The European Committee of the Regions and the Romanian Presidency of the Council of the European Union
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Under the motto “Cohesion, a common European value”, Romania will lead the EU Presidency during a decisive year for the future of our Union. It will be held during discussions on the next EU budget, a year when the next European Parliament is expected to be elected by citizens from 27, not 28, member states. Romania has rightly placed cohesion, competitiveness, growth and common values at the heart of its Presidency. We need to rebuild the EU around these priorities, bringing it closer to its citizens. This can only be achieved together, with and from our cities, regions, towns and villages.

We all need to be more vocal about what the EU is and does, demonstrating that European cohesion and prosperity can only be achieved through cooperation. The EU needs to be more responsive to local needs and increase citizen’s engagement so concerns are not only heard, but acted upon. Our Committee is working to create a new way to ensure citizens’ views directly shape EU decisions in partnership with local and regional governments.

A social, cohesive and inclusive Europe needs investment. Our Committee has fought hard to protect regional investment - cohesion policy and rural development – so every region, rich and poor, can benefit. Cuts and centralising EU funds will hamper the ability of regions and cities to strengthen territorial cooperation, create jobs, promote social inclusion and show the added value of the EU to their communities.

Coupled with sound investment, we need to ensure every EU law improves daily life. We need to strengthen the EU’s principle of subsidiarity – where decisions should be taken by those closest to citizens. 70% of all EU laws are delivered by local and regional governments so they need less paperwork and more autonomy. They need a greater say in the EU so it delivers. This does not mean less Europe with less legislation, but a more effective Europe with better legislation.

With sufficient funds and effective EU laws, local and regional governments can contribute to tackling climate change. It is cities, regions and towns that are greening our economies cutting air pollution, making our transport sustainable, our homes energy efficient and recycling waste. The fight against climate change will be fought and won in our regions and cities.

These points form the basis of the Summit of Regions and Cities on 14-15 March in Bucharest. Together, with our Romanian Delegation led by President Negoiță, and the Romanian EU Presidency, the Summit – entitled “ReNew Europe” – will demonstrate that regions and cities are at the forefront of the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, which should become the EU’s over-arching long-term economic model. The Summit’s Declaration will be the message of all EU regional and local governments to the EU27 national governments showing that the future of Europe needs its regions and cities, and the regions and cities need Europe. Only together can we create a more united, citizens’ Europe.
Over time, we have been key players on the world stage, and the decisions we have made have shaped world history, at key moments. Now we, Romania, again have perhaps one of the most important roles: we are the gateway to Europe. We won our freedom 30 years ago; we worked together to earn our place in the great European family and, in March 2019, we are pleased and honoured to be your hosts. This is not a throwaway introduction, as it may seem, but rather a sincere one, a note on which to welcome you and a “thank you” because, together, we can be strong.

And speaking of power and strength, in Romania, municipalities are the driving force of the economy. Three quarters of our country’s GDP comes from activity at that level, and for us as mayors, the responsibility that derives from this is enormous. By running successful projects and managing to attract private investment, we can ensure the wellbeing of the people we represent and provide quality public services. Well-performing local government is our main objective. This requires better regulation, exchanges of experience and the ability to learn from each other and to adapt successful models to the local needs of our communities.

While at national level, through the Association of Romanian Municipalities, we are actively and directly involved in the decision-making process concerning local government in our country, at European level, through the European Committee of the Regions, we also play our part in influencing the course of action. The CoR strives to promote cohesion policy and subsidiarity, and the direct link that is established between us, its members, is fundamental for the 27 Member States, which have their individual cultures and ways of working, but are united in a common purpose: the wellbeing of all Europeans. And, in Europe, securing that wellbeing starts with each individual town, city, municipality and region.

Welcome to Romania! Welcome to Bucharest! And best wishes for the work ahead!
The European Committee of the Regions

Renewing Europe with its regions and cities

The European Committee of the Regions (CoR) pursues a communication approach based on the principle of “reconnecting Europe with its citizens through a focused, two-way communication centred on its members”. In so doing, the CoR builds its communication activities in partnership and cooperation with a “network-of-networks” approach involving its members, associations and local and regional governments and their networks on the one hand and the EU Institutions, in particular the European Parliament, the European Commission and the Council and their networks on the other.

