

One month of CEMR activities

08/03 (Brussels): At the occasion of International Women's Day, local and regional elected representatives from a number of European countries launched the Observatory of the Charter on Equality of Women and Men in Local Life. It is in this context that they call upon municipalities and regions all over Europe to commit to the Charter and to the principle of **gender equality**.⁽ⁱ⁾ Contact: sandra.ceciani@cce-cemr.org

08/03 (Copenhagen): The EU **territorial agenda**⁽ⁱ⁾ is to receive support from a new communication strategy in order to facilitate its implementation at the local and regional levels. Such was decided upon at the occasion of a meeting of the Network of Territorial Cohesion Contact Points,⁽ⁱ⁾ during which CEMR committed to involving its member associations in the devising of this strategy.⁽ⁱ⁾ Contact: alessandro.proia@cce-cemr.org

14/03 (Brussels): While CEMR is pleased that local development is specifically highlighted in the European Commission's proposal for a common strategic framework in the EU **cohesion policy**, it calls for more clarity on the role of the different related funds. This clarity would allow for local and regional practitioners to better prepare and adapt their local development strategies.⁽ⁱ⁾ Contact: alessandro.proia@cce-cemr.org

15/03 (Brussels): **PLATFORMA** welcomes the first review of the European Commission's programmes for aid delivery in support of decentralisation processes in third countries. Indeed, these provide considerable support to decentralisation reforms, which are essential in poor and fragile countries where efforts aimed at state building and public sector reforms are greatly needed.⁽ⁱ⁾ Contact: lucie.guillet@cce-cemr.org

15/03 (Brussels): Rather than solely focusing on the types of training made available to the local and regional government sector, it is also important to look at the process behind competence-building and the involvement of employees in their own professional development. Such was the main conclusion of a workshop on lifelong learning, training and skills development organised in the framework of the **social dialogue** project "Future of the workplace".⁽ⁱ⁾ Contact: christina.dziewanska-stringer@cce-cemr.org

19/03 (Brussels): While CEMR supports the concept of open government (transparency and access to public information), it is wary of the European Commission's proposal for a revised **public sector information** directive. Indeed, the proposal may result in public authorities being required to make a large amount of data accessible without adequate financial compensation. This view was shared by CEMR and its member associations during a meeting with relevant members of European Parliament.⁽ⁱ⁾ Contact: angelika.poth-moegele@cce-cemr.org

21/03 (Brussels): "The too detailed provisions put forward in the European Commission's proposal for a new directive on **public procurement** are contrary to the need for simplification, especially when considering the more general fatigue vis-à-vis far too detailed EU legislation." Such was voiced by Angelika Poth-Mögele, CEMR director of policy, at a public hearing organised by the European Parliament Committee on internal market and consumer protection.⁽ⁱ⁾ Contact: angelika.poth-moegele@cce-cemr.org

21/03 (Strasbourg): "The last thing we need is more bureaucratic centralism; what Europe needs is more local responsibility and self-government in order to truly solve this crisis." Such was declared by Wolfgang Schuster, president of CEMR and mayor of Stuttgart, at the occasion of the 22nd plenary of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe. ⁱ CEMR also invited the Congress to further support work in this area, notably via CEMR's newly established observatory on **economic crisis** and decentralisation. ⁱ Contact: boris.tonhauser@cce-cemr.org

21/03 (Strasbourg): The Council of Europe has launched, in collaboration with CEMR, a book entitled Local Government in Critical Times: Policies for Crisis, Recovery and a Sustainable Future. The book outlines the local level's financial and budgetary development over the last three years and provides an analysis of the **economic crisis** and several policy proposals, which demonstrate the important role of local and regional authorities in the recovery process. ⁱ Contact: boris.tonhauser@cce-cemr.org

