

THE CONGRESS OF LOCAL AND REGIONAL AUTHORITIES

Recommendation 242 (2008)¹ Integration and participation of young people at local and regional level

1. Member states have in recent years made a number of joint commitments to bring about the renewed democratic participation of young people in local and regional life and they wish to help create the necessary conditions to promote active participation by young people. They also wish to strengthen social cohesion among the different components of our societies, which are both pluralist and democratic, in order to comply with the guiding principles adopted by the 3rd Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Council of Europe in Warsaw in May 2005.

2. The Congress believes that local and regional authorities are well placed to gauge the specific needs of the young people living in their districts or regions, in terms of consultation, participation and direct involvement in the decision-making process at local and regional level. The aim is to establish between the authorities, elected representatives and those representing the different groups of young people in the local context, a relationship of mutual trust and ongoing dialogue which, over time, will become more structured and regular.

3. In its Recommendation 128 (2003) on the revised European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life, the Congress calls on the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe to recommend that all its members adopt this revised European charter.

4. The Committee of Ministers examined the said recommendation and responded favourably to the Congress's request by adopting the revised charter in the form of a recommendation to member states.

5. The Congress draws particular attention to its Resolution 152 (2003) on the revised European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life and invites the Committee of Ministers to identify precisely the different practical actions to be implemented by all the players concerned.

6. In adopting its Resolution 207 (2006) on young people and new information and communication technologies: a new opportunity for local democracy, the Congress recognises the role of new information and communication technologies in arousing young people's interest in public life and active citizenship. This resolution calls on local authorities to use information and communication technologies when promoting the charter and when targeting young people in general.

7. The Congress invites the Committee of Ministers to ask member states to:

a. use the revised European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life as a reference guide when developing activities for young people;

b. take into account the principles set out in the revised charter when framing and implementing policies and programmes for young people;

c. promote youth participation in community life and in democratic decision-making processes within educational institutions;

d. lend their support, on the basis of current best practices or those identified in the future, to the setting up of a network of cities particularly active in the direct involvement of young people in political life;

e. set up a centre of excellence responsible for collecting and analysing information and data on established participation methods, processes and structures, and to make this information accessible to all players involved in youth participation;

f. pay special attention to training in the functioning of democratic institutions in history and civics education in order to encourage young people to become active partners in the democratic decision-making process;

g. offer financial support to non-governmental organisations in order to encourage them to take local initiatives in the fields of educational support, sport, cultural and artistic activities, to help the integration of young people from disadvantaged social backgrounds;

h. set up a "youth mediator" to be a reference and contact point in each municipality.

1. Debated and adopted by the Congress on 29 May 2008, 3rd Sitting (see Document CG(15)8REC, draft recommendation presented by S. Kirichuk (Russian Federation, R, SOC), rapporteur).