The 2019 Communication Plan will take forward the president’s ambition to improve the role and impact of the CoR by increasing its visibility and enhancing cooperation and communication, in particular with all EU regional and local authorities and their associations.

In what is going to be a crucial year for the future of the CoR and of the EU, the over-riding challenge will be that of demonstrating the added value of involving regions and cities in EU decision-making. The CoR must build on the success stories of the 25 years of its existence and show concrete achievements.

The CoR implements its communication activities through up to three campaigns, which present an integrated set of tools and channels to enhance the visibility and impact of the assembly’s political work:

**Campaign 1:** Engaging regional and local politicians for the future of Europe

**Campaign 2:** Investing in regions and cities

**Campaign 3:** Regions and cities delivering a sustainable Europe

Beyond the three campaigns, adequate coverage of the legislative work and other institutional activities should be generated from issues which promise to have the greatest impact. This work includes contributing to the President’s priorities (“four chantiers”) for the term of office:

- energising the functioning of the CoR statutory bodies;
- fostering our cooperation with the EU Institutions and our impact;
- strengthening our bonds with cities, regions and their associations;
- leveraging communication, dialogue with citizens and standing in public opinion.

Moreover, the 25th anniversary of the CoR will feature in an appropriate way across the communication work.
The Romanian Associations of Cities and Regions

The Association of Communes of Romania was established in 1997 as an association of local authorities, having as members the communes from Romania.

The number of A.Co.R’s members is about 2000 communes, from all counties of Romania. The Association, through its members, covers 87% of the country’s territory and 48% of the population, acting in the territory through the county branches, of which 39 have their own legal personality.

The Association of Communes of Romania aims to a unitary representation of the interests of the members, both in relation with the central institutions, as well as with those from the European or international level. Since 2006, the Association is a full member of the Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CCRE / CEMR), becoming also a member of the United Cities and Local Government (UCLG). Since 2005 is represented in the Committee of the Regions as observers, and since January 1, 2007, has three members and three alternates in this forum. Since 2009, the Association is a member of the Network of Associations of Local Authorities of South-East Europe (NALAS), where it held the presidency for a year, between May 2015 to May 2016, and from May 24, 2013 has formed the Council of Local Authorities of Romania and the Republic of Moldova together with the Congress of Local Authorities of the Republic of Moldova. On May 22, 2015, it was adopted unanimously, THE STATEMENT CALL of C.A.L.R.R.M. in Alba Iulia.

The Association annually organizes the ordinary session of the General Assembly, attended by more than 500 member communes, as well as members of the Romanian Government. ACoR organizes, in partnership with the National Agency of Civil Servants (NACS) and the National Institute of Administration (NIA), as well as with private training firms, courses for the training of local elected officials and civil servants from communes.

The county branches of ACoR carry out cooperative activities, one of the most successful being the public internal audit. Thus, in January 2019, in 26 counties of Romania, ACoR exercises through the County Branches, the internal public audit activity through cooperation, to the communes member in the county. Thus, a total of 1,290 communes out of 2,861 in the whole country, about 45%, are beneficiaries of this innovative system.

Besides the public internal audit activity, a number of 15 County Branches of ACoR perform other activities through cooperation, including financial accounting, public relations, urban planning and spatial planning, etc.

In the period 2010-2016, the Association implemented projects from European non-reimbursable post-accession funds worth over 25,000,000 lei, co-financed through the European Social Fund. Currently, ACoR has 4 projects funded by the ESF and the EEA and Norwegian Grants 2014-2021, projects that worth over 14 million lei.
The Association is involved in periodical organization of the Franco-Romanian Decentralized Cooperation Forum, together with the Ministry of Regional Development and Public Administration and the Embassy of the French Republic in Romania, as well as the Belgian-Romanian Decentralized Cooperation Forum, in partnership with the Embassy of the Kingdom of Belgium in Romania. The representatives of the County Branches of the Association of Communes of Romania, for the most part, actively participate in the works of regional development councils organized at the level of the development regions.

