



**Confederation of Towns  
and Municipalities of Europe**

*Confédération des Petites Villes de l'Union européenne*

*Konföderation der Gemeinden und Städte Europas*

*Confederazione dei Piccoli Comuni e Municipalità dell'Unione europea*

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## **The Confederation of Towns and Municipalities of Europe (CTME): reaffirms the importance of “preserving European core values”**

The Confederation of small towns and municipalities (CTME), whose President is Roberto Pella, held a meeting on the 8th of February in Berlin, Germany. On this occasion, the European delegations reaffirmed the importance of preserving “core European values”. Indeed, a few months before crucial European elections, local authorities cannot turn a blind eye on the threats weighing on what Jacques Delors called the “European soul”. On the fringe of the European Union (EU), the Russian aggression against Ukraine brought back war on the continent; concurrently, antisemitism and xenophobic sentiments spread within the EU.

The CTME members strongly believe that local governments have a key role in reversing the tide, which is all but inevitable. We stand by the words of the European Charter of Local Self-Government that states that “the existence of local authorities vested with effective responsibilities enables an administration that is both efficient and close to the citizen”. Efficiency and proximity are the two principles that make our daily actions worthy to our constituents.

As Bernhard Daldrup, member of the Bundestag, stated in his welcoming speech to the CTME delegations : “Local politics is not the cellar of our democracy, but its foundation”.

It is not to say that the challenges are not great. Introducing greener public policies, developing efficient transportation systems, providing affordable housing, improving energy efficiency whilst managing increasing energy prices, are just but a few examples of the issues towns and municipalities must solve. The CTME members believe that we are better off facing these challenges together, as Europeans.

The CTME members share a common hope. This hope is rooted in the fact that so much is already done in our communities. Not only are local initiatives usually more innovative, but they are also more likely to be accepted by the European citizens. Local autonomy is a chance for the EU and should be reckoned as such. That is why CTME members demand EU-policies to be designed to take into account towns and municipalities.

However, not all should be asked from EU-level decisions – or from national-level ones for that matter. A lot can be learnt from what exists in neighbouring EU countries. There are about 2,200 town-twinning schemes between France and Germany: these schemes are much of the reason of the “special relationship” between France and Germany. Diplomatic treaties could not have achieved that on their own. This is why CTME members call upon all municipalities to strengthen their bonds and to find new ways to make the European youth share the European ideals.

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