

## CODE OF CONDUCT OF CONGRESS MEMBERS

*as enshrined in the Congress Charter and provided for in the  
Congress Rules and Procedures*

1. The purpose of this Code is to provide a framework of reference for members of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe in the discharge of their duties.
2. It outlines general principles of behaviour which the Congress expects of its members. By adhering to these standards members can maintain and strengthen the openness and accountability necessary for trust and confidence in the Congress.
3. The Code applies to members in all aspects of their public life relevant to their duties as members of the Congress. Its provisions complement the obligations on members of the Congress to abide by the rules of conduct provided in the Rules and Procedures, as well as resolutions of the Congress and decisions of the Congress organs relating to members' conduct and discipline.
4. The application of this Code shall be a matter for the Congress.
5. Guidance on all matters covered by this Code and situations which may arise from its application may be sought from the Secretary General of the Congress who is responsible for ensuring its promotion.
6. While performing their mandate as members of the Congress, they shall:
  - a. carry out their duties responsibly with integrity and honesty;
  - b. take decisions solely in the public interest, without being bound by any instructions that would jeopardise members' ability to respect the present code;
  - c. not act in such a way as to bring the Congress into disrepute or tarnish the Congress' image;
  - d. use the resources available to them responsibly;
  - e. not use their public office for their, or anyone else's, private gain;
  - f. declare any relevant interests relating to their public functions and take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest;
  - g. promote and support these principles by leadership and example;
  - h. undertake to comply with the rules set out hereafter.

7. Members shall respect the values of the Council of Europe and the general principles of behaviour of the Congress and not take any action which would cause damage to the reputation and integrity of the Congress or its members.
8. Members shall avoid conflicts between any actual or potential economic, commercial, financial or other interests on a professional, personal or family level on the one hand, and the public interest in the work of the Congress on the other, by resolving any conflict in favour of public interest; if the member is unable to avoid such a conflict of interests, it shall be disclosed.
9. Members shall draw attention to any relevant interest in accordance with the Congress Rules and Procedures.
10. No member shall act as a paid advocate in any work of the Congress.
11. Members shall not promise, give, request or accept any fee, compensation or reward intended to affect their conduct as members, particularly in their decision to support or oppose any motion, report, amendment, written declaration, recommendation, resolution or opinion. Members shall avoid any situation that could appear to be a conflict of interests and shall not accept an inappropriate payment or gift.
12. Members shall not use their position as a member of the Congress to further their own or another person's or entity's interests in a manner incompatible with this Code of Conduct.
13. Members shall use information with discretion, and in particular shall not make personal use of information acquired confidentially in the course of their duties.
14. Members shall inform the President of the Congress of any pressure put upon them or against any other Congress member.
15. Where, in the course of their duties as members of the Congress, they are presented with a gift they should refuse as it might influence or might be seen as likely to influence their position in the performance of their duty as a member of the Congress. They may exceptionally accept the gift if refusing it would be reasonably considered contrary to the good practice in the relevant cultural context. In such cases, where the gift has a value of 100 euros or more it should be handed to the Secretariat of the Congress which will ensure that it is promptly entered into the Council of Europe Gift Register.
16. Members shall ensure that their use of expense claims, allowances, facilities and services provided by the Council of Europe is strictly in accordance with the relevant regulations laid down on these matters.
17. Members undertake to sign a copy of this Code of Conduct upon taking up their mandate in the Congress.
18. Implementation of this Code is the responsibility of the Bureau of the Congress, in accordance with the powers and responsibilities granted to it by the Rules and Procedures. Any breaches thereto will be dealt with in accordance with the procedure provided by the Rules and Procedures.