



Recommendation 1363 (1998)¹

Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe: recent activities and proposals for reform

Parliamentary Assembly

1. The Congress of Local and Regional Authorities (CLRAE) was set up in 1994 as the consultative body representing local and regional authorities. Over the past four years, it has continuously increased its standing within the Organisation thanks to the excellent work it has carried out promoting local and regional democracy as key values of the Council of Europe and in following up the implementation of the European Charter of Local Self-Government.
2. The Assembly, which has a very fruitful working relationship with the Congress, welcomes this. It wishes that the CLRAE be further developed and given more means to carry out its tasks.
3. The Committee of Ministers will have to re-examine two transitory provisions of the CLRAE's charter in less than two years' time. These deal with two fundamental issues: finance and the membership criteria of the Chamber of Regions. One of these transitory provisions should have been examined already, but the Committee of Ministers, at the request of the CLRAE, decided to extend its validity for another three years.
4. Not only does the Assembly think that these two transitory provisions should change if the Congress is to develop its role further, but it also proposes that a wider reform of the CLRAE should be considered on this occasion. The Council of Europe has always taken the lead in shaping the role of local and regional government in European affairs. Now is the time to take another step forward.
5. For these reasons, the Parliamentary Assembly asks that the Committee of Ministers:
 - 5.1. establish a political dialogue with the CLRAE and the Parliamentary Assembly which should lead to a reform of the CLRAE charter in the year 2000, and, in this respect, to consider:
 - a. re-introducing some specialised committees in the CLRAE without eliminating the present working party system;
 - b. eliminating the current limit which restricts working party membership to a maximum of eleven people;
 - c. reforming Article 4 of the charter so as to allow the CLRAE to hold more than one plenary session every year;
 - d. stricter rules governing membership of the Chamber of Regions, so as to make sure that only countries with true intermediate tiers of government may appoint full members, and that countries which plan on setting up regions may send observers from the Chamber of Local Authorities;
 - e. reforming Article 2 of the Congress charter so as to ensure that only holders of a local or regional electoral mandate or politicians on whom an elected assembly can pass a vote of no confidence, thus forcing their resignation, are eligible for CLRAE membership;
 - f. increasing the budget of the CLRAE substantially and reinforcing its secretariat;

1. See [Doc. 8028](#), report of the Committee on the Environment, Regional Planning and Local Authorities, rapporteur: Mr Risari. Text adopted by the Standing Committee, acting on behalf of the Assembly, on 18 March 1998.



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- 5.2. make the European Charter of Regional Self-Government into a binding European treaty as soon as possible;
- 5.3. invite member countries which have not yet done so to sign and ratify the European Charter of Local Self-Government.