



Welcome to **Resonance**!

The monthly news **bulletin** from across CEMR and its member associations.

As we step into 2024, CEMR is proud of its achievements in 2023 and looks forward to another year of impactful initiatives.

Here's an overview:



In this edition, we bring you the latest highlights and insights shaping the landscape of Local and Regional Governments.

CEMR took centre stage at the Conference: "**An Urban Policy Fit for the Future**," contributing valuable perspectives that aim to redefine urban policies for a sustainable tomorrow. Don't miss your chance to actively engage in the Committee of the Regions and CEMR's new consultation, focusing on the experiences of Local and Regional Governments with the Recovery and Resilience Facility. This edition also introduces you to **Federica Bordelot**, our new Director of Policy and Impact. Get to know Federica and her vision as she takes on this pivotal role, steering our organisation toward impactful policy initiatives.

Resonance is easy to navigate and is delivered to your inbox at the end of every month.

*Do you have a story, topic, event that you'd like to share on **Resonance**? Write us at and let's amplify it for you.*

NEWS



CEMR signed a Declaration for an ambitious European Urban Policy - Belgian Presidency event

CEMR participated in the "An Urban Policy Fit for the Future" conference, organised by the Belgian presidency and culminated in a landmark declaration for the EU's 2024-2029 mandate.

[Read more →](#)



CEMR at the EU Commission Job Fair - Talent Hub for Cities and Regions

CEMR participated in the EU Commission job fair under the umbrella of the Talent Hub for Cities and Regions to meet young professionals eager to seek a career in the territorial diplomacy field.

[Read more →](#)



What is our call to action for the upcoming EU elections? Find out



UCLG - Culture 21 Award

Participate in this biennial award that recognises outstanding projects and good practices led by cities, Local and Regional Governments and individuals.

[Read more →](#)



Celebration - COSLA 30 Years

At the CEMR Secretariat, we celebrated 30 years of collaboration with COSLA, representing the interests of Local Government and the 32 Local Authorities in Scotland.

[Read more →](#)



How are energy and climate policies implemented in European local and regional governments? Read more



Tallinn Conference - A Second Edition on "Local, Social, Digital" project

On February 16 in Tallinn, CEMR and EPSU are hosting a conference to address the challenges of digital transition and evolving work patterns.

[Read more →](#)



LRGs - Maroš Šefčovič, European Commission Executive Vice-President

CEMR met with the Executive Vice-President for the EU Green Deal at the EU Commission to discuss the implementation of the Green Deal at the Local and Regional levels.

[Read more →](#)



The VVSG is dedicated to empowering its members and fostering a grassroots approach at the local level. To achieve this mission, the organisation assumes three pivotal roles: advocate, knowledge provider, and network developer. Through active representation, the VVSG champions the cause of Local Governments across various policy domains. Additionally, the organisation provides crucial support and reinforcement to local authorities through advisory services, training initiatives, publications, and effective communication channels. The VVSG plays a pivotal role in uniting local governments and their partners, facilitating the exchange of knowledge and best practices.

Looking ahead to 2024, a significant election year is on the horizon. The election of a new European, federal, and regional parliament will take place in June, followed by the election of new municipal councils in October. The VVSG has articulated its stance in an election memorandum, passionately advocating for the elevation of the local level. While Local Governments bear the responsibility of preparing and implementing local policies, they do so in collaboration with the Flemish, federal and European governments, necessitating constructive cooperation.

Recognising the autonomy of municipalities, the VVSG emphasises the importance of central governments actively engaging local counterparts early in policy preparation. To facilitate this, empowering municipalities with robust organisational tools and ensuring adequate, predictable, and transparent funding are key priorities. The aim is to establish municipalities as full and equal partners in policymaking. Acknowledging the significance of local authorities, the central administrations are urged to treat them as fully-fledged employers, granting them a seat at the negotiation table across all levels. Additionally, efforts must be made to enhance IT infrastructure and data sharing to support policymaking and improve service delivery.

When discussing local authorities in Belgium, it's essential to recognise that this extends beyond just cities and municipalities. The landscape includes social welfare centres, local police, autonomous municipal companies, welfare associations, fire services, and intermunicipal cooperative organisations. Specifically in Flanders, there are 300 municipalities, with the VVSG representing 7,465 local politicians and supporting a workforce of 193,753 individuals.

[Learn more](#)



The Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities (KS) is the organisation for all Local Governments in Norway. KS is Norway's largest public employer organisation.

Since 2013 KS has run "the municipal network for universal design", a project founded by the Norwegian Ministry of Culture to create good, inclusive communities where everyone can participate. The purpose of this is to facilitate the exchange of best practices and knowledge among municipalities. The network has been operational since 2013. In 2023, all 11 regions and 70 out of the 357 municipalities in Norway actively participated in the initiative.

"The municipalities and counties are at the core of the efforts to create a society where everyone can participate on equal terms"

- Anne Gamme chief adviser of The Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities (KS).