The President of the Association of Communes of Romania is Mr. Emil DRĂGHICI – the Mayor of Vulcana-Băi commune, Dâmbovița county.

Romanian Municipalities Association (AMR) founded in 1990 is a legal entity of private law, non-profit, non-governmental and apolitical organization, established to promote and protect the common interests of local public administration authorities, to deal with and manage the public needs on behalf of and for the interest of the local communities.

AMR includes all the 103 municipalities of Romania and the 6 districts of Bucharest Municipality, representing 109 members, about 10.5 million inhabitants. AMR members have the possibility to involve in the consultation and elaboration of the legislative projects. AMR is represented in the European Committee of Regions (CoR) and holds the Presidency of the Romanian National Delegation in CoR. AMR is represented in the European Council of Municipalities and Regions (CEMR), the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of European Council (CPLRE) and Global Network of Cities and Local and Regional Authorities (UCLG). AMR is a Supporting Organization for the implementation of the Covenant of Mayors (CoM). AMR is a member of the Association of European Cities and Regions for Culture "LIKE", of the Association of Local Democracy Agencies (ALDA) and founder of of the Federation of Local Authorities in Romania (FALR). Starting 2007, AMR has a Representation Office next to the institutions of the European Union (EU) in Brussels, which supports the involvement of municipalities in dialogue with them in order to promote the general interest of AMR in the process of EU policies development and implementation. Services offered to members by the AMR Office in Brussels are of information and support to sustainable partnerships developing with authorities and missions and promotion events organization in Brussels. Activities developed by AMR being structured on the fields of interest for its members: participation in the legislation consultation, lobby and public policies, communication and training, cooperation and development, projects and partnerships, attracting financing sources for the municipalities. Leading Bodies of AMR: General Assembly, Steering Committee, the President. President: Mr. Robert Sorin NEGOIȚĂ - Mayor of 3rd District of Bucharest Municipality; Executive President: Mr. Ilie Gavril BOLOJAN – Mayor of Oradea Municipality; First Vice-President: Gheorghe FALCĂ – Mayor of Arad Municipality; First Vice-President: Mihai GENOIU – Mayor of Craiova Municipality; General Director: Constantin MITACHE.
The Association of Romanian Towns is a non-governmental, apolitical, non-lucrative organization representing the interests of 216 small urban localities. If at the time of its establishment the Association had only 21 members as provided by the legislation in force for registration, it gradually increased to 185 at this time.

Since its inception, 17 years ago, the Association of Romanian Towns has set itself the goal of becoming an active dialogue partner, supporting the central public administration’s legislative agenda, trying to outline its expertise from the local level for changes at smaller or larger scale. Together these years of existence we have been able to make a substantial contribution to the strengthening of the local public administration as well as to the improvement of the administrative act in general. For a number of years, our association has been recognized as a real, national and European partner, an important actor in public negotiations on legislative developments and public policies on the fate of small urban communities.

Important laws such as local public administration, local public finances, decentralization or salary of civil servants are normative acts to which the Association of Romanian Towns expressed its views through its working groups, thus, for many times its point of view being included in the final text allowing Romanian local authorities to take another step towards an European administration.

The President of the Association of Romanian Towns is Mr. Madalin-Ady TEODOSESCU, Mayor of Bals.
Created in 1993, the National Union of County Councils of Romania (UNCJR) is a non-governmental organization representing the interests of the 41 County Councils that exist in Romania.

UNCJR seeks the effective involvement of its members in developing policies with local impact, their increased involvement in the absorption of structural funds and a better implementation of European policies, through communication and consultation. The representation of UNCJR members to the national authorities materializes mainly through participation in negotiations, round tables, debates on draft normative acts, participation in consultation working groups and committees with central ministries.

The County Councils coordinate the activities of local councils, in order to provide public services on the basis of counties' interests, initiating and promoting projects and programmes, as well as encouraging partnerships with institutional or non-institutional actors. UNCJR is committed to foster a professional local administration, to facilitate the joint work of local councils on specific policies and projects, to encourage partnerships and to identify the most suitable partners for its members, providing, in the meantime, a best use of the European agenda and opportunities for its members.

