

# THE CONGRESS OF LOCAL AND REGIONAL AUTHORITIES

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## Resolution 458 (2020)<sup>1</sup> Developing urban-rural interplay

1. The Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe refers to:

*a.* the European Urban Charter adopted on 18 March 1992 by the Council of Europe's Standing Conference of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe and Resolution 269 (2008) "European Urban Charter II – Manifesto for a new urbanity";

*b.* the Priorities of the Congress 2017-2020, in particular paragraphs 119 and 120 on empowering rural areas;

*c.* Congress Resolution 128 (2002) on the problems of Europe's countryside, adopted on 21 March 2002;

*d.* Congress Resolution 252 (2008) on services of general interest in rural areas, a key factor in territorial cohesion, adopted on 14 March 2008;

*e.* Congress Resolution 422 (2017) on a better future for Europe's rural areas, adopted on 19 October 2017;

*f.* the thematic debate at the 36th Session of the Congress' Chamber of Local Authorities entitled "Addressing the urban/rural divide: solutions for territorial renewal", in April 2019;

*g.* the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in particular Goal 11 on sustainable cities and communities;

*h.* the Declaration of co-operation on "A smart and sustainable digital future for European agriculture and rural areas", signed by 24 European Union States on 9 April 2019;

*i.* the Rural People's Declaration of Candás (Asturias, Spain), adopted by the 4th European Rural Parliament on 9 November 2019.

2. The Congress points out that:

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1. . Debated and adopted by the Statutory Forum on 7 December 2020 (see Document [CG-FORUM\(2020\)02-03](#), explanatory memorandum), co-rapporteurs: Wilma DELISSEN VAN TONGERLO, Netherlands (L, ILDG) and Matija KOVAC, Serbia (R, EPP/CCE).

*a.* in recent years, local and regional governments in Europe have been facing a number of issues resulting from the changing interplay between urban and rural areas, both having their own specific assets and challenges, particularly in areas such as demographic transition as well as in environmental and social questions;

*b.* there is a need to pay more attention to the interdependence between urban and rural areas, to strengthen the relationships between them and to foster their linkage to ensure greater territorial cohesion and sustainable local development and prevent further fragmentation;

*c.* suburban municipalities and rural areas that are close to urban areas have a specific role to play in developing urban-rural relationships;

*d.* local and regional policy makers need effective strategies and instruments for better integrating rural and urban areas in order to bridge the gap between them and achieve economic, social and environmental benefits for both. They also need to be made aware of the advantages of urban-rural co-operation for their populations and territories.

3. In light of the above, the Congress invites the local and regional authorities of Council of Europe member States to:

*a.* ensure that interplay between the multiple levels of governance is guided by the principle of subsidiarity and recognise that subsidiarity is crucial, not only for relations at national, subnational and local levels, but also for relations between local authorities;

*b.* strengthen the mutual understanding of the very different realities of areas at different positions on the broad urban-rural continuum in order to further develop urban-rural interplay;

*c.* ensure an equilibrium between predominantly urban and predominantly rural areas by demonstrating equal appreciation and equal consideration for them in policy making, in particular concerning spatial planning and economic development;

*d.* ensure an integrated strategy for coherent land-use planning that duly considers the specific conditions of areas at different positions on the urban-rural continuum, taking into account, for example, the multifunctional character of areas on the fringes of cities.

4. The Congress calls on the local and regional authorities and their national associations to take account of this resolution and its explanatory memorandum (Document [CG-FORUM\(2020\)02-03](#)).