

A vibrant scene of various butterflies flying over purple flowers against a clear blue sky. The butterflies are in various stages of flight, some hovering near the flowers and others soaring higher. The colors of the butterflies range from bright yellow and orange to deep reds and blues. The purple flowers are in the foreground, and the background is a clear, bright blue sky with a few wispy clouds. The overall atmosphere is one of natural beauty and movement.

**CEMR: A EUROPE  
WITH A LOCAL AND  
REGIONAL DIMENSION !**

# WHO WE ARE

The Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR) is Europe's oldest and broadest association of local and regional governments.

It was founded in 1951 by a group of mayors determined to build a united Europe of peace and democracy.

From the outset, its priorities included the development of local democracy and self-government, and bringing citizens together across frontiers through twinning actions. To these aims, new priorities have been added, including our work in influencing European legislation and policy, and our contribution to peace and development in the international domain.

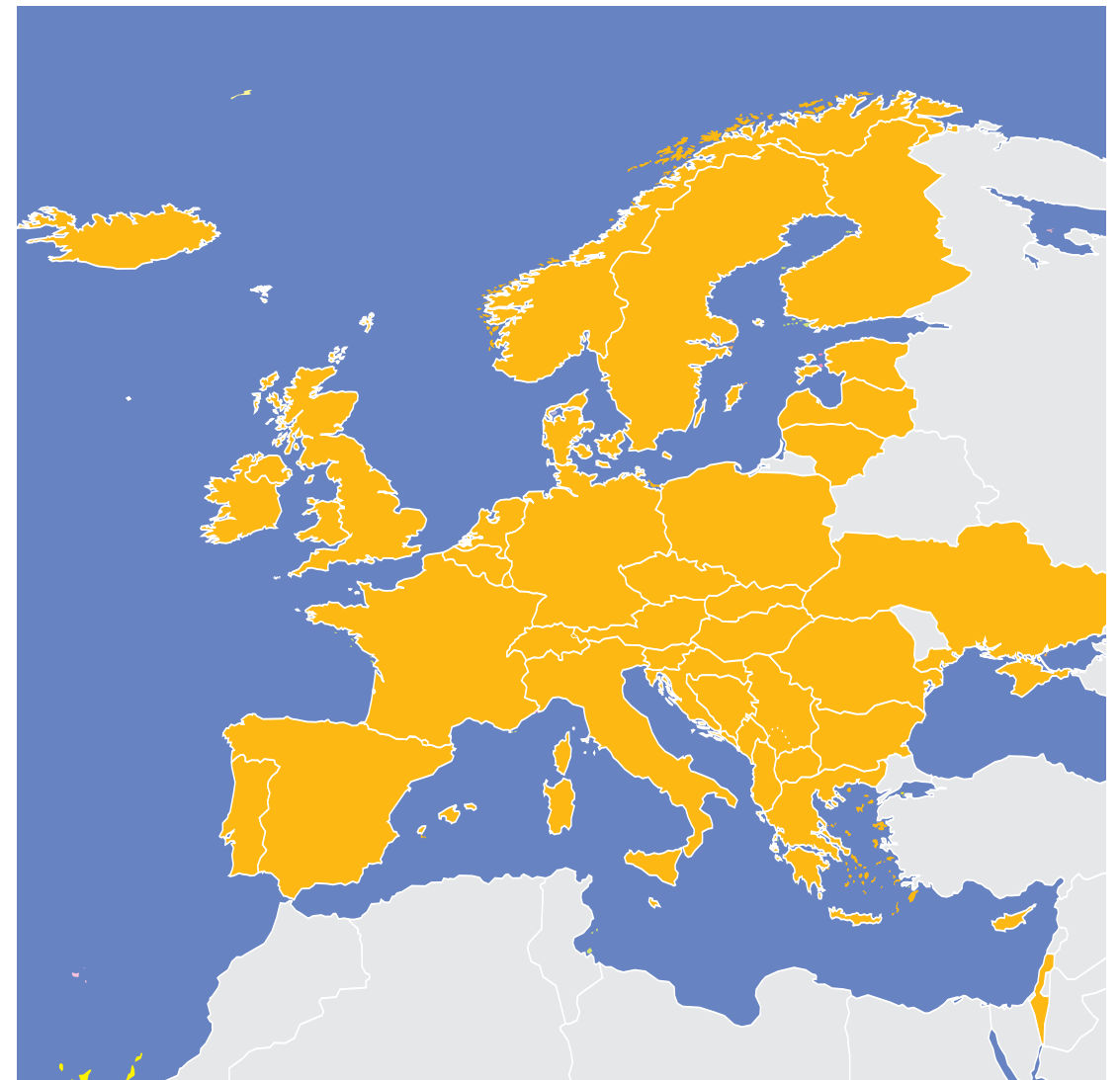
CEMR's members are national associations of local and regional government, whose own members are local or regional authorities in their country.

