Parliamentary Assembly
Assemblée parlementaire
https://pace.coe.int

COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Resolution 1118 (1997)[1]
Final version

Preliminary draft European charter of regional self-government of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe (CLRAE)

Parliamentary Assembly

1. After many years of considering the problem of regionalisation within the Council of Europe, the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe (CLRAE) adopted, at its first session in June 1994, its Resolution No. 8, in which it decided to draw up a European charter of regional self-government in co-operation with the Parliamentary Assembly. To this end, the CLRAE set up a working group with responsibility for preparing a preliminary draft charter, in which the Assembly was invited to participate. The Committee on the Environment, Regional Planning and Local Authorities monitored the working group's activities.

2. On 5 July 1996 the CLRAE adopted Resolution No. 37 on the European charter of regional self-government, whereby it provisionally approved a draft European charter of regional self-government. After wide-ranging consultation, a final version of the draft will be resubmitted to the congress at its fourth session (3-5 June 1997).

3. In a letter of 15 July 1996, the president of the CLRAE requested the Assembly to give an opinion on the draft charter, which will be taken into account in the final text to be drawn up by the CLRAE. The Committee on the Environment, Regional Planning and Local Authorities was asked to prepare that opinion.

4. The Assembly believes that recognition of regional self-government is consistent with implementation of the principles defended by the Council of Europe and that the draft charter is a useful complement to the European charter of local self-government. In a Europe under construction it is also important to guarantee the principle of subsidiarity, firstly by furthering the development of territorial democracy, particularly at regional level, and secondly by promoting regionalisation as an alternative to centralised policies which often prove incapable of providing an effective solution to certain local problems.

5. The Assembly congratulates the CLRAE on its praiseworthy initiative of preparing this draft charter, which it fully supports, and is gratified to have been involved in the *travaux préparatoires* from the outset, enabling it to make contributions throughout the drafting process.

6. The Assembly is convinced of the value and benefit of preparing a legal instrument laying down the general principles of regional self-government, with due regard to the different national traditions, at a time when several member states have already established regional authorities and others are embarking on a regionalisation process and when there is no binding international instrument on the subject.

7. Now that local self-government has been more securely guaranteed through the European Charter of Local Self-Government it is important that the Council of Europe should go one step further and equip itself with a European charter of regional self-government which reflects another institutional reality of our continent. Such a text will give the regions of Europe an international legal guarantee of respect for their autonomy and may serve as a reference for regionalisation processes under way or planned in certain member states.

---

1. *Text adopted by the Standing Committee,* acting on behalf of the Assembly, on 19 March 1997. See Doc. 7771, report of the Committee on the Environment, Regional Planning and Local Authorities, rapporteur: Mr Mota Amaral.

8. The Assembly is generally satisfied with the current wording of the draft submitted to it and welcomes in particular the decision not to define the term “region”, since not only is such a task intrinsically fraught with difficulties but it would also have been impossible to take account of the vast institutional diversity of Europe’s regions. As to the text itself, the Assembly will confine itself to a few comments while awaiting the final version currently being prepared.

9. The Assembly is also in favour of the innovation whereby this text allows states not yet in a position to comply with the charter’s provisions to undertake to do so following a given timetable. This possibility should prove very helpful to states which have not yet set up regions but wish to embark on a regionalisation process.

10. The Assembly will continue to co-operate in the further work on a final version of the draft charter and will give an opinion on the final text when the time comes.