

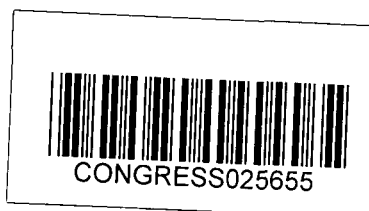
**CONGRES DES POUVOIRS LOCAUX ET REGIONAUX DE L'EUROPE  
Chambre des Régions**

**CONGRESS OF LOCAL AND REGIONAL AUTHORITIES OF EUROPE  
Chamber of Regions**

**2000**



COUNCIL OF EUROPE    CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE



502

Strasbourg, 18 April 2000

CPR (7) 6  
Resolution

**SEVENTH SESSION**

**(Strasbourg, 23-25 May 2000)**

**DRAFT RESOLUTION  
ON  
DEMOCRATIC STABILITY THROUGH TRANSFRONTIER  
CO-OPERATION IN EUROPE**

**Rapporteur: Viorel COIFAN (Romania)**

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**Members of the Working Group "Social Cohesion and Economic Development of Regions":**

Mr Suaud, *Chairman* (France, R), Mr Coifan (Romania, R), Ms Paukejova (Czech Republic, R), Mr Habermann (Germany, R), Mr Borbely (Hungary, R), Mr Connor-Scarreen (Ireland, R), Mr Jardim (Portugal, R), Mr Varnavsky (Russian Federation, R), Ms Alvarez-Arenas (Spain, R), Mr Mildon (Turkey, R), Ms Taylor (United Kingdom, R)

**Members of the Working Group "Follow-up of the 7<sup>th</sup> European Conference of Border Regions":**

Mr Habermann (Germany, R), Mr Yakovlev (Russian Federation, R), Mr Sonesson (Sweden, R), Mr Guinand (Switzerland, R), Mr Coifan (Romania, R)

**Secretary of the Working Group: Günter MUDRICH**

The Congress,

Bearing in mind the proposal of the Chamber of Regions,

1. Having taken note of the report by Mr Coifan (Chamber of Regions) presenting the results of the 7<sup>th</sup> European Conference of Border Regions, which was held from 28 to 30 October 1999;
2. Reaffirming the fundamental importance of transfrontier co-operation for the European construction process and for establishing a climate of confidence through tolerance, mutual understanding, solidarity and good-neighbourly relations, in particular in border regions which are home to minorities;
3. Stressing the crucial role of the Congress in promoting and developing transfrontier co-operation in Europe with a view to contributing to the construction of a democratic, humane and tolerant Europe based on solidarity;
4. Recalling that transfrontier co-operation operates best of all in the day-to-day lives of citizens living on either side of individual borders, and should be established between direct neighbours;

#### **Urges local and regional authorities**

5. to recognise the importance of establishing new Euroregions in central and eastern Europe and to draw on these experiences for the development of networks and co-operation arrangements to promote good-neighbourly relations;
6. to continue setting up permanent transfrontier co-operation networks and implementing joint projects based on initiatives taken by senior officials at local and regional level;
7. to take part in efforts to promote the development of regional co-operation and, for instance, become partners of the Local Democracy Agencies (set up under the auspices of the CLRAE) and/or support actions by civil society aimed at promoting transfrontier co-operation in south-eastern Europe;
8. to foster and encourage, in their areas of responsibility, the teaching of the languages and cultures of neighbouring countries and regions and the implementation of cultural activities designed to bring populations on either side of individual borders closer together;

#### **Resolves**

9. to submit this Resolution, together with Recommendation XX on the same subject, to the representatives of all border regions in Europe and the bodies representing them;
10. to encourage the establishment of closer collaboration with the European Commission in the field of transfrontier co-operation with Council of Europe member countries that are not members of the European Union, and take steps to launch joint projects such as conferences, colloquies or expert seminars aimed at co-ordinating spatial planning policies in regions on either side of and spanning borders;

11. to involve the representatives of frontier regions from south-eastern Europe in the activities carried out by the Council of Europe and, in particular, the Congress under the Stability Pact;
12. to continue to review the situation of transfrontier co-operation in Europe regularly in the light of the implementation of Recommendation XX;
13. to ask its Bureau to devote appropriate attention in all of its activities to the issues of transfrontier co-operation, and to submit to the Congress, in due course, a report on the implementation of the recommendations arising from the 7<sup>th</sup> European Conference of Border Regions, in particular regarding the Stability Pact.

