

BILBAO 2018

DIFFERENCES UNITE US!



Local & Regional
Europe



Bilbao

EUDEL

ASSOCIATION OF BASQUE MUNICIPALITIES
EUSKADIKO UDALEN ELKARTEA

**CEMR Citizenship Conference
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion**

Concept note

11-13 June 2018

Euskalduna Conference Centre, Bilbao

In partnership with:





Introduction

CEMR

The Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR) is *the* voice of local and regional governments in Europe. Representing 130,000 local governments, gathered into 60 national associations from 41 different countries, its mission is to:

- Influence European legislation on behalf of cities and local and regional governments (LRGs); and
- Provide a platform of exchange of experiences and practices for its members and partners.

Every four years, CEMR brings together all its members and partners for its citizenship and twinning conference in order to gather practitioners and relevant stakeholders in Europe to exchange views and knowledge in fields related to the broad concept of European citizenship. At the 2018 conference, local politicians and practitioners will showcase how they are addressing critical issues such as: gender equality, LGBT+ rights, racism, migrant integration and citizen participation.

The last quadrennial conference took place in Rome, Italy, in 2014 in the framework of the Italian Presidency of the Council of the European Union. The 2018 conference is organised within the work programme of the CEMR Standing Committee for Equality of Women and Men in Local Life, currently chaired by the Association of Basque Municipalities.

Conference on equality, diversity and inclusion

General description

Event title: “Differences unite us!”

Event venue: Euskalduna Conference Centre, Bilbao, Basque Country (Spain)

Event dates: 11 - 13 June 2018

Organisers:

- Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR)
- City of Bilbao
- Association of Basque Municipalities (EUDEL)



Partners:

- Spanish Federation of Municipalities and Provinces (FEMP)
- Plataforma

Target audience

CEMR, the City of Bilbao and the Association of Basque Municipalities (EUDEL) aim to organise an inspiring and informative international conference that brings together a wide range of people.

Up to **500** participants are expected, mainly from Europe but also beyond (e.g. Mediterranean basin), from among local and regional elected representatives and experts, European institutions, national governments, academics, and partners from civil society and the private sector that work on the themes of the conference.

Objectives and outcome

Through this conference, CEMR aims to:

- Present opportunities and challenges that diverse, egalitarian and inclusive societies present for local deciders and their citizens;
- Gather the greatest number of signatories of the European Charter for Equality of Women and Men in Local Life since its creation, representing various stages of the implementation process. While the main focus is on gathering Charter signatories, local and regional governments that take action to advance gender equality will also be included, even if they have not adhered to the Charter;
- Fortify links between local and regional government and stakeholders in civil society and academia;

Through this conference, we want participants to:

- **Meet** peers and partners from a variety of contexts and discover how to build communities that value everyone, communities that unleash the full potential of their population.
- **Learn** from each other's practices and experience and gain knowledge and tools for inclusive local governance in the 21st century.
- **Get inspired** from leaders engaged in local public policy and action.



Themes

Globally, and in Europe, individuals and societies are more connected and versatile than ever before. We face evolving demographic and political landscapes where “business as usual” is being put to the test. Our towns and regions have an interest and a responsibility to address issues of inequality, discrimination and exclusion. It is time to explore new possibilities and opportunities to engage and **include all citizens** and **create local environments where each person can pursue their ambitions** on an equal basis and in security.

Equality, diversity and inclusion are vital to develop attractive communities and enhance the well-being and quality of life of all citizens. These are the three **intersecting** thematic foundations of the conference, representing core European values and areas of opportunity for innovative action at local and regional levels.

In general, ideas and experiences on the transformation of the social landscape in Europe will be addressed, covering, topics such as: human rights, anti-discrimination/multiple discrimination (intersectionality), the UN Agenda 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), migration and integration, public services and management, employment, and participative democracy.

Specific attention will be given to equality of women and men in local life and the **European Charter for Equality**.

The conference will be both **political** and **technical**, with debates, speeches and **interactive** sessions featuring local politicians and practitioners.

It's time to seize the opportunities that equality, diversity and inclusion have to offer. In Bilbao and beyond, differences unite us!

Structure and types of sessions

Through unconventional plenary sessions, debates, workshops and roundtables, the conference will showcase the actions LRGs are currently undertaking in the areas of equality, diversity, and inclusion and how municipal management can be used as a lever



to advance social inclusion and diversity in local life—a common challenge for European municipalities.

The above-mentioned objectives will be reflected in the structure of the conference; the sessions will be structured into:

- **Plenary sessions:** one to set the scene and prepare participants and another to draw conclusions and explore the connections across the 3 conference themes (**2 hours** each)
- **Parallel sessions with options for:** classic panel discussions, short talk model (max. 18 minutes per intervention) followed by exchanges between participants and presenters (**1.5 - 2 hours** each)
- **Project and good practice hubs** where networking will be central (1.5 and 2 hours)
- **World café / workshops** to discuss policies, projects and methodologies being implemented at local level (**1.5 and 2 hours**)
- **Outside sessions** that offer direct contact with centres working with citizens at risk of exclusion and/or discrimination on a daily basis. These sessions provide participants with a **hands-on experience** of the concrete ways in which equality, diversity and inclusion are being actively encouraged and supported by the City of Bilbao (**1.5, 2 and 4 hours**)

Up to 3 sessions may be running in parallel, offering participants a wide range of possibilities to meet, learn or get inspired in each of the themes.

Partners

CEMR and the organisers will reach out to a wide range of partners to make this event as successful and inclusive as possible.

Online discussions and social networks

The CEMR team will be active online prior to and during the event, notably through the hashtags #CEMRBilbao2018 on Twitter.

Contact and questions

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All questions may be directed to Jaimie Just, Policy Officer – Gender Equality and Diversity at CEMR by email (jaimie.just@ccre-cemr.org) or phone (+32 2 500 05 49).