UNCJR members also actively participate in the strengthening of local and regional democracy in Europe through its representatives in the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe.

UNCJR is an active member of the European Confederation of Local Intermediate Authorities (www.cepli.eu) and a CEMR (The Council of European Municipalities and Regions) member.

The European Office of UNCJR in Brussels was opened in 2004, its main role being to identify and share knowledge of partnership proposals in European projects, to manage financing opportunities through European Programmes, to participate in debates organized by the European institutions and to provide support to the members of the Romanian delegation to the Committee of the Regions.

The president of the National Union of County Councils of Romania is Mr. Marian OPRIȘAN, president of Vrancea County Council.
The 8th European Summit of Regions and Cities in Bucharest will be the largest gathering of mayors, regional Presidents and local leaders from across the EU in 2019.

Together with leaders of the EU institutions and governments, the Summit will debate the future of the European Union by rebuilding it from its municipalities, cities and regions. A Summit Declaration will be adopted, addressed to the EU Summit of 27 Heads of State and Government to be held in Sibiu on 9 May 2019, as well as the incoming EU institutions.
European Committee of the Regions’ President Karl-Heinz Lambertz:

“The Summit will be a blueprint on how to build a more inclusive, democratic and united future of Europe that is closer to its citizens. Together, we will explain why the cities and regions need the European Union and why the European Union needs its cities and regions”
What is the European Committee of the Regions (CoR)?

The CoR is the European Union’s body representing regions and local authorities. Its members hold a regional or local electoral mandate and participate in the EU’s legislative process.

Members of the European Committee of the Regions

President
Karl-Heinz LAMBERTZ
(from Eupen/BE)
Term of office: 2 and 1/2 years
• leads the CoR’s work
• chairs its plenary sessions
• acts as CoR’s official representative

First Vice-President
Markku MARKKULA
(from Espoo/FI)
Term of office: 2 and 1/2 years
• leads the CoR’s work in tandem with the President

Plenary
CoR Members gather in Plenary 5 to 6 times/year for 2-3 days in Brussels to vote and adopt opinions.

5 Political Priorities

A European economy driven by its regions and cities
The territorial dimension of EU legislation matters
A simpler, more connected Europe
Stability and cooperation at the EU’s borders
Europe of the citizens is Europe of the future
What is the European Committee of the Regions (CoR)?

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CoR Commissions

6 Commissions (groups of Members) prepare draft opinions, reports and resolutions to be submitted to the Plenary Assembly.

- Territorial Cohesion Policy and EU Budget (COTER)
- Environment, Climate Change and Energy (ENVE)
- Economic Policy (ECON)
- Citizenship, Governance, Institutional and External Affairs (CIVEX)
- Natural Resources (NAT)
- Social Policy, Education, Employment, Research and Culture (SEDEC)

How CoR opinions are created

1. European Commission proposal of a legal act or EP or Council request or CoR own initiative
2. Rapporteur prepares draft opinion and consults stakeholders
3. Discussion and adoption of draft opinion by CoR Commission
4. CoR rapporteur meets EP rapporteur(s), Council Presidency, EC services
5. Adoption of the opinion by the CoR Plenary Session
6. Publication and information of the EU institutions

Output

over 70% of EU legislation has a direct impact at local or regional level

70%

In 2017, the CoR passed:

- 71 opinions
- 92 events
- 113 events

In 2017 the CoR held 113 events and contributed to the organisation of Reflecting on Europe events.
The members of Romanian delegation

Membership of the Committee of the Regions is a good opportunity to get in touch with similar institutions for current and future collaborations and project proposals, learn the latest news about the future of the Union, budget, processes and procedures, but especially about methods to overcome administrative, bureaucratic or governance barriers. I think it is absolutely necessary for Neamț County to be directly connected to the European bodies involved in the guidelines establishment and decision making processes, so that local development plans fit into EU long-term development strategies.*

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Commissions: COTER and SEDEC
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**Ionel ARSENE**
President of Neamț County Council

