

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

Prime Minister  
Mr Fredrik Reinfeldt  
Prime Minister's Office  
103 33 Stockholm  
Sweden

*The President*

July 2009

**Work Programme of the Swedish Presidency: key issues for local and regional government**

Dear Prime Minister,

Sweden holds the Presidency of the EU Council during the second half of 2009 and we have read with great interest your work programme for the next six months. The selected priorities of the Swedish government are to a great extent also relevant for local and regional government and we therefore wish to provide you with our views on these.

The Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR) is the European umbrella organisation of local and regional governments, federated through its 51 member associations in 37 countries. Our member in Sweden is the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (SALAR) and SALAR's President, Mr Anders Knappe, is also first Vice-President of CEMR.

As you know, SALAR has always had good relations with the Swedish government, and meets frequently with your representatives to discuss issues of importance to the local and regional level in Sweden. SALAR is for example always invited to meetings preceding EU Summits, to present its views on the items of the Summit agenda.

CEMR and SALAR support the Swedish Presidency's focus on the response to the economic crisis, climate change, neighbourhood and development policies, and the changing context and framework of the EU with the new Parliament and Commission and – we hope - the coming into operation of the Lisbon Treaty.

However, we wish also to note some other relevant issues, which will also be on the agenda in the coming months, such as the debate on the future budget of the EU and the cohesion policy.

We are convinced that the major challenges confronting the EU, and which are addressed in the Swedish Presidency's programme, cannot be successfully met without cooperation with and support from Europe's local and regional governments. Many European policies and legislative acts have an impact on the territories and are implemented at local and regional level.

We therefore particularly value the *Berlin Declaration*, signed in March 2007 by the Presidents of the European Council, the European Parliament and the European Commission, which states, "There are many goals, which we cannot achieve on our own, but only in concert. Tasks are shared between the European Union, the Member States and their regions and local authorities".

The Lisbon Treaty, which recognises explicitly local and regional self-government and extends the subsidiarity principle to local and regional government, strengthens the necessary legal basis to put into practice a multi-level governance approach. We are confident that the Swedish Presidency will ensure a sound and effective application of these provisions as soon as the Treaty enters into force.

The attached document briefly summarises the view of local and regional government on key issues of the Swedish Presidency's work programme. Our views are expressed in a more detailed way in the declaration and resolution, adopted at our recent General Assembly in Malmö, which we also attach to this letter for your information.

We thank you very much for your attention to our views and remain at your disposal for further and more detailed information on the different issues.

Yours sincerely



Dr Michael HÄUPL  
Mayor of Vienna  
President of CEMR



Anders KNAPE  
President of SALAR  
1<sup>st</sup> Vice-President of CEMR