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European Local Democracy Week (ELDW) 2015: "Living together in multicultural societies: respect, dialogue, interaction"

Strasbourg, 12.10.2015 - This week (12 - 18 October) more than 130 events and activities are taking place at local level across 23 member States of the Council of Europe to celebrate the 2015 edition of the European Local Democracy Week (ELDW). Participating municipalities are organising a wide range of events on this year's theme 'Living together in multicultural societies: respect, dialogue, interaction', such as seminars on solidarity, debates on human rights, exchanges with migrants and visits of refugee camps, bilingual theater performances, interviews with foreigners, exhibitions on recent armed conflicts and multicultural coffee mornings.

"The theme of the 2015 ELDW 'Living together in multicultural societies: respect, dialogue, interaction' is intended to draw attention to the great challenges our societies face in today's politics, such as increasing radicalisation, terrorism and the greatest refugee flow since World War II" stated Gaye Doganoglu (EPP/CCE, Turkey), ELDW Political Co-ordinator and Vice-President of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe. "Local authorities have a great potential, on account of their proximity to citizens, to address these issues and to raise citizens' awareness to the Council of Europe values: democracy, human rights and the rule of law" she added.

"Along with longstanding partners of the ELDW, such as Buyukcekmece from Turkey, Huddinge from Sweden, Katowice from Poland and Reggio Calabria from Italy, we also have 'new arrivals', mainly arising from our recent partnership with the Europe Prize of the Parliamentary Assembly. These are previous Europe Prize winners Czestochowa (PL) and Kharkiv (UA), as well as the cities of Izmit (TR), Mioveni (RO) and Ternopil (UA), awarded the Plaque of Honour".

The European Local Democracy Week is a voluntary movement, co-ordinated by the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities, which takes place every year around 15 October – the anniversary of the opening for signature of the European Charter of Local Self-Government in 1985, 30 years ago. During the ELDW, local and regional authorities and their associations throughout Europe organise various activities to promote citizens' participation in local decision making processes and foster their greater awareness of the work of public authorities.

Created by the Parliamentary Assembly in 1955, the Europe Prize is the highest distinction that can be bestowed on a European town for its actions in the European domain.

The '12 Stars' of the 2015 edition are: Amadora (PT), Association of the City and the Municipalities of the Brussels-Capital Region (BE), Buyukcekmece (TR), Bydgoszcz (PL), Falun (SE), Huddinge (SE), Ivano-Frankivsk (UA), Izmit (TR), Karsiyaka (TR), Katowice (PL), Kharkiv, (UA), Luleburgaz (TR), Reggio Calabria (IT), Medgidia (RO), Melitopol (UA), Mioveni (PL) and Sundbyberg (SE).

[ELDW website](#)

[Events in 2015](#)

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The Congress has two chambers, the Chamber of Local Authorities and the Chamber of Regions. It brings together 324 full and 324 substitute members representing more than 200 000 European territorial communities.

President of the Congress: Jean-Claude Frécon (France, SOC), President of the Chamber of Local Authorities: Anders Knape (Sweden, EPP/CCE), President of the Chamber of Regions: Gudrun Mosler-Törnström (Austria, SOC)

Political Groups: Socialist Group (SOC), Group of the European People's Party – Christian Democrats (EPP/CD), Independent and Liberal Democrat Group (ILDG), European Conservatives & Reformists Group (ECR)