Our role in the Committee of the Regions is to represent the interest of local communities and to make their voice heard at European Union level. Subsidiarity has created an environment where people have a voice in everyday affairs and bottom-up decision making is truly works. Key objectives can’t be achieved without the involvement expertise of local and regional authorities. We "deliver" information in order to make an informed decision which affects the community’s everyday life – this is our main commitment in the CoR.*

Full member
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**Csaba BORBOLY**
President of Harghita County Council

The National Delegation of Romania has the moral obligation, from the history, to militate for the materialization of a special agreement between the European Committee of Regions and the Congress of Local Authorities of the Republic of Moldova - CALM.

As urban-administrative territorial units can compete for the European Capital of Culture title, and those in rural areas are discriminated, without a similar competition, although the surface area of the latter is over 90%, and the population over 64%, I propose launching the EUROPEAN RURAL CAPITAL competition.*

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Commissions: CIVEX and NAT
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**Emil DRĂGHICI**
Mayor of Vulcana Băi, Dâmbovița County
President of the Association of Communes in Romania
In the European Union, local administrations share common values, respecting at the same time the diversity of the regions they form.

Dialogue is our chance to bring more value by considering diversity as an opportunity, but also as a major challenge. We recently organized in Arad, in collaboration with the Committee of the Regions, the first debate with citizens, because it is very important for us, for the local communities, to carry out debates regarding major social topics. We have to feel Europeans in our decisions and take them as such."

Full member
Political group: EPP
Present commissions: COTER and NAT
Past Commissions: COTER, ECOS, CONST, EDUC
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I, the local elected – representative of The Association of Communes from Romania, member of The Committee of Regions, work for an active European citizenship, that encourages the exchanges and cooperation with citizens and between them, for an European Union with social character, that promotes equality between women and men, as well as the equality in rights and equal opportunities for all, an European Union in which young people benefit from education and formation, whom could study and find a workplace anywhere on the continent, an European Union that preserves national identity, cultural patrimony and promotes cultural diversity."

Full member
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The European Committee of the Regions provides local and regional authorities with a platform in which they can directly bring their interests into the European legislative process and contribute to the determination of the final outcome.

In the context of Romania’s taking over of the Presidency of the Council of the European Union, both myself and Ialomita County Council are convinced that this unique opportunity will make Romania a credible and persistent European partner dedicated to reforming and strengthening the European project for the benefit of all citizens in the member countries.

Success, Romania! Success, European Union!”

Victor MORARU  
President of Ialomița County Council

Local administration is a complex, dynamic area and is a key element for the sustainable development of all local communities. At European level, the national delegation of Romania to the CoR militates to narrow the gaps between Member States, and this can only be achieved if we actively concentrate on economic and social development at local and regional level, because cities, municipalities and regions are real engines of economy of each state. In Romania, over 70% of GDP is generated by municipalities. I believe that this speaks for itself about the responsibilities we have as mayors in our countries of origin and equally as members of Romania’s representatives at the CoR.”

Robert NEGOIȚĂ  
Mayor of Sector 3, Bucharest

Broadband Internet is an opportunity for the development of local communities since broadband will be the highway of the future. In the region where I come from, high-speed internet and promoting entrepreneurship in the field of information and communications technology can be the way to keep young people in the locality and to halt the exodus of intelligence (the phenomenon of “brain drain”). It does not matter that you are at the top of the mountain or in the Danube Delta, if you have high-speed internet you can do your work just as well without having to be physically in the big urban areas. That is why it is very important for the administration to intervene through public investment so that rural areas or distant regions have a chance to grow using broadband internet.”

Alin NICA  
Mayor of Dudeștii Noi, Timișoara County

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Political group: EPP  
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The European Committee of the Regions is the European Union's assembly of local and regional representatives, thus being the closest organism to the citizens.

CoR is the most adequate mean of communication through which, by decision-making, the European Union and the European Commission, convey to the EU citizens that their main purpose, as institutions, is to raise the living standard of the European community.

