

## Statutory Forum

### Developing urban-rural interplay

Resolution 458 (2020)<sup>1</sup>

1. The Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe (hereinafter “the Congress”) refers to:

a. the European Urban Charter adopted by the Council of Europe’s Standing Conference of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe adopted on 18 March 1992 and the follow-up 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 on 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 cooperation on A smart and sustainable digital future for European agriculture and rural areas signed by 24 EU States on 9 April 2019;

i. the Rural People’s Declaration of Candás Asturias adopted by the 4th European Rural Parliament on 9 November 2019.

2. The Congress points out that:

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 like 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 urban and rural areas and to foster their linkage to ensure greater territorial cohesion and sustainable local development and prevent further fragmentation;

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<sup>1</sup> 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).

*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 to bridge the gap between them and achieve economic, social and environmental benefits for both. They also need to be made aware of the assets of urban-rural cooperation for their societies 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 be guided by the principle of subsidiarity and to recognise that subsidiarity is crucial not only for national-subnational-local relations, but also for relations at the local level as well;

*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 the urban-rural interplay;

*c.* ensure an equilibrium between more urban and more rural areas by demonstrating equal appreciation and equal consideration 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 in the fringe of cities.

4. The Congress calls on the local and regional authorities and their national associations to take account of this resolution and the accompanying explanatory memorandum.