



T +33(0)390214895

www.coe.int/congress

congress.com@coe.int

Ref. CG-PR045(2013)

The Congress dedicates the European Local Democracy Week in 2013 to “active citizenship”

Strasbourg, 7 February 2013. – Motivating citizens to take part in decision-making processes at the grassroots level will be at the centre of the new edition of the European Local Democracy Week (ELDW) which will be organised, this year, from 14 to 20 October in Europe and beyond. The leading theme of this event in 2013 - **“Active citizenship: voting, sharing, participating”** - has been endorsed by the new ELDW Political Co-ordinator, Congress Vice-President and member of the Municipal Council of Dubrovnik (Croatia), Dubravka Suica, further to a co-ordination meeting assembling representatives of European cities, regions and associations.

Lack of trust in institutions and politicians and political apathy are also wide-spread phenomena at the level of local and regional government. The European Local Democracy Week – a pan-European initiative launched by the Council of Europe in 2007 and co-ordinated by its Congress of Local and Regional Authorities – aims at promoting dialogue between local elected representatives and citizens and thus tackles democratic deficits. The leading theme chosen for the 2013 edition of the ELDW is for the Political Co-ordinator Dubravka Suica also a chance to improve accountability of elected representatives at local and regional level. “Functioning democracy at the grassroots level implies active citizenship and this is a common responsibility of citizens and their elected representatives. Interaction between citizens and local politicians is key in this respect - each part has to contribute”, Ms Suica says. She is convinced that the new leading theme of the ELDW and the European Union’s “European Year of Citizens 2013” will complement each other. “This is an opportunity for the Congress to address active citizenship and related issues such as democratic rights and duties, representative and participatory systems of democracy or innovative forms of civic participation in the broader context of 47 Council of Europe member countries”, Ms Suica concludes.

The assessment of events carried out during the European Local Democracy Week 2012 confirmed the continuous development of this initiative. The leading theme, which was dedicated to the importance of human rights for more inclusive communities, contributed to the success. Last year, some 150 partners from 29 countries joined the ELDW. For the first time, municipalities in Morocco and Tunisia also registered as ELDW partners, in order to strengthen local democracy. A total of 342 activities and events were organised by towns, cities, regions, national and international associations. 18 municipalities gave special prominence to their participation in the ELDW and seized the chance to take part as a “12-Star City” – Metz and Strasbourg (France), Brussels (Belgium), Chania and Festos (Greece), Reggio Calabria Province and Mola di Bari (Italy), Utrecht (Netherlands), Katowice (Poland), Amadora (Portugal), Candelaria and Malaga (Spain), Sundbyberg, Örebro and Huddinge (Sweden), Stockton on Tees (United Kingdom), Büyükçekmece and Lüleburgaz (Turkey).

Municipalities and associations who are interested in taking part and organising events and activities to promote democratic participation in their communities can learn more about this campaign and register easily online at: www.coe.int/demoweek-registration

Contact:

Sabrina Feletig

Project Manager of the ELDW

Democracy.week@coe.int

www.coe.int/demoweek

Tel.: + 33 (0) 390 21 59 94

Follow us:    

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 Regions: Nataliya Romanova (Ukraine, IDLG), President of the Chamber of Local Authorities: Jean-Claude Frécon (France, 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)