

**48<sup>th</sup> SESSION****Congress Budget for 2026-2027**Recommendation 520 (2025)<sup>1</sup>

1. The Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe (“the Congress”) refers to its institutional role as the voice of the local and regional authorities of the Council of Europe member States and as guardian of the European Charter of Local Self-Government (ETS No. 122), which has been ratified by all member States, and reaffirms its responsibility for promoting and fostering the implementation of the Council of Europe's common standards at local and regional level.
2. It welcomes the results of the 4th Council of Europe Summit in Reykjavik and the joint declaration by the Heads of State and Government, recommitting themselves to protecting the democratic foundations of our societies, in particular through the work of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities.
3. The Congress welcomes the decisive support given by the Heads of State and Government in this declaration to the essential role of multilevel governance in achieving the Organisation's vision.
4. It also welcomes the adoption of the Reykjavik Principles for Democracy and the commitment made by the Heads of State and Government to guarantee and strengthen democracy and good governance at all levels throughout Europe.
5. The Congress notes with satisfaction the firm commitment of the Heads of State and Government to the system established under the European Convention on Human Rights (ETS No. 5) as the cornerstone of the Council of Europe's protection of human rights. In this respect, it welcomes their consideration of the essential role played by local and regional authorities in the promotion and protection of human rights.
6. The Congress calls for local and regional authorities to be proactively involved in devising preventive and curative public policies to manage climate and environmental crises, since all major crises will ultimately have an impact on all levels of governance. In this context, it supports the work aimed at promoting the role of local and regional authorities in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in the areas of competence of the Congress.
7. It underlines the recognition by the Heads of State and Government that local authorities are among those responsible for implementing the Convention and complying with the judgments of the European Court of Human Rights and welcomes their call on the Congress to strengthen political dialogue on the implementation of judgments.
8. It also refers to the call by the Heads of State and Government to intensify efforts, at all levels of governance, for the effective protection of the rights of Ukrainian children, in response to the consequences of the Russian Federation's war of aggression against Ukraine.
9. The Congress reiterates its support for ongoing efforts to involve young people in decision-making processes by helping local authorities to improve their policy and practice in working with young people. It stresses the importance of securing future funding for the “Rejuvenating Politics” initiative, which each

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<sup>1</sup> Debated and adopted by the Congress during the 48th Session on 25 March 2025, (see document [CG\(2025\)48-09](#)), Rapporteur: Konstantinos KOUKAS, Greece (L, EPP/CCE).

year offers one young person from each Member State the opportunity to participate actively in Congress sessions and in the work of its committees.

10. The Congress underlines the need to review its activities in the light of the decisions of the 4th Summit and new developments in priority areas such as human rights and the rule of law, while strengthening its statutory and cooperation activities and raising the profile of the Congress and strengthening its relations with its institutional partners.

11. The Congress welcomes the regular exchanges of views between the President and the Secretary General of the Congress and the Committee of Ministers, and the support and satisfaction expressed by the member States and the Committee of Ministers regarding the results achieved and the reforms undertaken by the Congress.

12. It recalls the successive budget cuts that the Congress has experienced over the years and the risks that further budget cuts could pose to its statutory, post-monitoring, thematic and co-operation activities, which have been tailored to the expectations and interests of the member States.

13. The Congress further highlights that it has been obliged to discontinue certain activities, in particular those enabling it to respond to the challenges identified in the Secretary General's annual reports on the state of democracy, human rights and the rule of law, and to the priorities of successive Presidencies of the Committee of Ministers.

14. The Congress refers to the series of reforms it carried out in 2010, 2015, 2018 and 2019.

15. It welcomes the Committee of Ministers' decision to strengthen the Secretariat by transferring the Centre of Expertise for Multilevel Governance to the Congress in 2024, as well as the budgetary reinforcements granted under the 2024-2025 budget.

16. It notes that this welcome consolidation is, however, not sufficient to cover the remaining gap between the resources available and the capacity needed to deliver the expected results.

17. The Congress welcomes and fully supports its Secretary General's proposals to increase the resources allocated to the Congress under the Council of Europe's 2026-2027 ordinary budget, in order to provide the Secretariat with human and financial resources commensurate with the institution's mandate and the development of its activities, particularly in the light of the strategic decisions of the 4th Summit.

18. In the light of the above, the Congress calls on the Committee of Ministers to:

a. confirm the confidence shown at the 4th Summit in local and regional authorities' role in promoting and protecting the values of the Council of Europe at the closest possible level to its citizens;

b. continue to invest in the Congress to enable it to implement the Reykjavik deliverables by strengthening its statutory and co-operation activities;

c. encourage member States to make voluntary contributions for concrete operational activities of the Congress and to make staff available to its Secretariat;

d. take into account the inflation adjustment for the next biennium in order to maintain the Council of Europe as a competent actor in the fields of democracy, human rights and the rule of law, so as to enable all its bodies and structures to act in the interest of the citizens of the 46 member States;

e. invite the Secretary General of the Council of Europe to grant the Congress, in the draft programme and budget for the 2026-2027 biennium, an increased budgetary allocation, as set out in the explanatory memorandum accompanying this recommendation (document CG(2025)48-09), and which is fully commensurate with the contribution of the Congress to the priorities of the Council of Europe as a monitoring body and pan-European body for the promotion of territorial democracy, encouraging decentralisation as well as debate and exchanges of good practice between local and regional elected representatives on the main topical issues of our societies.