

# THE CONGRESS OF LOCAL AND REGIONAL AUTHORITIES

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## Resolution 443 (2019)<sup>1</sup> Financial compensation of local and regional elected representatives in the exercise of their office

1. The right and ability of all citizens to stand for elected office is a fundamental principle of local democracy, established in Article 7 of the European Charter of Local Self-Government (ETS No. 122, “the Charter”). Material concerns should not prevent any citizen from standing for office. Article 7.2 of the Charter aims to ensure that local elected representatives receive sufficient allowances, salaries or other forms of compensation for carrying out their duties.

2. It follows that local and regional elected representatives need to receive adequate and appropriate financial compensation in order to carry out their duties effectively. As demands on local and regional politicians become more complex, financial compensation packages need to be adjusted accordingly.

3. The diversity of compensation packages and arrangements available for local and regional representatives in Europe, which mirrors the rich spectrum of forms and structures of subnational government in Europe, must not conceal the fact that the principle of adequate compensation is valid for all. While this principle needs to be applied flexibly, it nevertheless needs to enable citizens to consider standing for office whatever their socio-economic status.

4. Inappropriate and inadequate levels of compensation can and do discourage many suitably qualified candidates from running for elected office. Any decline in the quality of candidates is harmful to the overall quality of governance of local and regional authorities. Dissatisfaction with the levels of compensation can also harm the effectiveness of elected candidates and increase the risk of corruption and illegitimate practices.

5. Since all member States of the Council of Europe now have some form of financial compensation in place for local and regional elected representatives, it is to be regretted that 13 member States have yet to ratify Article 7.2, especially as recent monitoring missions of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe have established that the national legislation of several of these member States has evolved to a point where it can be considered to be in compliance with this article.

6. Recommendation 383 (2015) of the Congress on the conditions of office of elected representatives, sets out several principles for member States on how best to apply Article 7.2.

7. In light of the above, the Congress, bearing in mind:

*a.* its Recommendation 383 (2015) on the conditions of office of elected representatives;

*b.* the report of the Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR) on the “Status of local elected representatives in Europe” (2010),

8. Calls upon the local and regional authorities of the member States of the Council of Europe to:

*a.* ensure that all forms of financial compensation are commensurate with the needs and responsibilities of local and regional representatives;

*b.* engage with their national authorities on how best to apply the provisions of Recommendation 383 (2015) pertaining to Article 7.2;

*c.* carry out regular, independent audits on the forms and levels of compensation and on the degree of satisfaction of local and regional representatives with these arrangements;

*d.* assess, on a regular basis, the appropriateness and adequacy of different forms of financial compensation for local and regional representatives, proposing adjustments as appropriate, in view of the evolving tasks and duties of representatives;

9. Calls on national associations of local and regional authorities to:

*a.* report on any instances of backsliding or potential backsliding with regard to the application of Article 7.2;

*b.* where Article 7.2 has not been ratified, or where no national legislation with regard to the remuneration of local and regional representatives exists, lobby their governments to ratify the article or introduce such legislation;

*c.* consult with local and regional representatives in order to gauge the degree of satisfaction with their remuneration and to get a better picture of what constitutes appropriate and adequate financial compensation for carrying out their respective duties.

10. The Congress resolves to prepare reports at regular intervals on the evolution of the situation regarding the financial compensation of local and regional elected representatives in member States.

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1. Debated and adopted by the Congress on 3 April 2019, 2nd sitting (see Document [CG36\(2019\)10](#), explanatory memorandum), co-rapporteurs: Marta CAMPANARI-TALABER, Hungary (L, EPP/CCE), and Robert GRUMAN, Romania (R, EPP/CCE).