

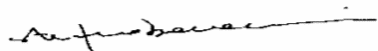
Declaration

on the opinions of the European Commission and the decision of the European Council on the application of Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine for membership of the European Union

*The European Council has taken into account the recommendations of the European Commission and recognised the **European perspective of Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova and Georgia**, and has decided to **grant candidate country status to Ukraine and Moldova**. It is ready to grant candidate country status to **Georgia** as soon as the priorities set out in the Commission's Opinion on Georgia's application for membership have been addressed. The European Commission is invited to report to the Council on the fulfilment of the conditions specified in the Commission's opinions on the respective membership applications as part of its regular enlargement package.*

1. The European Commission's opinions underline the importance of the decentralisation process and public administration reforms in the three countries, as key components of the political criteria for EU membership.
2. The Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR), together with PLATFORMA, have provided support to their members, the national associations of local and regional governments in the EU Eastern neighborhood, in strengthening local autonomy, institutional capacity and fostering multilevel governance reforms.
3. The CEMR has been facilitating the capacity-building of local and regional governments and their representative associations for sustainable local development and reinforcing decentralised cooperation with local governments in Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine.
4. The CEMR is ready to continue to underpin its member associations from Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine in their contribution to the EU membership process. In particular, CEMR will continue to back Local Governments and their National Associations to localise the EU (e.g., Associations Agreements, EU enlargement package, Green Deal) and Global agendas (e.g.; localising Sustainable Development Goals, Paris Agreement).
5. In this context, CEMR commits to defending a *Trio* holistic approach and is ready to accompany the **EU accession process of Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia** from a local perspective.
6. The CEMR insists on the **important role of decentralised cooperation** (e.g., peer exchanges, municipal partnerships, mentorship, study visits, twinning, seminars, and trainings) to accompany the needed institutional reforms and ensure a sustainable integration process. Notably, to overcome socio-economic difficulties, in the emergency and recovery phases of the post-COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic and post-war in Ukraine.
7. Granting candidate status to the three countries will have a significant impact on the consolidation of the **local democracy, local autonomy and decentralisation reforms** crucial for the three countries' long-term sustainable development. It would also allow local governments to have their specific rights and be better equipped with technologies, practices, administrative and financial tools for this important responsibility.

In the upcoming membership negotiations, CEMR hopes that these aspects will be taken into consideration by the European institutions and competent authorities in support of the candidate status of Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia to the European Union.



Stefano Bonaccini,
CEMR President



Local & Regional
Europe

About CEMR and PLATFORMA

The Council of European Municipalities and Regions ([CEMR](#)) is the broadest organisation of local and regional authorities in Europe. Its members are over 60 national associations of municipalities and regions from 41 European countries. Together these associations represent some 100 000 local and regional authorities.

CEMR's objectives are twofold: to influence European legislation on behalf of local and regional authorities and to provide a platform for exchange between its member associations and their elected officials and experts.

[PLATFORMA](#) is the pan-European coalition network of towns and regions and their national, European and global associations active in city-to-city and region-to-region development cooperation led by CEMR.

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