Therefore, I strongly believe in the development of the CoR within the European Parliament’s future legislature and I consider that it is absolutely necessary to enhance the collaboration between the European Parliament, The European Commission and the European Committee of the Regions, for the benefit of all European citizens.”

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By succeeding, through the local and regional authorities, to bring the voice of the communities in the core of the European legislative process, the Committee of the Regions contributes, in a substantial manner, to the achievement of an objective essential for the future of the Union and to the accomplishment of a priority of the Romanian Presidency to the EU Council. Having a national agenda constructed around the interests of the European citizen, the efforts of our delegation must continue to focus on the need of consolidation of the relationship between the European institutions and each and every citizen, by encouraging a wider participation in the decision-making process.”

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Small communities, such as the Transylvanian mountain town that I represent, bring about not only a rich cultural heritage, but also core European values as transparency and integrity. In this respect, I carried out a rapporteur’s work on public procurement; therein I made sure that our procurement practices across the continent are meeting the essential European principle of subsidiarity, believing that multilevel governance was to be fully embedded in procedures at all levels of public administration in the Member States. Public procurement in the EU, I showed, is not a mere administrative procedure where the public authority is buying products or services, but a strategic instrument that allows government, either local or national, reach key results in their policies. We were striving for increasing efficiency and competitiveness of procurement, but also for transparency, fighting corruption, and, ideally, for instilling democratic practices.”

Full member
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Commissions: COTER and ECON
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The European Union is based on a series of fundamental principles that all Member States, implicitly Romania, have to comply with in order to assure and protect their sovereignty, but also economic prosperity in a safe and secure environment. The actions of our country and our county at the European level have been and will remain focused on supporting a consolidated Europe. This way, democratic principles, human rights, fundamental freedoms, equality in justice, sovereignty, free market economy, good governance, environment protection and peace and stability at regional and international level will be complied with.”

**Bogdan Andrei TOADER**

*President of Prahova County Council*

Member of European Committee of Regions and president of Constanta County Council in Romania, I organized and supported initiatives and actions at European level. Besides the contributions to the events development I permanently bring my support and the one of my team to successful developed projects, such as: the project “VIOLET - preserve traditional buildings through Energy reduction”, in collaboration with specialized institutions from Germany, Spain, Holland, France and Cyprus, financed by INTERREG EUROPE Programme. In 2017, our institution has organized for the first time in Romania the European Chess Championship, which gathered 1200 players from 24 countries. In 2018, I have signed the partnership convention, for supporting the development of social assistance and child protection service, with Social Education and Assistance Institute from Brest, in France and Brest-Constanța Friendship Association. All these endeavours testify our constant preoccupation and involvement in activities with European impact on the way of territorial communities towards sustainable development.”

**Full member**

*Political Group: PES*

*Commissions: ECON and NAT*

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**Marius Horia ȚUȚUIANU**

*President of Constanța County Council*

An old saying tells us that when the wind of change is blowing, some people build shelters, others build windmills. Even since 2007, I have strongly believed that the EU structures are the windmills that Romania needs for a healthy and sustainable development. My experience, acquired in almost 16 years of local public administration, as the Mayor of Gura Humorului town, is the one that supports my presence in CoR since April 2017, a presence that will hopefully contribute to the improvement of the legal framework in which the local administrative structures of EU operate.”

**Marius URSĂCIUC**

*Mayor of Gura Humorului*

An old saying tells us that when the wind of change is blowing, some people build shelters, others build windmills. Even since 2007, I have strongly believed that the EU structures are the windmills that Romania needs for a healthy and sustainable development. My experience, acquired in almost 16 years of local public administration, as the Mayor of Gura Humorului town, is the one that supports my presence in CoR since April 2017, a presence that will hopefully contribute to the improvement of the legal framework in which the local administrative structures of EU operate.”

**Full member**

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The future of Europe should be determined by subsidiarity. I firmly believe that we need “more Europe” in regional politics and more access to European funds for regions. Regions should have a more enhanced role in shaping European policy and a stronger voice in Brussels.

We are firm adepts of the European ideal, and we fully support a sustainable European regionalism. Also, we believe it is time for the European Union to consider norms and policies regarding national minorities in Europe, as summarised in the Minority Safe Pack Initiative, in order to protect and enhance the diversity national minorities represent.

