

CONGRESS OF LOCAL AND REGIONAL AUTHORITIES OF EUROPE

Recommendation 68 (1999)¹ on women's participation in political life in the regions of Europe

*(Extract from the Official Gazette of the Council of Europe
– June 1999)*

The Congress,

Bearing in mind the proposal of the Chamber of Regions,

1. Having regard to the field of action outlined by the Final Declaration of the Ministers of the states participating in the Istanbul Conference (13-14 November 1997) on "Equality between women and men as a fundamental criterion of democracy";
2. Referring to the activities of the European Union in this field;
3. Taking also note of the activities of the European organisations of regional and local authorities in this field and referring, among other things, to the Final Declaration of the Conference on "Women in politics at regional level", organised by the AER in Turin on 7 November 1998;
4. Considering the results of the survey carried out by the Congress into women's representation in the regional institutions of the member countries;
5. Stressing that this survey showed that, although the rates of women's participation in political life still vary greatly from one country to another, the overall proportion of female elected representatives in the regional institutions remains unsatisfactory;
6. Draws the attention of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe to the initiatives adopted throughout

Europe to encourage women's participation in political life described in the report submitted by Ms Dini (Italy) on "The holding of political office by women in the regions of Europe" (doc. CPR (6)4 Part II), on which all the regions of Europe could draw for inspiration and discussion;

7. Requests the governments of the member states:
 - a. to amend national legislation with a view to removing the obstacles to implementing genuine equal opportunities for men and women in political life, and to granting legal recognition to the legitimacy of anti-discriminatory measures;
 - b. to introduce positive measures to facilitate women's access to public and political office, and this in liaison with regional and local authorities, in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity;
 - c. to facilitate, in co-ordination with regional authorities, the introduction of measures liable to increase women's participation in regional institutions, such as:
 - alerting political parties to the possibility of fielding female candidates when administrative elections are held;
 - the launching of specific training courses for candidates, to familiarise them with political techniques, and of awareness raising campaigns to overcoming women's fear of lacking sufficient skills and motivate them to become actively engaged in political life;
 - establishing specific measures to enable candidates to reconcile family life with civil jobs and political duties;
 - support for joint activities by political parties to increase the number of women actively engaged in politics;
 - d. to provide for examination of the texts of the Congress and of the interregional organisations which closely co-operate with it in this area and assessment of the questions raised therein by the relevant government institutions and by elected Assemblies, with a view to informing the Congress of their comments, conclusions and, where appropriate, measures taken to improve the situation.

1. Debated and approved by the Chamber of Regions on 16 June 1999 and adopted by the Standing Committee of the Congress on 17 June 1999 (see Doc. CPR (6) 4 revised, draft Recommendation presented by Ms P. Dini, Rapporteur).