[Learn more about KS and Universal Design](#)



CEMR Member Associations are Invited to the New Consultation on the Implementation of the Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF)

The Council of European Municipalities and Regions and the Committee of Regions have launched a new consultation to follow up on the experience of Local and Regional Authorities with the Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF). The aim is to gain a deeper understanding of the role of Local and Regional Authorities in the National Recovery and Resilience Plan (NRRP) implementation and to identify developments since previous consultations.



Learn about CEMR Members' experiences working with National Governments on RRF planning and deployment on their respective territories.

This targeted consultation is specifically directed at key EU national associations of Local and Regional Governments, including yours. Your response to this concise questionnaire will offer insights into the implementation of national plans and their capacity to address specific investment and reform priorities at the Local and Regional levels.

[Click here to participate to the survey](#)



We are delighted to welcome our new colleagues:



Hamza Bennis
Officer - Employment, Digitalisation and Public Services

[LinkedIn Profile](#)

Yâëlle Molle Robert
Intern - Bridges of Trust

[LinkedIn Profile](#)





A chat with Federica Bordelot

New Director of Policy and Impact

Hello Federica, and welcome aboard! Could you share with us the key priorities of CEMR for the coming years?

2024 will be a crucial year for CEMR. With the EU elections taking place in a few months, we will be positioning the network towards the new EU institutions on critical issues such as the local implementation of the Green Deal, a clearer enlargement policy and a stronger cohesion policy, violence and discrimination, and the future of public services. We will firmly advocate the role of Local and Regional Governments ensuring a stronger sit around the table and fostering cooperation and coordination at all levels of governance.

This year will be key to also start implementing CEMR's 2030 vision and strategy. I want to capitalise on the good work developed so far to position more CEMR not only vis a vis the EU institutions but also to other organisations and increase CEMR impact. By building new partnerships with academia, think tanks, foundations and networks, providing members with more opportunities to dialogue and exchange on key topics, and working more effectively and in coordination internally we will create more knowledge and more impactful results.

What are your perspectives on the objectives of the upcoming European Parliament and Commission?

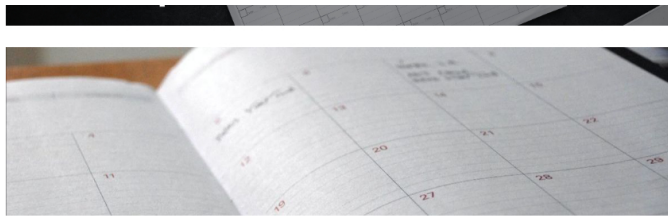
Europe is facing several critical challenges; wars and conflicts, refugees as well as energy and climate crises are enormously impacting European finances, territories and people. While there are a lot of uncertainties linked to the results of the EU elections and the composition of the new Parliament, the upcoming members of the EU institutions will have to face critical challenges to which they are unable to adequately respond alone. Now more than ever the future of Europe is about municipalities. LRGs will be even more essential allies for the next EU institutions to bring Europe closer to citizens. CEMR will continue to ensure permanent dialogue and co-creation of effective policies.

Considering the growing influence of Artificial Intelligence, how do you anticipate its impact on policy-making in the near future?

When talking about AI we tend to use the future tense. It is true, that AI is constantly and rapidly under development, however, it has already been largely used for years and its impact and effects are already quite visible. Machine learning algorithms powered by data are crucial for better informed decision making at the Local and Regional levels with a direct impact on key public services such as urban transport and mobility, urban planning, and waste and water management, to mention just a few.

Despite the need to urgently start implementing strong safeguards – derived from the AI Act, soon to be adopted by the Council and the EP - ensuring that fundamental rights and democracy are protected, I have an enthusiastic and positive approach to the future of AI for helping LRGs to overcome many of the current challenges they are facing.

 Follow Federica on LinkedIn



Our Selection of Debates and Events Happening in February Within and Around CEMR Space

- 05 - EU Conference - Bridging the Funding Gap [\[Read more →\]](#)
- 08 - Launch of the European City Center Observatory [\[Read more →\]](#)
- 13 - ERA of Inclusive Gender Equality - GenderAction and Belgian Presidency of the Council of the EU [\[Read more →\]](#)
- 15 - Conference on citizen's participation and involvement at the level of local authorities in the European project [\[Read more →\]](#)
- 16 - Second Conference CEMR-EPSU - "Local, Social, Digital" project [\[Read more →\]](#)
- 19-25 - Towards a Green Deal Industrial Plan 2.0 Agoria, Eurometaux, CEEMET [\[Read more →\]](#)
- 24-25 - beEU Citizen Panel - Belgian Presidency of the Council of the EU [\[Read more →\]](#)



Local and Regional Governments have a share of the responsibility of **68%** of all relevant competencies in **climate** and **energy** policies.

[\[→ Find out more about National Energy and Climate Policies ←\]](#)



We mourn the loss of Louis Le Pensec, our former Vice President, and President of AFCCRE. and French Minister. We will miss a prominent figure in the construction of Europe.



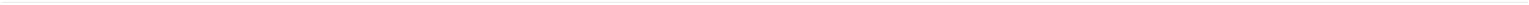
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