



République Hellénique  
*Hellenic Republic*



16CEMAT(2014)6Fin E

Council of Europe Conference  
of Ministers responsible for Spatial/Regional Planning

16<sup>th</sup> session, Napflion, 17 June 2014

**RESOLUTION N.2**

**ON**

**THE CONTRIBUTION OF CEMAT TO THE ACHIEVEMENT  
OF THE GOALS OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE**

Resolution No 2  
on the contribution of CEMAT to the achievement  
of the goals of the Council of Europe

WE, THE MINISTERS responsible for Spatial Planning of the member states of the Council of Europe, meeting in Nafplion, Greece, on 17 June 2014, at the invitation of our Greek colleague, Mr. Yannis Maniatis, for the 16th session of our Council of Europe Conference (CEMAT)

ACKNOWLEDGING the value of our cooperation in the framework of the Council of Europe, which has enabled us to promote good practices and develop an *acquis* for the benefit of all European states and their populations,

WELCOMING the invitation by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe “to take stock of decades of cooperation in spatial planning and agree on future themes and methods of cooperation” which enables us to present our achievements and propose new venues for cooperation

AGREE THE FOLLOWING:

***I. As regards the achievements of CEMAT***

1 Since its foundation in 1970, our Conference has played an important role in the promotion of efficient territorial development policies throughout Europe, in line with the major trends and evolutions in member States. The themes of our sessions bear witness to the variety and richness of our reflections, addressing topical issues of relevance for our member States and the European continent. We recall in particular the themes of our most recent sessions (Moscow, Lisbon and Ljubljana) where we addressed such issues as rural heritage, regional integration, and the contribution of essential goods to sustainable territorial development, polycentric development, competitiveness and social cohesion, and the territorial dimension of sustainable development.

2 The European Regional/Spatial Planning Charter (Committee of Ministers Recommendation (84)2) and the Guiding Principles for Sustainable Spatial Development of the European Continent (Committee of Ministers Recommendation Rec(2002)1) have been a source of great inspiration in the development of a framework to enable the participation of regions, municipalities and citizens in spatial planning in several of our member States. In some cases the Guiding Principles have garnered strong commitment and support at national level and have permeated the national

spatial planning culture. The Guiding Principles are integrated in and implemented by national legislations and planning systems. The Guiding Principles, currently translated into ten languages, have been widely disseminated by several member States across their national, regional and local administrations. The document has been published on official websites, and largely distributed in printed copies to public and private bodies, NGOs, higher education institutes and professional organisations.

3 The Glossary of terms adopted by the CEMAT contributes to promoting a common understanding of key concepts and terminology in spatial planning in the European context. It is particularly valuable in creating a common European reference for spatial problems facilitating in particular cross-border comparison amongst spatial planning instruments. The Glossary is used on a regular basis by the national planning authorities of several member States in this international context. The definitions and concepts in the Glossary form a valuable record of approaches and trends at the national level. At the national level the CEMAT glossary is a valuable resource for students, experts and civil servants from all areas of knowledge which deal with spatial planning and in particular to help clarify terminology and concepts. Several Member States have recommended the use of the glossary to their local governments, research and planning organizations.

4 The declarations, charters, recommendations and texts adopted at the various sessions of our Conference have been widely used as a reference for national, regional and local policy-making and contributed to improving its quality and better common understanding. Other international Organisations such as the United Nations, have acknowledged the value of our work and made use of, or reference to it. The networking value of our Conference as the only European forum for bringing together EU and non-EU member States with the aim of the sustainable spatial and socio-economic development of the European continent also enjoys particular recognition. It has contributed to setting up a discussion platform between States, regional and local authorities, NGOs and professional networks.

5 In the Council of Europe, our work has inspired the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities or influenced intergovernmental cooperation in such fields as natural environment, managing diversity and landscapes. The Committee of Ministers on some occasions has given a follow up to our declarations in the form of recommendations, thus giving them added political weight and value.

6 Looking back to our Conference's achievements, we cannot but note that our work on sustainable spatial planning and development has both drawn inspiration from the core values of the Council of Europe - democracy, human rights and the rule of law - and fit into the Organisation's priorities in the fields of local and regional democracy, citizen participation, sustainable development, built and natural environment, cultural heritage and managing diversity, and landscapes, thus contributing to meeting the objectives of the Organisation.

## ***II. As regards its future***

7 We are fully aware of the recent reforms in the Council of Europe aimed at strengthening the "democracy" pillar in the Organisation, including the creation of a Directorate General of Democracy within the Secretariat. These reforms are strong signals of the commitment of the Organisation to play an even more active role in promoting the value of democracy through enhanced intergovernmental dialogue, sharing of good practice, cooperation and bilateral assistance.

8 These strategic orientations are enshrined in our shared vision of spatial planning policies as tools for addressing global challenges and their impact on territories in a democratic and participation-oriented manner, for delivering good territorial governance and promoting sustainable communities across the European continent.

9 Accordingly, our Conference, both at the ministerial level and through its network of senior officials effectively connecting major administrations responsible for spatial planning in member States, can make a further contribution to the achievement of the fundamental goals of the Council of Europe through promoting the territorial dimension of democracy and human rights and the sustainable spatial development of the European continent.

AND IN RESPONSE TO ITS EXPRESSED WISH, INVITE THE COMMITTEE OF MINISTERS OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE

10 *to note the following as possible **themes** for work:*

10.1 democratic participation and good territorial governance in spatial planning policies, including through e-governance and e-democracy<sup>1</sup>

10.2 territorial impacts of demography, migration, energy, transport, environment, landscape etc. policies of member States and throughout the European continent

10.3 evaluation and monitoring of territorial processes

10.4 distribution of and access to general interest services as a means of balanced territorial development and the development of sustainable communities throughout the European continent

10.5 capacity-building in designing and implementing spatial planning policies through the exchange of know-how and the dissemination of good practice

10.6 cross-border and transnational dimension of spatial planning policies

10.7 spatial planning as a tool for improving the resilience of regions, orienting the investments in order to fasten recovery from the financial and economic crisis, anticipating trends and jointly preparing the European territory for future challenges;

11 *to note our expectation that the **working methods** allow for the continued involvement as a permanent specific body of the Council of Europe of our senior officials whose specific technical expertise and built-up knowledge we believe could be helpful in achieving the goals of the Organisation in the field of democratic governance, through the sustainable territorial development of the European continent;*

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<sup>1</sup> See in particular Resolution No 2 of the 14th session of CEMAT on Territorial governance: empowerment through enhanced coordination.

*12 to continue the practice of holding the Council of Europe Ministerial Conferences on Spatial/Regional Planning as this format, being the only pan-European forum on intergovernmental co-operation in this sphere, has for 44 years of its existence proved to be very effective and useful for member States and the Council of Europe, on the condition that adequate resources be provided;*

*13 to consider what, if any, further steps would be appropriate to give greater recognition to the "Guidelines" of Resolution No 1 in the context of wider developments on promoting the democracy pillar of the priorities of the Council of Europe.*