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Árpád-András ANTAL
Mayor of Sfântu Gheorghe Municipality

Our future is built on trust and people’s trust in the European institutions is closely linked to the trust they have in their local public administration, that watches on and invests in the quality of life of every citizen.

Alternate member
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Emil BOC
Mayor of Cluj-Napoca Municipality

Romania’s interest is that the European Union is strengthened from a political and economic point of view. Romania is and will remain a State fully committed to its European destiny. As Romanians and European citizens, we have the duty and the potential to contribute to the declaration of the common identity of Europe. We are stepping-up in our efforts to make our membership to the Union more and more beneficial to Romania and Romanians, as well as to the Union and its citizens. But, it is very important for Romania to take benefit from equal treatment and rights, like other member countries, in all areas of common interest of the European Union.

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Dănuț BUHĂESCU
Mayor of Uricani town
The European Union is, first of all, a union of peoples and communities, a union of citizens and his strength is in its multilevel governance model and in its diversity.

That’s why the European Committee of the Regions has become such an important institution, giving the opportunity to the actors involved in regional and local development to have their voices heard. Acting like an interface and platform for changing ideas and best practices, CoR has created a strong network that gives us the opportunity to offer better services for citizens.

Daniela CÎMPEAN
President of Sibiu County Council

Here in Sibiu, the geographic center of Romania, Europe is at home. Throughout 2019 Sibiu will be European Region of Gastronomy and seeks sustainable economic growth by integrating food in its touristic programs and events but also by improving distribution chains for local products. At the same time, on the 9th of May 2019, Sibiu will host the first European Summit ever organized in Romania, where over 27 European leaders are expected to be present. In conclusion, in Sibiu, European commitments go for a long run.

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The European Committee of the Regions and the Romanian Presidency of the Council of the European Union

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Local authorities are very much in need of the mechanisms provided by the Committee of the Regions to promote the most effective legislative rules and ideas to develop regions, cities and every locality in the European Union. The European Structural Funds are important resources for the development of Luncavița commune, and my role is to find solutions for increasing the absorption capacity of all localities in Romania.

Ștefan ILIE
Mayor of Luncavița, Tulcea County

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We, the Romanians, in reality we are like a bridge between East and West, bringing contributions in a defining manner to the European Union development, which brings prosperity and unity on the European continent.

The consolidation of democracy and institutional modernisation, the economic growth, the commercial exchanges and foreign direct investments intensification, entrepreneurship stimulation, the access to the structural and cohesion European Union funds are representing realities that have changed, the most tangible way, the day by day life of each Romanian, within the local communities.

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Viorel IONESCU
Mayor of Hirșova town

The future of Europe is not a matter to be discussed exclusively by state leaders, governments or parliaments. We demand a wide debate by which people can be encouraged to share their visions and what kind of Europe they want.

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Cornel NANU
Mayor of Cornu, Prahova County

The European Committee of the Regions represents the opportunity for the local authorities to express their views and formally engage in the European Union’s legislative process. Being the ones interacting in the front line with the citizens, the role of local authorities is to make sure that the EU legislation has a positive impact on the life of every citizen. Understanding the specificities of each region is the key in order to have a strong European Union, promoting peace and prosperity for all, regardless of the cultural diversity. Debating about the future of Europe is essential in order to guarantee its democratic advancement.

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Petre Emanoil NEAGU
President of Buzău County Council
Durable urban development is the key to a successful cohesion policy. We need a strengthening of relations between European cities. That is why the construction of the multiannual budgetary framework after the year 2020 will have to start from this premise: a better integration makes us more powerful and able to rise to the challenge and identify feasible solutions to meet those challenges. When we say Europe perhaps city names like Bruxelles, Paris or Berlin come to mind but the European Union will have to become aware of the fact that Europe also means Bacau, Piatra Neamt or Focsani. Building a common identity based on values and principles respected by all to the same extent is crucial for the future of the EU.*

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Marian PETRACHE
President of Ilfov County Council

