

# THE CONGRESS OF LOCAL AND REGIONAL AUTHORITIES

---

## Recommendation 454 (2021)<sup>1</sup> Budget of the Congress for 2022-2023

The Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe,

1. reaffirming its institutional role as the voice of local and regional authorities of the member States of the Council of Europe and as the guardian of the European Charter of Local Self-Government (ETS No. 122) which has been ratified by all 47 member States, and its responsibility for promoting and fostering the implementation of Council of Europe common standards for local self-government and regional democracy in Europe;

2. recalling that the Congress Charter provides that compliance with the European Charter of Local Self-Government by the Parties shall be monitored regularly and that since 2014 the monitoring work has increased steadily, leading to a significant backlog further increased by the delays resulting from the current pandemic situation;

3. referring to the regular exchanges of views between the President and the Secretary General of the Congress with the Committee of Ministers, and welcoming the support and appreciation expressed by member States and the Committee of Ministers for the results achieved and reforms undertaken by the Congress;

4. recalling the successive budget cuts that the Congress has sustained over the years and the acknowledgement and understanding by member States of the risks that further budget cuts would entail for its statutory activities and its post-monitoring, thematic and co-operation activities, which are tailored to member States' demands and interests;

5. further recalling that the Congress has been obliged to cease activities including those allowing it to address the challenges identified in the Secretary General's annual reports on the situation of democracy, human rights and the rule of law and the priorities of the respective chairmanships of the Committee of Ministers;

6. stressing that since 2010 the Congress has steadily contributed to the Organisation's efficiency savings and sustained operational and staff budgetary reductions proportionately higher than its share of the Ordinary Budget of the Council of Europe;

7. recalling its reiterated requests for its share of the Council of Europe's budget to be increased again towards 3% in order to ensure a budgetary envelope which would enable the Congress to fully deliver with regard to the Council of Europe's priorities;

8. recalling that the Congress's actual share of the Ordinary Budget has dropped over 13% since 2010 from 2.92% in 2010 to 2.53% in 2020 and its staff has been reduced by over 19% from 47 to 38, including two frozen posts;

9. recalling its successive reforms in 2010, 2015, 2018 and 2019 and its willingness to contribute to the overall efforts of the Organisation;

10. welcoming the decision of the Committee of Ministers to apply the adjustment for inflation in the current biennium and stressing the need to maintain it for the next one for the sake of maintaining the Organisation's capacity to deliver and respond to the new challenges as well as its statutory tasks;

11. acknowledging the solution found for financing interpretation and translation into the Congress's working languages: German, Italian and Russian;

12. calls on the Committee of Ministers to:

*a.* acknowledge the results achieved and the efforts made by the Congress to increase its efficiency despite a reduced budgetary allocation and significant restrictions in the human resources made available to it;

*b.* ensure, through its regular political dialogue with the Congress, consistency between the priorities identified by the Congress and its budgetary allocations in order to achieve critical mass and a real impact;

*c.* consider how to best make use of the political and operational capacities of the Congress and its Secretariat to focus and concentrate all activities of the Council of Europe targeting local and regional authorities and their political representatives;

*d.* encourage member States to make voluntary contributions for concrete operational activities and second officials to the Congress Secretariat;

*e.* include the Congress monitoring of the European Charter of Local Self-Government in the exceptional measures scheme to address the delays resulting from the Covid-19 health crisis;

*f.* allocate an operational budget and human resources to the Congress for the biennium 2022-2023 commensurate with the requirements of its institutional functioning as well as of its statutory, institutional, monitoring, thematic, consultative and advisory tasks to enable the Congress to implement the priorities identified for the current mandate;

*g.* agree to gradually return to a share of 3% of the Ordinary Budget without which the Congress can simply not fulfil its mandate or deliver what it is entrusted with and expected to;

---

1. Debated and adopted by the Congress on 24 March 2021, 1st sitting (see Document CG(2021)40-06), co-rapporteurs: Anna MAGYAR, Hungary (R, EPP/CCE) and Barbara TOCE, Italy (L, SOC/G/PD).

*h.* take into account the adjustment of inflation for the next biennium in order to ensure the Council of Europe remains a capable actor in the fields of democracy, human rights and the rule of law, and to enable all its organs and structures to deliver in the interest of the citizens of the 47 member States;

*i.* invite the Secretary General of the Council of Europe to include in the draft programme and budget for the biennium 2022-2023 a budgetary envelope for the Congress which will fully recognise its contribution to the Council of Europe priorities as a monitoring body and the pan-European promoter of territorial democracy which encourages decentralisation and debates and exchanges of good practices among local and regional elected peers on our societies' major topical issues.

**APPENDIX**

<b>Table 1 – Evolution of human resources within the Congress Secretariat</b>											
	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>
Posts	42	41	39	37	37	37	37	37	37*	37*	37*
Positions	5	5	5	5	5	4	2	2	1	1	1
Total	47	46	44	42	42	41	39	39	38	38	38

\* Including two frozen posts.

<b>Table 2 – Evolution of the Congress’s operational budget</b>											
	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012**</b>	<b>2013**</b>	<b>2014**</b>	<b>2015**</b>	<b>2016**</b>	<b>2017**</b>	<b>2018***</b>	<b>2019**</b>	<b>2020**</b>
Council of Europe	218 337 900	217 017 900	240 016 900	243 970 300	244 095 200	245 067 600	259 915 400	260 090 500	244 477 300	244 477 300	254 845 600
Congress	6 384 400	6 311 900	6 996 900	6 726 100	6 696 500	6 891 400	7 126 400	7 113 300	6 201 500	6 201 500	6 442 000
% Share Congress	2.92	2.91	2.92	2.76	2.74	2.81	2.74	2.73	2.54	2.54	2.53
% Unspent Congress	2.88	1.98	0.74	2.31	3.23	1.13	2.81	1.74	2.67	0.53	7.73

\* Figures for the Council of Europe and Congress budget, as approved. % underspent Congress as adjusted.

\*\* Including allocations to the Pension Fund as from 2012.

\*\*\* Adjusted following cessation of Turkey’s major contributor status.