress 2010.
- Bring a positive European contribution to UCLG's international debates eg. on development and aid efficiency, climate change, gender equality, the consequences of the economic crisis etc.

*Aim C2: To ensure that the European Platform of Local/Regional Authorities for Development, for which CEMR holds the secretariat, works effectively and contributes to enhancing the role of local and regional authorities in international development policy, programmes and actions*

- Effectively implement the work programme of the Platform, including the seminar in Bucharest in March 2010, the mini-Conference in Spain in May and the Final Conference in the autumn 2010.
- Develop and strengthen the role and work of the Platform, including by presenting an application to the European Commission for support for the Platform from 2011, and other modalities
- work closely with the European Commission (a) to ensure that the perspective of local / regional authorities is taken into account in the implementation of the Non State Actors and Local Authorities programme in order to reinforce their role and participation in other European development cooperation programmes, and (b) to respond to relevant consultations on development issues by the European Commission.
- Work with the Committee on Development of the European Parliament to ensure that the role of local / regional authorities for development is appreciated and taken into account.

*Aim C3: to promote wider and deeper involvement of local and regional authorities in EU and international programmes and policies for development, in cooperation with UCLG as appropriate*

- Work closely with the European Commission (EuropeAid, DG DEV and DG Relex) and the European Parliament, and with the Committee of the Regions, to increase the future opportunities for local and regional authorities to participate more widely in international development activities and programmes, including contribution to the Assizes of decentralised cooperation
- Promote wider participation of local and regional authorities in geographic programmes and thematic programmes in addition to the Non State Actors and Local Authorities programme
- Promote the creation of specific programmes for partnerships for development between cities, and local and regional governments from different continents
- To promote awareness and use of the international website on twinning and partnerships, including consideration of widening its geographical and linguistic reach to the Middle East.

*Aim C4: To develop cross-cultural dialogue and exchanges between local and regional governments, in particular with Europe's neighbours and in the Mediterranean space*

- To work closely with the European Commission and the European Parliament to strengthen the participation of local and regional authorities in the European programmes for neighbourhood policy
- Actively participate in the initiatives concerning Mediterranean issues, for example in the Mediterranean Committee of UCLG and in the evolution of the ARLEM (organised by the CoR)
- Cooperate with the FEMP on the organisation of the Europe/Latin American/Caribbean forum of local governments

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D. Objective: to strengthen CEMR as an effective organisation on behalf of its members associations, representing the interests of Europe's local and regional governments

*Aim D1: to organise a reflection process on the future of CEMR to ensure that our work remains relevant in a fast moving European and international context*

- Organise debates/exchanges with the members to agree proposals on a strategy and main priorities for the future of CEMR to put to the Policy Committee for adoption by the end of 2010
- Prepare and begin the implementation process

*Aim D2: To effectively prepare and organise the 3-yearly elections to CEMR's Presidency, office-holders and governing bodies, to ensure that CEMR's internal governance and democracy operate effectively*

- Circulate the information and invitation for nominations in a timely manner so that the elections may be successfully organised during the winter Policy Committee meeting, and ensuring that the Statutes and Rules of Procedure (including the new Rule on gender balance) are properly implemented.

*Aim D3: to review and enhance CEMR's communication with members, partners and the wider public*

- Begin work on creating new main CEMR website taking advantage of the up to date technological developments.
- Develop regular electronic newsletter for members

*Aim D4: To organise CEMR events in a professional and attractive manner, ensuring that customer feedback is received and analysed*

- Continue to obtain and use feedback from those attending working groups, committees and events with a view to improving our services

*Aim D5: to ensure that CEMR's finances and financial systems remain soundly based, that membership fees are properly followed up, that other appropriate income sources are pursued, and that the annual budget is accurately implemented*

- Provide good and timely support to the work of the Financial Management Committee, honorary auditors and the professional auditors
- Continue to monitor the impact (if any) of the economic downturn on CEMR's finances, taking any necessary action
- Explore possible other sponsors/financial partners

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