

Gothenburg, Sweden
2024-10-05

Dear members,

In a time when society face new and complex challenges, the regions of Europe are becoming more and more important. Regions hold important keys to cooperation and problem solving for municipalities and individuals in evolving areas.

Several issues have been addressed in the Chamber of Regions, indicating the importance of active regions, cooperating on development issues and developing new policies. Those issues range from handling consequences of climate change and natural disasters, the need for sustainable energy and public transport, fostering a circular economy as well as meeting health care challenges such as the pandemic. As a regional councillor of the Västra Götaland Region in Sweden, I am committed to these issues.

Europe is changing fast. Green transition and digital transformation are opportunities to utilize. At the same time we face the challenge of changing demographics. While young people grow up in a digital world, the older generations risk falling behind. Functioning democracy at all levels require generations, authorities and civil society to work together. Bridging digital gaps will be a key factor. New and different forms of communication will be important also for regions and for the Chamber of Regions. In my professional work I have been involved with communication and digital development and I recognize that the capacity for communication is a key part of efficiency and staying relevant to citizens.

There is a strength in extending border region cooperation, building regional development on the idea of being neighbours and equals in a connected Europe. It can also ease rural areas dependency on states as well as ease pressure on municipalities.

This is a time when preparedness and resilience need to be in focus. Regions offer a platform for cooperation between municipalities and civil society to prepare and act together in a crisis. Border regions can help sustain each other in times of crises, conflict and even war. Human rights need to be safeguarded especially for people who have to leave their homes behind. Women and children are especially exposed to risks and need protection. Local and regional democracy needs to be upheld.

Public health and health care services is at the core of resilience. It is also a regional responsibility in many member states. That is also at the core of my interests as President of the board for Sweden's largest hospital, Sahlgrenska University hospital where I have been a member of the board the last 10 years.

The Council of Europe safeguards respect for human rights, democracy and the rule of law. The regions of the member states have responsibilities and opportunities to be tools for a positive development for our societies. Seeking inclusion rather than exclusion, cooperation rather than division in a time when polarization is creating a political climate of conflict rather than cooperation. The Chamber of Regions have a serious role to play in the developing situation in Europe.

I am experienced and motivated for the Presidency of the Chamber of Regions of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe. My political background as member of the group of Socialists, Social Democrats, Greens and Progressives, will be the cornerstone of my aspiration. Within my capabilities I will be active and supportive of the objectives of the Chamber of Regions and the Congress.



Cecilia Dalman Eek

Regional councillor Region Västra Götaland in Sweden
President Sahlgrenska University hospital