

# THE CONGRESS OF LOCAL AND REGIONAL AUTHORITIES

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## Recommendation 216 (2007)<sup>1</sup> Community policing: local and regional authorities guaranteeing a new partnership

1. Increasing violence and a deepening feeling of insecurity are highlighting the limits of the punitive approach to crime-fighting in structurally halting the progression of threats to security, as such an approach fails to solve the underlying problems that generate insecurity and damage the quality of life.

2. Furthermore, the professionalisation of the police service can distance it from the population and cause it gradually to withdraw from the public scene, which is counterproductive for taking account of citizens' primary concerns.

3. In this connection, most member states have (re)defined programmes to bring policing closer to the population, because the legitimacy of policing is based on processes of consultation and interaction with the different population groups.

4. At the Warsaw Summit the heads of state and government of the Council of Europe's member countries stressed their determination to "ensure security for our citizens". This determination is reaffirmed in the Action Plan which they adopted on that occasion.

5. The Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe is aware of the need to strengthen the citizen's feeling of security, and, in this context, points to its adoption of Recommendation 197 (2006) on urban security in Europe and Recommendation 152 (2004) on local policing in Europe.

6. In view of the above, the Congress is hoping to reinforce its work in this field by stressing the vital role of local and regional authorities in organising a new partnership for urban security involving all the social players (population groups and citizens) and security professionals (the police and the judiciary) with a view to establishing an effective, democratic and integrated system of local policing. Consequently, it recommends that the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe invite member states to:

*a.* introduce local policing, where it does not yet exist, in order to take better account of social demands and provide a customised response for citizens;

*b.* provide local and regional authorities with the organisational, human, material, technological and financial resources needed for this initiative;

*c.* implement the guiding principles concerning partnership in crime prevention as set out in Recommendation Rec(2003)21 of the Committee of Ministers;

*d.* ensure respect for and protection of human rights in the exercise of police work, notably by incorporating the relevant international standards into initial and further training for police officers, in accordance with the principles set out in the European Code of Police Ethics (Recommendation Rec(2001)10 of the Committee of Ministers);

*e.* set up a permanent co-ordination body comprising representatives of law enforcement structures and local authorities whose task it would be to:

*i.* prepare joint security programmes;

*ii.* ensure co-ordination of public order and security activities;

*iii.* find ways of working towards the prevention of infringements of the law;

*iv.* provide the necessary support for the forces of law and order;

*v.* organise the work of local and regional authorities and law enforcement agencies alongside leaders of ethnic groups and representatives of different faiths in order to combat acts of violence as well as terrorist and extremist activity;

*vi.* actively ensure coverage of this work by the media;

*f.* initiate an educational policy of communication and information for local decision makers, the media, the general public and the police themselves, in order to promote awareness of the fact that security concerns everyone;

*g.* encourage the education system to include, in its curricula for pupils and students of all ages, encounters with those involved in security issues, with a view to increasing mutual knowledge and understanding;

*h.* conduct exchanges of best practice between member states with experience of implementing local policing systems.

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1. Debated and adopted by the Congress on 31 May 2007, 2nd Sitting (see Document CG(14)8REC, draft recommendation presented by D. Lloyd-Williams (United Kingdom, R, ILDG), rapporteur).