Bucharest-Ilfov Region represents one of the Romanian economy engine, where a quarter of Romania’s GDP is produced, being on the 76th place, out of 271 European regions regarding the GDP per capita. The region is the headquarter of 25% of the private enterprises and 50% of the research institutes and business incubators in Romania. Ilfov County and Bucharest, represent the innovation and research center of Romania, hosting 23% of active innovative companies. Ilfov County Council initiated Magurele Science Park (MSP), a concept for the innovative entrepreneurship development at regional and national levels, through creation of links between industry and research. The mission of MSP is to develop innovative economy by supporting the commercialization of R&D results and spin-off systems within the universities and research institutes and capitalizing the presence of the most powerful laser in the world (ELI-NP) and the IFIN-HH Institute in its vicinity. MSP will become a hub of innovation at European level.*

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Nicolae PANDEA
Mayor of Ștefan cel Mare, Călărași County

The National Delegation of Romania has a moral obligation, to advocate for the preservation, protection and improvement of the quality of the environment, the protection of people’s health, the prudent and rational use of natural resources.

As rural space accounts for almost 90% of Europe’s territory and over 60 of the population, it must be firmly acted to store and preserve it because it is a vital area for a country, both in its dimensions and in the complex effects it generates. It is the main source of natural raw materials - agricultural and non-agricultural - as well as the area for the elimination of noxes in urban agglomerations, as well as recreation and anti stress conditions for the population.*

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Cosmin NECULA
Mayor of Bacău Municipality

Durable urban development is the key to a successful cohesion policy. We need a strengthening of relations between European cities. That is why the construction of the multiannual budgetary framework after the year 2020 will have to start from this premise: a better integration makes us more powerful and able to rise to the challenge and identify feasible solutions to meet those challenges. When we say Europe perhaps city names like Bruxelles, Paris or Berlin come to mind but the European Union will have to become aware of the fact that Europe also means Bacau, Piatra Neamt or Focsani. Building a common identity based on values and principles respected by all to the same extent is crucial for the future of the EU.*
If political leaders have vision and courage, the EU will have a successful future.

I am a Mayor in Zlatna town, attested in 158 A.D. It was a castra in the Roman Empire. In 1990 the city was polluted and dirty. It is now modern, with infrastructure made with European funds over 50 million Euros. Zlatna is a REASON that the European Union is necessary. That it has a future! If it makes a political update to the reality of the 21st Century. If it puts the interests of small communities above the interests of governments and multinational companies. If all the opinions of the European citizens are heard in Brussels...”

Silviu PONORAN
Mayor of Zlatna town

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At the regional and European level, we have always pushed for combining efforts and engaging local and regional authorities in setting up, implementing and materializing new and viable programs and initiatives with a beneficial territorial impact, both on cross-border cooperation and on regional partnerships.

In addition, by maximizing the absorption of European funds, within the implementation of the Integrated Strategy for Sustainable Development of the Danube Delta, Tulcea County can demonstrate to the external partners in the Eastern neighbourhood the benefits of belonging to the European construction, a priority promoted constantly within the Committee of the Regions.”

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Situated in the heart of Transylvania, Cluj is the most dynamic county in Romania, which has won the title of “developed county” primarily due to its well-trained citizens in regions’ universities. This vertiginous development could not take place without accessing European funds in both administration and private sectors. The County Council has as a top priority the “Europeanization” of the region in all sectors and, in order to achieve this goal, we use all the levers offered by the European Union. Both myself and the Cluj County Council will continue to represent the County’s citizens in the European institutions.”

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Horia TEODORESCU
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Created in 1994 following the signing of the Maastricht Treaty, the European Committee of the Regions is the EU’s assembly of 350 regional and local representatives from all 28 Member States, representing over 507 million Europeans. Its mission is to involve regional and local authorities and the communities they represent in the EU’s decision-making process and to inform them about EU policies. The European Commission, the European Parliament and the Council are obliged to consult the Committee in policy areas affecting regions and cities. It can appeal to the Court of Justice of the European Union if its rights are infringed or it believes that EU law infringes the subsidiarity principle or fails to respect regional or local powers.

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