21-23/03 (Kiev): The development of mutual trust between the national government, employers and trade unions is vital when it comes to implementing **social dialogue** structures in Ukraine. This conclusion arose from a workshop organised by the European Commission, with the aim of supporting European countries in their development of European social dialogue tools and structures. At this occasion, Christina Dziewanska-Stringer, CEMR policy officer for employment and social affairs, presented the CEMR-EPSU social dialogue committee as an example of cooperation at the local level in this field. Contact: christina.dziewanska-stringer@cce-cemr.org

22/03 (Copenhagen): In a declaration adopted by its Executive Bureau, CEMR called on the European Commission to introduce greater flexibility in the rules governing the use and distribution of **EU structural funds** for countries particularly hard-hit by the crisis. ⁱ CEMR's 25th General Assembly, to be held in Cádiz from 26 to 28 September 2012, and the AICCRE's upcoming 60th anniversary celebration were also discussed at this occasion. Contact: nina.holbrook@cce-cemr.org

23/03 (Brussels): **PLATFORMA** welcomes the creation of a policy forum for development by the European Commission Directorate General for development and cooperation, as a continuation of the structured dialogue, which ended in May 2011. The forum is to discuss development cooperation at the EU level with representatives from the Commission, the European Parliament, member states, PLATFORMA and civil society organisations. Contact: lucie.guillet@cce-cemr.org

28/03 (Brussels): Wolfgang Schuster, president of CEMR and mayor of Stuttgart, met with the European commissioner for citizenship, Viviane Reding, to present her with its White Paper for an active **European citizenship**. The White Paper brings new perspectives for involving citizens in the European project. It also formulates the position of local and regional authorities on citizenship and town twinning in light of the 2014-2020 EU "Europe for citizens" programme. ⁱ Contact: sandra.ceciarini@cce-cemr.org

30/03 (Brussels): CEMR and the European Federation of Public Service Unions (EPSU) argue that the best long-term approach to restructuring the public sector is the setting-up of a **social dialogue** between local and regional authorities, trade unions and the national government. Such was the main message of a joint CEMR-EPSU response ⁱ to the European Commission green paper on restructuring and the anticipation of change. ⁱ Contact: christina.dziewanska-stringer@cce-cemr.org

Ongoing activities

CEMR and EPSU are organising their fourth workshop of the **social dialogue** project "Future of the workplace" on equality, diversity and non-discrimination, to be held on 16 May 2012 in Brussels. The workshop will focus on CEMR and EPSU's guidelines on gender equality within local and regional administrations.^① CEMR invites its members to provide examples of implementation of these guidelines in their member municipalities and regions in view of the workshop. Contact: christina.dziewanska-stringer@ccre-cemr.org

CEMR and its focus group on **public procurement** are preparing amendments to the European Commission's proposal for a new directive.^① Contact: angelika.poth-moegele@ccre-cemr.org

CEMR's calendar¹

02/04 (Florence): Launch of **PLATFORMA**'s new website, which is to become an information portal on decentralised cooperation, on funding opportunities for local and regional authorities in the field of development cooperation and on PLATFORMA's activities. Contact: florent.resche-rigon@ccre-cemr.org

02-03/04 (Florence): **PLATFORMA**'s annual European Forum on "Development and participatory governance: Which multi-actor partnerships in Europe and in partner countries?". Contact: lucie.guillet@ccre-cemr.org

13/04 (Paris): Meeting of the AFCCRE committee on "Europe, cooperation and **development**", during which PLATFORMA will present its activities.^① Contact: florent.resche-rigon@ccre-cemr.org

18/04 (Brussels): Focus group on **cohesion policy**. Contact: alessandro.proia@ccre-cemr.org

Other events

12/04 (Brussels): Joint conference of the European Parliament and Eurofound on "Quality of work and **employment**: a policy tool towards an inclusive and sustainable growth".^① Contact: christina.dziewanska-stringer@ccre-cemr.org

¹ CEMR's calendar is available on our website: www.ccre.org

