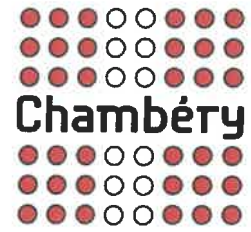




BASHKIA KORÇË



DECENTRALISED COOPERATION AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE CITY OF KORCA (Albania) & THE CITY OF CHAMBÉRY (France)

Context

As a city of passage and exchange, Chambéry is naturally turned towards the world and has been drawn by international cultural influences. In Chambéry, 12% of the population is of foreign nationality. There are more than 100 international NGOs in the Chambéry area, and every year the Savoie Mont Blanc University welcomes more than 1,500 foreign students. This international character contributes to the richness of Chambéry: a cosmopolitan city where life is good.

Tourism, economy, culture, sport, education: Chambéry's openness to the world mobilises many actors, citizens, companies, NGOs and institutions on joint projects that contribute to the identity of the region. In an increasingly interconnected world, the city's openness is one of the keys to its development, enabling it to reinvent itself, keep in step with the issues of our time and live well together across cultural and generational divides.

Since 1957, the City of Chambéry has chosen to turn this context into a proactive, innovative and assertive international policy. It is involved in cooperation projects with the Cities of Turin (Italy), Albstadt (Germany), Ouahigouya (Burkina Faso), Caza de Bcharré (Lebanon), Shawinigan (Canada), Zahngjiakou (China) and Taroudant (Morocco).

With a view to developing its international action, the City of Chambéry wanted to consider opening up a new cooperation with a city from a country wishing to join the European Union, in order to contribute to the cohesion policy, which aims to jointly develop the potential of different territories.

Albania applied for EU membership in April 2009 and was granted candidate country status in June 2014. The EU held its first intergovernmental conference with Albania in July 2022.

Through the French Embassy in Albania and a citizen from Chambéry who had worked in cooperation in the area, the City of Korça was identified as a town potentially interested in entering into decentralised cooperation with a French town.

Korça city, located in the southeastern part of Albania, is one of the most important regional center, with a competitive economy, dynamic entrepreneurship, developed agriculture and tourism. The city politics are focused on innovation development by taking special care of the environment. It is also considered as an urban center of national importance having a great number of population, very good administration, and a huge number of economic, artistic and cultural events.

With the increase of the administrative area were increased even the number of services, activities and facilities. These include public and administrative services such as Public University, a Regional Hospital, etc; numerous economic activities (industrial and business activities, banks etc); cultural institutions (7 museums - National Museum of Education, National Museum of Medieval Art, National Archeological Museum, "Vangjush Mio" Museum, "Bratko" Museum, "Gjon Mili" Museum and Digital Art Gallery); important events such as Beer Fest, International Symposium "Sculpture of the Park", Spring Fair, Korça's Carnival, Korça Cult, International colony of painters "Mio's Days", and New Year's Fair; important cultural and touristic attractions such as "Andon Zako Cajupi" Theatre (recently reconstructed), the Old Bazaar (an important historical and architectural site of the Ballkan, which gives to the visitor a clear view of the development of Korca city as an important economic city), the pedestrian area (newly reconstructed offering numerous services and facilities) etc.

Municipality's local economy could be described as rural, semi-urban and is mainly related to the following sectors: Tourism, Agriculture, Textile Production, Commerce and Business.

Korca city is well known in the wine and beer production. Numerous wine canteens are found in Korca, using grapes from native win yards. The first Beer Factory was opened in this city dating round 1929. Actually the factory is uses a professionalized technological process which makes Korca Beer unique in whole Albania.

Digital transformation and technological advancements have revolutionized our world and daily lives. Technology has challenged every area of life by creating new spaces which can bring community development advantages. The new era asks for innovation and creativity to keep up with the new challenges and transform the benefits into competitive advantages. Focused on achieving our social and economic goals and in line with the Sustainable Development Goals, we believe that our region can actively participate in the new digital/economic era by making the most of the region's competitive advantages and keeping up the sustained commitment towards participating and competing in the global market.

Through this cooperation Municipality of Korça aims to develop the most important fields, through various projects and assistance, such as Tourism, ICT Program and Agriculture / Food processing Industry, sharing experience and good practices between the two countries.

Considering

- The will of the City of Korça and the City of Chambéry to be fully involved in the privileged cooperation between France and Albania;
- The legislation in force in each country allowing local authorities to sign a decentralised cooperation agreement;

The following has been agreed

- The City of Korça represented by its Mayor, Mr Sotiraq Filo,
- The City of Chambéry represented by its Mayor, Mr Thierry Repentin,

Have decided by mutual agreement to enter into a relationship of decentralised cooperation.

Article 1: Purpose

The purpose of this non-binding agreement is to define the guidelines and specify the framework and procedures for cooperation between the partners, on a basis of equality, trust, transparency and mutual interest.

The aim of the cooperation is to develop opportunities for all citizens, NGOs, companies and institutions by contributing to the mutual attractiveness of the two territories. It also enables the organisation of exchanges and joint projects in the following areas:

- Combating climate change, energy transition and sustainable mobility;
- Regional attractiveness, development of tourism and protection of natural areas;
- Cultural influence and Francophonie
- Economic development and innovation;
- Education and youth.

Decentralised cooperation is the framework within which the two institutions carry out joint projects and make their respective contributions. Each of the local authorities is the contracting authority for the projects carried out in its territory. The local authorities may, at their discretion, delegate project management to other parties based on specific agreements.

Article 2: Commitment of the Parties

The City of Chambéry and the City of Korça undertake to:

- Integrate this agreement into the local development strategies of each territory;
- Promote this cooperation agreement and the related communication tools among the partners and potential beneficiaries;
- Ensure that these exchanges run smoothly, particularly with regard to reception, local transport, accommodation and the integration of the various partners in their home towns;
- Define and implement a system for monitoring and evaluating relations between the two Cities.

Article 3 : Related parties

Each of the signatories undertakes to encourage, as far as is necessary and in accordance with its competences, the establishment of partnerships between the actors in the fields covered by this agreement

Article 4: Procedures for implementing cooperation actions

Cooperative actions are developed by mutual agreement and in accordance with the specific characteristics of each of the partners. The parties undertake to implement these projects through their own operating and decision-making bodies. In addition to their own funds, the partners may call on any source of additional co-financing.

Article 5: Validity of the agreement

The cooperation agreement is concluded for an indefinite period. The provisions of this agreement may be amended or supplemented by mutual agreement.

Signed in Chambéry, on 2 February 2024

For the City of Chambéry

Thierry Repentin

Mayor



For the City of Korça

Sotiraq Filo

Mayor