CEMR has over 50 members in 38 countries. These include national associations in all the EU member states plus countries such as Norway, Switzerland, the Ukraine, Serbia, Albania...

New member associations are approved by the Policy Committee, having established that they are both representative and democratic. Full membership is limited to countries belonging to the Council of Europe.

## How we are funded ?

Some 85% of CEMR's budget comes from its members' annual subscriptions. These are calculated for each country, based on a formula which combines GDP and population, and amounts to some € 1.6 million. In addition, in recent years we have benefited from a grant from the European Commission of some € 200,000 per year.



CEMR's Members

# OUR STRUCTURES



CEMR main governing bodies are the Policy Committee and the Executive Bureau.

The **Policy Committee** approves the budget and the annual work programme, decides on the main policy lines and on new members' application. Its over 100 members are elected for three years, with each membership country having a number of seats, ranging from three places for states of less than 5 million, to 8 places for states of more than 75 million inhabitants. The Policy Committee generally meets twice a year.

The **Executive Bureau** follows up the Policy Committee's decisions. Between Policy Committee meetings, it is responsible for CEMR's work and policy.

The political leadership is provided by CEMR's **Presidency** which comprises:

- The President, elected by the Policy Committee
- The First Vice-President, elected by the Policy Committee
- The Executive Presidents, nominated by the President with the approval of the Policy Committee to assist him in representing the organisation.

In addition, each country can elect a Vice-President of CEMR, of whom 10 are elected by the Policy Committee to be members of the Executive Bureau.

All of these office-holders have a three year mandate.

Since 2005, CEMR's President is the mayor and governor of Vienna, Michael Häupl. His recent predecessors as President were Valéry Giscard d'Estaing (1997 – 2004) and Pasqual Maragall, then Mayor of Barcelona (1992 – 1997).

The Secretary-General is responsible for the effective management of the secretariat, for advising the governing bodies, and for implementing their decisions. The post-holder is elected by the Policy Committee for a term of 6 years. CEMR's secretariat (some 18 staff) is based in two offices.

One is in Paris, which is the legal seat of the organisation, and the other is in Brussels, in an office building shared with many of our national associations who are based there.

# WHAT WE DO

CEMR works to promote **a strong united Europe** based on the principles of subsidiarity, closeness to the citizens, and local and regional self-government. We therefore campaign for local and regional government to have a stronger role in the European Union. We draw inspiration from the Council of Europe's European Charter of Local Self-Government, and have supported similar initiatives for regional self-government.

An enormous proportion of **European Union legislation** falls to be implemented by local and regional governments; therefore one of our priorities is to influence the European policies and legislation which have a significant impact on our sector such as waste, environmental and health standards, state aid and public procurement rules, public transport, etc. We intervene from the earliest stages of the European Commission drafting process, through to the amendments for consideration by the European Parliament.

In addition, we promote **good practice and exchange of information** on many subjects relevant to local and regional governments.

Since its foundation, CEMR has supported the European **town twinning** movement. CEMR receives an EU grant in support of this work on twinning and active European citizenship. In 2008, we have created a new "100% twinning" website ([www.twinning.org](http://www.twinning.org)), which has one part dedicated to European twinning actions in over 20 languages, and one for international twinings and partnerships for development. Both have a partner search function. We also organise European meetings and – every few years – a major twinning Congress.

