

**36th Session of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities (2-4 April 2019)**

## Speech by Liisa ANSALA (Finland, ILDG), Congress co-rapporteur

### Debate on “Social rights of young people: the role of local and regional authorities”

*Check against delivery - Seul le prononcé fait foi*

Dear Colleagues,

I am very pleased that the Current Affairs Committee took on board the proposals made by the Youth Delegates in 2015 and 2016 to promote their access to social rights.

In line with the Congress's policy for “Rejuvenating politics”, we are willing to involve them in our work and we prepared this report to reflect their concerns. I am sure our Youth Delegates will express their views during the debate which will follow.

As my colleague Mr Fassino said, in our report we took stock of Council of Europe's instruments regarding young people's human rights, in particular the Social Charter as the Council of Europe's “flagship” treaty in the field of social rights. The Charter is also the driving force behind social inclusion and the active participation of young people in the life of the community.

In our report we underlined the key role of local and regional authorities - along with the social partners and civil society organisations - both in disseminating the Social Charter and in implementing it, as regards young people's access and enjoyment of the social rights enshrined in it.

I would like pay homage here to the work done by the Youth Department of the Council of Europe which has done valuable work for the development of effective youth policies. Legal instruments, guidelines and programmes have been elaborated, as well as concrete tools such as the “Self-assessment for youth policy”. A number of them are mentioned in our report.

I would particularly draw your attention to the regular surveys that will be carried out to look at the measures taken by member states. This was recommended by the Committee of Ministers for “*access of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods to social rights*”. The survey will include projects and initiatives implemented by youth organisations as well as local and regional authorities. I think we should take this opportunity to contribute to this review, which will be carried out in 2019 and invite all our national associations to diffuse the information.

### **I now come to our draft Recommendation. In this document we focus our attention to three main points:**

- First of all, there are still States that have not ratified the revised Social Charter. Given the importance of the rights enshrined in it, this is an important lack which needs to be remedied. Therefore, we ask those Member States that have not yet done so, to sign and ratify the revised European Social Charter, and to accept the collective complaints procedure.

- Secondly, we draw the attention of governments to how important it is to involve local and regional authorities when they prepare annual national reports or when they prepare observations on collective complaints submitted by Governments.

On this point, we based ourselves on our European Charter of Local Self-Government and its Article 4 paragraph 6 which provides for consultation of local authorities "*during the planning and decision-making processes for all matters of direct concern to them*".

The implementation of social rights is a matter that directly concern local and regional authorities. The delivery of many of the services that correspond to these rights such as housing, education, employment and health come under local and regional government competence.

- Finally, we ask member States to develop national action plans for raising awareness of young people's social rights in coordination with local and regional authorities. And in doing so, to be aware of the role of voluntary or professional youth leaders in the dissemination of good practices.

I would like to finish by underlining that consultation with local authorities and cooperation with all stakeholders and in particular with young people should be part of all government policies that aim in building democratic societies.

Dear Colleagues, I invite you to adopt this recommendation. Thank you for your attention.