

CONGRESS OF LOCAL AND REGIONAL AUTHORITIES OF EUROPE

Recommendation 133 (2003)¹ on management of capital cities

The Congress, bearing in mind the proposal of the Chamber of Local Authorities,

1. Recalling the CLRAE survey on management of capital cities, which was structured around relations between capital cities and:

- a.* central government;
- b.* regional/provincial or metropolitan area authorities;
- c.* district authorities;
- d.* members of the public;
- e.* other capital cities;

2. Recording its gratitude to the eleven capital cities (Paris, Warsaw, Madrid, Berlin, Moscow, Budapest, Kyiv, Rome, Bucharest, Tallinn, London) which replied in 2001 to the questionnaire relating to the above survey;

3. Bearing in mind the Meeting of Mayors of Capital Cities held in Helsinki on 29 September 2001;

4. Recalling the Conference on Management of European Capital Cities held in Kyiv on 3 and 4 October 2002;

5. Wishing to thank the host authorities of Helsinki and Kyiv for having organised the above two conferences;

6. Looking forward to the outcome of the forthcoming expert meeting on E-governance of capital cities, to be held in Tallinn in June 2003;

7. Recognising that despite the existence of many different administrative structures for capital cities, a clear, transparent and effective division of responsibilities between different levels of the administration, within an adequate legislative framework, remains a prerequisite for the successful management of capital cities;

8. Stressing the importance of the example capital cities inevitably set for other cities and hence the importance of providing good examples;

9. Recognising the additional responsibilities capital cities often have, for example in providing and running logistic facilities of national importance, such as embassies and state institutions; transport infrastructure; organising national and international meetings and events; supplying information and providing security services;

10. Aware of the challenges, often related to finances and differences in political parties, which characterise capital

cities' relations to other levels of the administration, namely central government, regional/provincial and district levels;

11. Conscious of the particular responsibility of capital cities in representing the interests of national and wider geopolitical interests, alongside the capital's interests;

12. Considering that the involvement of the public in capital cities is essential for maintaining the legitimacy of decision making;

13. Recognising that a good understanding of the management of capital cities by the public is a prerequisite for the public's successful involvement;

14. Emphasising that such involvement should be real and effective and not consist in simply including people in consultative bodies without giving them any real opportunity to participate in actual decision making on matters of vital importance;

15. Encouraging capital city authorities to make the most of the possibilities offered by new technology in creating a more efficient and transparent administration;

16. Realising the importance of promoting equal public access to these new technologies, particularly the Internet;

17. Advocating continued frequent contacts between capital cities, particularly in order to exchange good practice with regard to the management of capital cities;

18. Asks the Committee of Ministers to invite member states to:

a. sign and ratify the European Charter of Local Self-Government if they have not yet done so;

b. fully comply with the provisions of the Charter in ensuring maximum self-government of capital cities, while in particular guaranteeing sufficient financial independence;

c. ensure that all legislation with a bearing on the management of capital cities is clear, coherent and transparent, in particular with regard to the division of responsibilities between different levels of authority; and to ensure that such division of responsibility is legally respected and enforced;

d. ensure proper consultation of their capital cities whenever any new legislation with an impact on capital cities is being drafted;

e. allow their capital cities to raise and keep the revenues necessary for planning and running a sufficiently autonomous administration, fulfilling the functions of a capital city and running vital infrastructure systems such as energy supply, transport and environmental management;

f. ensure that capital cities receive the necessary financial and other support, to provide and maintain infrastructure of national importance such as embassies and state institutions, transport infrastructure, national and

international meetings and events management, the supply of information and the provision of security;

g. promote the introduction and extended use of new technologies as tools within their capital cities' administration;

h. ensure that the relations between government and capital city remain unaffected by any change of political majority at either level;

i. involve and consult capital city authorities in the planning of any events at national level which inevitably affect the capital city, such as international meetings;

j. allow capital cities to pursue their international relations as freely as possible, for example through promoting and signing international partnerships and, in relevant cases, allowing capital cities to request easing of visa arrangements when receiving/sending official delegations or for their foreign visitors.

1. Debated and approved by the Chamber of Local Authorities on 21 May 2003 and adopted by the Standing Committee of the Congress on 22 May 2003 (see Document CPL (10) 4 revised, draft recommendation presented by Mrs N. Shymanska, rapporteur).