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## **European Local Democracy Week 2014 'Participating, proposing, deciding'**

### **Statement by the President of the Congress of the Council of Europe**

Strasbourg, 13.10.2014 - "This week (October) we celebrate European Local Democracy Week for the eighth time in the Council of Europe member states. I am impressed by the creativity of the ELDW participants - the neighbourhood meetings, public debates, actions for involving disadvantaged groups, school competitions, exhibitions, film festivals, sport and dance events organised by our partners show the many ways of better involving citizens into community life and democracy. I am pleased to have stated Herwig van Staa, President of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe.

"In 2014, 'Participatory democracy: sharing, participating, proposing, deciding' is the main theme of the ELDW. This topic is at the heart of the ELDW since its launch in 2007 - to create a pertinent tool for boosting and measuring citizen participation at local level. As for this year, we are in close cooperation with the Association of Local Democracy Agencies (ALDA) in preparing a brochure of best practices of citizen participation, which includes case studies of the most active ELDW participants from last year: AMSED (France), AVCB (Belgium), Buyukcekmece (Turkey), Huddinge (Sweden), Iasi (Romania), Kairouan (Tunisia), Tbilisi and NALAG (Georgia)."

European Local Democracy Week is a voluntary movement, co-ordinated by the Congress, which takes place every year around 15 October, the anniversary of the opening for signature of the European Charter for Local Self-Government in 1985. During the ELDW, local and regional authorities and their associations across Europe organise various activities to foster greater citizen awareness of the work of local authorities, promote citizen participation in local governance and stress the importance played by local self-governance in building a united and democratic Europe.

[ELDW website](#)

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The Congress has two chambers, the Chamber of Local Authorities and the Chamber of Regions. It brings together 318 full and 318 substitute members representing more than 200 000 European territorial communities.

President of the Congress: Herwig Van Staa (Austria, EPP/DC), President of the Chamber of Local Authorities: Jean-Claude Frécon (France, SOC), President of the Chamber of Regions: Nataliya Romanova (Ukraine, IDLG)

Political Groups: Socialist Group (SOC), - Christian Democrats (EPP/CD), Independent and Liberal Democrat Group (ILDG), European Conservatives & Reformists Group (ECR)