**7<sup>th</sup> European Conference of Border Regions**

**TRANSFRONTIER CO-OPERATION,  
FACTOR OF SOCIAL COHESION AND POLITICAL STABILITY IN EUROPE**

**Timisoara, Roumania (28-30 October 1999)**

**FINAL DECLARATION**

adopted unanimously on 30 October 1999

The participants at the 7<sup>th</sup> European Conference of Border Regions, local, regional and national elected representatives and representatives of European border regions and their associations,

**Express their gratitude to**

- the Council of Europe, and in particular the Parliamentary Assembly and the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe (CLRAE) for organising the conference
- the Parliament and Government of Romania, and especially the County of Timis and the City of Timisoara for their hospitality

**And adopt the following conclusions :**

Having considered the situation of transfrontier co-operation in Europe, and taking into account previous conferences organised by the Council of Europe

**Reaffirm**

- the fundamental importance of transfrontier co-operation for the European construction process and for establishing a climate of confidence through tolerance, solidarity, mutual understanding and good-neighbourly relations, particularly in border regions which are home to minorities;
- the crucial role of the Council of Europe in promoting transfrontier co-operation at pan-European level through its fundamental objectives, i.e. democracy, the respect of human rights and local and regional self-government, through its technical and legal activities and its European conferences on transfrontier co-operation organised on a regular basis by the Parliamentary Assembly and the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe;
- the role of transfrontier co-operation in promoting and strengthening local and regional democracy in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity;

## **Welcome**

- the entry into force of the Additional Protocol to the European Outline Convention on Transfrontier Co-operation between Territorial Communities or Authorities in December 1998;
- the adoption of Protocol No. 2 to the European Outline Convention on Transfrontier Co-operation between Territorial Communities or Authorities on inter-territorial co-operation in 1998;
- recognition of the transfrontier co-operation dimension in the draft European Charter of Regional Self-Government drawn up by the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe, which they wish to see adopted quickly by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe;

## **Stress**

- the importance of creating new Euroregions in central and eastern Europe and call on local and regional authorities to draw on these experiences for the development of networks and working structures to promote good-neighbourly relations;
- that transfrontier co-operation operates best of all in the day-to-day lives of citizens living on both sides of a frontier, and should be set up between direct neighbours;
- the importance of multilateral structures, such as the Baltic Initiative, and co-operation between the Black Sea and Mediterranean Basins and the Atlantic Arc, in particular with a view to providing them with access to the various means of action of the European institutions;
- the need to supplement European legal provisions with legal progress in the field of transfrontier co-operation in domestic law and to conclude bilateral and multilateral agreements at local, regional and national level;
- the value of the activities carried out by the Council of Europe's Committee of Advisers, designed to raise awareness of and promote transfrontier co-operation in the countries of central and eastern Europe, and by the intergovernmental structures;
- the impact of the regular meetings of transfrontier co-operation representatives on the legislative and legal levels in member states, particularly in central and eastern Europe;
- the need to continue setting up permanent transfrontier co-operation networks and implement joint projects based on the initiatives taken by responsables and officials at local and regional levels;
- the vital role of the programmes developed by the European Union (Phare, Tacis, Interreg, MED) in supporting the implementation of transfrontier, inter-regional and transnational projects;
- the need to step up co-operation between the European Union and the Council of Europe in order to develop significantly democracy and political and economic stability in the countries of central and eastern Europe;

- the impact of transfrontier co-operation on the implementation of a transfrontier policy for regional/spatial planning and sustainable development to help create joint sectoral projects, in particular with regard to transport and infrastructures, transfrontier employment catchment areas, joint strategies for tourism, cultural development, education and heritage conservation;
- the activities of associations, in particular the Association of European Border Regions (AERB) and its advisory role for existing and future Euroregions;
- the importance of teaching the languages and cultures of neighbouring countries and regions and the implementation of cultural activities to bring transfrontier populations closer together;
- the particular gravity of the problem of transfrontier co-operation within towns and cities divided by national frontiers, and accordingly request specific support and attention to overcome the obstacles to the mobility of citizens living in the spirit of a common city;
- the role of Local Democracy Agencies (set up under the auspices of the CLRAE) and civil society in promoting transfrontier co-operation in south-east Europe;

**Note**, however, that there are still legal and administrative obstacles to the movement of persons and goods and the development of transfrontier co-operation, especially in areas where dividing lines exist which are not internationally recognised;

