



**COUNCIL OF EUROPEAN MUNICIPALITIES AND REGIONS
EUROPEAN SECTION OF UNITED CITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS**

8 MARCH – INTERNATIONAL WOMEN’S DAY

CALL TO THE EUROPEAN LOCAL AND REGIONAL AUTHORITIES COMMIT THEMSELVES TO EQUALITY OF WOMEN AND MEN IN THEIR LOCAL/REGIONAL AREA

Address by the Chair of the Committee of women elected representatives of the Council of European Municipalities and Regions, Jocelyne Bougeard, to European local and regional decision makers.

On 8th March we will celebrate the International Women’s Day. Equality of women and men Equality of women and men constitutes a fundamental right for all, and an inalienable value founding every democracy. But despite numerous instances of formal recognition and progress made, equality of women and men in daily life is still not a reality.

I call on European local and regional political leaders to contribute in making gender equality a priority of the political agenda at local/regional level.

In 2006, CEMR launched, with the support of the European Commission, the European Charter for Equality of Women and Men in Local Life. The Charter, which has been signed by almost 900 local and regional governments in Europe so far, is a real tool to implement equality of women and men in your territory.

As the spheres of governance closest to the citizens, local and regional authorities represent the levels best placed to combat the persistence and the reproduction of inequalities, and to promote a truly egalitarian society. They can, through their competences, and through co-operation with the whole range of local actors, undertake concrete actions to improve women’s lives and thus benefit as well to the whole society.

By signing the Charter, local and regional authorities make a formal public commitment to the principle of equality of women and men, and to implement, within their territory, the commitments set out within the Charter. I invite you, on the occasion of 8th March, to take part in this initiative and thus participate in the strengthening of our democracy.

Chair of the CEMR Committee of women elected representatives of local and regional authorities

Jocelyne Bougeard