



Resolution 1151 (1998)¹

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

Parliamentary Assembly

1. Since the establishment of the Council of Europe, the Parliamentary Assembly has continuously lent its support to the creation of appropriate fora for local and regional government to take part in European construction. It has been instrumental in creating the Standing Conference of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe and has welcomed the recent establishment of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe (CLRAE).
2. The Parliamentary Assembly has had a fruitful working relationship with the CLRAE since it was established four years ago. This co-operation has been particularly active in the fields of transfrontier and inter-regional co-operation, sustainable development in the Mediterranean Basin, and regional planning. The Assembly trusts that this will lead in future to more joint initiatives
3. The Assembly wishes to recall its commitment to local and regional self-government, which it considers core values of the Council of Europe and of any truly democratic state, and congratulates the CLRAE on the new impetus it has given to the Organisation's activities in this field.
4. It also wishes to recall its support for the Congress's recent initiative to draw up a draft European Charter of Regional Self-Government, which the Assembly would like the Committee of Ministers to adopt as a binding international treaty as soon as possible.
5. The Assembly welcomes the stricter line taken by the Congress over the past years when verifying its members' credentials, which has doubtless helped increase the political weight of the CLRAE within the Organisation. It renews its call for the Congress to be made up solely of politicians holding a local or regional electoral mandate, or of politicians whom an elected political assembly can force to resign by passing a vote of no confidence.
6. The Assembly notes, however, that some aspects of the functioning of the CLRAE could be improved, such as, inter alia, the make up of the Chamber of Regions, and its working party system. The CLRAE might wish to start considering possible reforms with a view to amending its Charter in the year 2000, when two transitory provisions come to an end and have to be re-examined by the Committee of Ministers.
7. The Assembly welcomes the decision to hold a political colloquy between elected representatives and ministerial delegates before the next meeting of the European Conference of Ministers responsible for Regional Planning (CEMAT). It hopes that co-ordination between the CEMAT, the CLRAE and the Parliamentary Assembly will help develop a European regional/spatial planning concept for the whole of Europe.
8. The Parliamentary Assembly invites the CLRAE:
 - 8.1. to increase its efforts to promote local democracy as a core value of the Council of Europe, and to follow up the implementation of the European Charter of Local Self-Government by its signatories;

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.



- 8.2. to continue writing country reports on the state of local and regional government with a view to strengthening and improving these tiers of government throughout Europe;
- 8.3. to give thought to possible internal reforms that would make its decision-making mechanism more flexible and allow as many members as possible to take part in its activities;
- 8.4. to pursue the strict verification of its members' credentials and insist that members be either holders of a local or regional electoral mandate or, failing this, local or regional politicians whom an elected local or regional political assembly can force to resign by passing a vote of no confidence;
- 8.5. to give thought to the role and shape it wishes to give the Chamber of Regions after the year 2000, with a view to strengthening it;
- 8.6. to apply its rules of procedure strictly in order to make sure that members, and not their counsels or assistants, take the floor at working party meetings;
- 8.7. vii. to envisage holding an additional annual session of the two chambers, outside the plenary sessions;
- 8.8. to consider possible formulas that would allow the CLRAE, and the Chamber of Regions in particular, to hold a political dialogue with regions having legislative power;
- 8.9. to keep bringing forth proposals as to how local and regional self-government can help ease minority issues in the Council of Europe's member countries;
- 8.10. to keep analysing how local and regional authorities can promote, within the scope of their attributions, the implementation of a "Local Agenda 21" as indicated in Chapter 28 of "Agenda 21" adopted at the Rio Conference;
- 8.11. to launch new initiatives regarding Europe's island and peripheral regions.