**Call on national authorities to**

- sign and/or ratify the European Outline Convention on Transfrontier Co-operation between Territorial Communities or Authorities and its protocols, and the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages;
- develop vertical and horizontal partnerships between national, regional and local authorities in order to put in place a concerted strategy for the development of transfrontier co-operation, in application of the principle of subsidiarity;
- associate in particular representatives of national authorities to institutions and to activities concerning transfrontier co-operation between the regions of central and eastern Europe as well as to the activities of the Community of Independent States in order to take into account local and national legal structures;
- eliminate the legal and administrative obstacles which still hamper the general development of transfrontier co-operation, particularly in the field of visas, and ratify the 1957 European Agreement on Regulations governing the Movement of Persons between Member States of the Council of Europe;
- create new frontier crossing points, in view of the increase in socio-economic transfrontier activities, and provide national, local and regional authorities responsible for transfrontier co-operation with the necessary staff to cope with growing needs;
- encourage devolution and provide local and regional authorities with effective powers to exercise at transfrontier level in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity and the provisions contained in the Additional Protocols to the Outline Convention;

- promote the teaching of the languages of neighbouring countries/regions with appropriate financial resources;
- promote transfrontier co-operation as a means of furthering economic development and networking small and medium-sized enterprises, chambers of commerce and industry, universities, non-governmental organisations and representatives of civil society;
- encourage the setting up of transfrontier working structures through the funding of training programmes for local elected representatives and administrators and exchanges of experts;

**Request the Council of Europe** to lend assistance to national authorities by means of technical measures and to encourage its member states to develop transfrontier co-operation programmes; accordingly, the financial resources made available to the Council of Europe should be increased, if necessary by means of voluntary contributions;

## **Invite**

### ***The European Union***

- to ensure the compatibility of programmes fostering transfrontier co-operation, particularly Interreg, Phare, Tacis and the MED Programme, in order to guarantee their political and economic efficiency, and to take into account appropriately maritime frontiers;
- to attach special importance, when drawing up its relevant programmes, to the promotion of transfrontier co-operation and the implementation of joint projects in towns divided by national frontiers which constitute a single urban unit;
- to develop a coherent and flexible policy for its future external borders in order to insure that enlargement does not damage transfrontier co-operation and in doing so to collaborate with the Council of Europe;

### ***The OSCE***

- to ensure that the subject of transfrontier co-operation is included in the Charter for European Security which is currently under preparation;

### ***The Parliamentary Assembly and the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe***

- to pursue and intensify their support to transfrontier co-operation and the exchange of competencies and information in this area;

### ***The Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe***

- to take stock of progress in implementing the European Outline Convention on Transfrontier Co-operation between Territorial Communities or Authorities, 20 years after its adoption, and to organise a conference on the findings;

- to invite the European Conference of Ministers responsible for Regional Planning to intensify the role of transfrontier co-operation in the guiding principles which will be submitted at their next session scheduled for September 2000 in Hanover;
- to adopt the CLRAE draft European Charter of Regional Self-Government with a view to promoting the devolution of powers towards the regions, in application of the principle of subsidiarity;
- to examine, with the view to its adoption, the draft European Charter on Mountain Regions in order to implement a co-ordinated and sustainable development policy on mountains at regional, national and European level;
- to promote co-operation activities in European frontier areas currently beset by serious problems and, in this connection, to devote particular attention to the Caucasian countries and the eastern frontier of Moldova;
- to promote the drawing up of multilateral agreements in response to specific problems of certain regions, such as the Mediterranean and Black Sea basins, the Danube and the Baltic Sea basins and the Carpathians;
- to support transfrontier projects designed to promote and strengthen tolerance, solidarity, confidence, mutual understanding and good-neighbourly relations through its Confidence-building measures Programme

With regard to South-Eastern Europe, the participants:

- consider that transfrontier and inter-territorial co-operation forms an essential element of the **Stability Pact for South-Eastern Europe** since, according to the Heads of State and Government of the Council of Europe at the Vienna Summit in 1993, the creation of a tolerant and prosperous Europe also requires transfrontier co-operation between local and regional authorities;
- welcome the fact that the Council of Europe's proposal to include transfrontier co-operation in Working Table No.1 has been accepted, and that the Council of Europe will be the leader both in this sector and in other sectors such as local democracy and human rights;
- believe that transfrontier co-operation in South-Eastern Europe cannot develop solely on a bilateral level but must also be dealt with in a multilateral framework involving the countries which make up that part of Europe;
- therefore consider it appropriate to enter into negotiations, as part of the Stability Pact, with a view to preparing a multilateral agreement between the countries of South-Eastern Europe on transfrontier and inter-territorial co-operation between local and regional authorities;

Finally, the participants:

- take note of the invitation to organise the next meeting on transfrontier co-operation in Edirne (Turkey).