



Doc. 14212

05 December 2016

The role of national authorities in successful decentralisation processes

Motion for a resolution

tabled by Mr Luís LEITE RAMOS and other members of the Assembly

This motion has not been discussed in the Assembly and commits only those who have signed it

The decentralisation of administrative powers and responsibilities has been carried out in many member States of the Council of Europe in the past, including through territorial reforms or reforms of local financing systems. Further countries are currently implementing such reforms or preparing for them due to the sheer need of constantly adapting socio-economic policies and related structures to new institutional frameworks and societal trends (demographic, economic, technological etc.).

In the ideal case, the decentralisation of administrative competences consolidates democratic systems, strengthens local governance, promotes inclusive growth and local economic development, and makes public services more effective in responding to local needs, for example when it comes to protecting and promoting the interests and rights of minorities and marginalised communities. Furthermore, decentralisation is considered as a way of promoting a more accountable exercise of power, the principle of subsidiarity and the right of local communities to manage their own affairs in an autonomous way, as also promoted by the European Charter of Local Self-Government of the Council of Europe (CETS No. 122).

However, recent studies on decentralisation underline that some processes failed to achieve the desired effects when the administrative and financial capacities provided remained inadequate in comparison with the delegated or devolved responsibilities, or where local or regional authorities were not consulted in a satisfactory manner.

The Parliamentary Assembly should encourage member States and in particular their national authorities – governments and parliaments – to create the adequate framework and conditions for successfully implementing current or upcoming decentralization processes. With this aim, the Parliamentary Assembly should identify recent good practices, explore some of the determinants of successful processes and make concrete recommendations to national authorities in this respect.

Signed (see overleaf)



*Signed*¹:

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SOC: Socialist Group
UEL: Group of the Unified European Left
NR: Representatives not belonging to a Political Group