



Doc. 11626
03 June 2008

Regionalisation in Europe

Reply to Recommendation¹: Recommendation 1811 (2007)
Committee of Ministers

1. The Committee of Ministers has attentively examined Parliamentary Assembly [Recommendation 1811 \(2007\)](#) on regionalisation in Europe which it transmitted to the European Committee on Local and Regional Democracy (CDLR) for comments; these are appended.
2. The Committee of Ministers follows with interest the ongoing debate on regional self-government, and will continue to bring attention to it in the light of the experience obtained in implementing the European Charter of Local Self-Government. In fact, as stated by the European Ministers responsible for Local and Regional Government in their Declaration on Regional Self-Government adopted at their 15th Session in Valencia (15-16 October 2007), this debate provides useful insight for all member states. It would therefore inform the Assembly, that it has instructed the CDLR, by 31 December 2008, to conduct, and report on, an in-depth discussion on regionalisation in Europe, on the basis of the conclusions adopted at the aforementioned conference.
3. The CDLR has also prepared a report to “monitor developments in regional self-government across member states during the years 2005 to 2007, identifying in particular innovations and any issues common to a number of states”, and recalling, *inter alia*, the principle of subsidiarity. The Committee of Ministers, at its 1022nd meeting on 26 March 2008, took note with satisfaction of this report, and agreed to transmit it to the Parliamentary Assembly and the Congress in order that they may benefit from it. It would also draw attention to the appendix to the report which contains the update of the syntheses and overviews of models of regional self-government.
4. Finally, the Committee of Ministers would recall that the Council of Europe has a panoply of legal instruments with which to ensure the protection and promotion of the rights of persons belonging to national minorities in member states such as the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities and the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages. It would also recall the principle of non-discrimination as set out in Article 14 and Protocol No. 12 of the European Convention on Human Rights, and the case law of the Court as well as the work of the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) which monitors the application of this principle in all member states.

1. Adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 21 May 2008, at the 1027th meeting of the Ministers' Deputies.



Appendix – Comments by the European Committee on Local and Regional Democracy (CDLR) on Parliamentary Assembly Recommendation 1811 (2007)

1. The European Committee on Local and Regional Democracy (CDLR) notes with interest Parliamentary Assembly Recommendation 1811 (2007) on regionalisation in Europe, which covers an issue to which it too has devoted considerable efforts.
2. The CDLR recalls the declaration made by European Ministers responsible for Local and Regional Government at the 14th Session of their conference (Budapest, 24-25 February 2005) recognising “the importance of regional self-government and the fact that it can represent an enrichment for democratic societies, can help address new challenges of good democratic governance and, depending on circumstances, can respond to the need to deal with public affairs as close to the citizen as possible”.
3. Later on, and at the request of the European ministers, the CDLR prepared a report on European practice and development of regional self-government which was well received at the 15th Session of the conference in Valencia (15-16 October 2007).
4. At this conference, the ministers also adopted a Declaration on Regional Self-government in which they stated:
 - “1. The diverse, changing and stimulating reality of regional self-government in Europe today deserves to be further monitored as it provides useful insight for all member states.*
 - 2. This work naturally takes place within the Council of Europe, which is the only organisation in Europe today where regional self-government is explicitly treated as a field of intergovernmental co-operation (through the CDLR), while ensuring a regular exchange of information with the regions themselves (through the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe).*
 - 3. We invite the Committee of Ministers, when examining the report on regional self-government, to take note of our interest for this work to be continued and take the appropriate decisions in this respect.*
 - 4. We resolve to keep the issue of regional self-government and the further work carried out in this field under review at our next session, in order to give this important aspect of democratic societies the attention it deserves.”*
5. The CDLR is therefore willing to conduct a more indepth discussion on issues relating to regionalisation in Europe, and to incorporate the Parliamentary Assembly’s suggestions, if the Committee of Ministers gives it terms of reference to this effect.