CEMR's work in the **international** domain has increased in recent years, and many of our member associations are involved in international decentralized co-operation. CEMR is the European regional section of our world organization, United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG). We have a World Affairs Committee to prepare and coordinate our international activities and our European contribution to UCLG. CEMR has also established, and acts as secretariat for, the Platform of local and regional authorities for development, which aims to provide local and regional authorities with a common voice towards the European institutions.



## COMMITTEES, EVENTS AND INITIATIVES

Much of CEMR's policy work is undertaken through our committees and working groups. These cover issues such as the environment, energy, transport, public services and procurement, cohesion and territorial policy, social policy, employers' platform, democracy and governance and information society, as well as a committee of women elected members. CEMR also acts as secretariat on the employers' side for the social dialogue on local and regional government.

Every three years, we organise our General Assembly, which brings together around 1000 local and regional representatives, most recently in Malmö, Sweden, in 2009 under the theme "Fit for the Future? How Europe's local and regional governments are preparing".

We also organise European conferences and seminars on a wide range of subjects, for example "Twinning for Tomorrow's World" (Rhodes, 2007); "Acting Locally for Equality" (Pisa, 2008); "South-east Europe – meeting the challenges", (Vienna 2008); "Local government's day on water" (Vienna, 2008); "Changes in local and regional structures (Copenhagen, 2008).

Furthermore, CEMR draws up charters or codes of practice which provide the basis for specific campaigning activities. They include our European Charter for equality of women and men in local life signed up to by some 800 local and regional governments, and our Code of good practice on consultation procedures between central, regional and local government.



## OUR WEBSITES AND COMMUNICATION

Our main website can be found at: [www.ccre.org](http://www.ccre.org). Its homepage consists of daily news of interest to local and regional authorities across Europe; the rest of the site gives further information on CEMR, its policies, activities and member associations.

In 2008 CEMR created a "100% twinning" website ([www.twinning.org](http://www.twinning.org)) which has one part dedicated to European twinning actions in over 20 languages, and one for international twinings and partnerships for development in 4 languages. Both have a partner search function.

Our studies and publications cover a wide range of issues such as a handbook on twinning, how national governments assess the efficiency of their municipalities' work, a guide on how to save energy locally, reforming public services...

CEMR's members also have access to our Extranet site. It constitutes a virtual work area in which our members can discuss work-related issues such as the drafting of a position paper on an EU initiative, or the preparations for a CEMR seminar or conference.





# A BRIEF HISTORY OF CEMR



- 1951** Creation of the Council of European Municipalities (CEM) in Geneva
- 1953** First general assembly, in Versailles: adoption of the European charter of local liberties
- 1955** CEM's seat transferred to Paris
- 1964** CEM's general assembly in Rome attracts 15,000 participants
- 1969** Opening of CEM's office in Brussels
- 1983** First CEM's conference of women elected representatives, in Pisa
- 1984** Regions join – CEM becomes CEMR
- 1989** Fall of the Berlin wall: CEMR's membership expands to Central and Eastern Europe
- 1989** Creation of the EU funding programme for town twinning following CEMR's campaign
- 1990** CEMR becomes European section of IULA (International Union of Local Authorities)
- 2004** CEMR becomes European section of the new world association UCLG
- 2006** Innsbruck general assembly: CEMR's charter for equality of women and men in local life
- 2007** Michael Häupl, mayor and governor of Vienna re-elected CEMR president
- 2007** 500 local authorities have signed CEMR's charter for equality
- 2007** CEMR's Brussels office moves in House of cities, municipalities and regions along with some 20 representations of its member associations
- 2007** Over 600 participants at CEMR's town twinning congress, in Rhodes
- 2008** CEMR creates Platform of local and regional government for development, with 19 partners
- 2008** Launch of CEMR's "100% twinning" interactive website in over 20 languages , with two entry points: one for twinning in Europe and the other for local north-south cooperation
- 2009** Malmö general assembly focuses on impact of economic crisis on towns and regions