

THE CONGRESS OF LOCAL AND REGIONAL AUTHORITIES

Resolution 220 (2006)¹ on urban security in Europe

1. Local authorities today have a decisive role to play in urban security, both as intermediaries between the different technical services concerned and also as interlocutors at the different levels of government; they are also answerable to the electorate for security in the town, or the electorate's perception of it.

2. These different roles have entailed an increase in the tasks devolved to local authorities in the field of urban security and necessarily call into question their ability to respond effectively to these new challenges.

3. The Congress is convinced that the basis for any action on urban security must lie in the establishment of a structured, effective dialogue between local and regional authorities, the state and the various players involved.

4. The Congress is also aware that if they are to carry out this action, local authorities must have appropriate means – in particular financial resources – and notes that the shortage of resources may lead local authorities to have greater recourse to private-sector organisations to provide certain security-related services, and that this practice may carry risks where data protection and access to security systems in general are concerned.

5. The Congress is further convinced that local authorities must project their action more into the medium term, in particular by means of initial and further training for the various partners in prevention policies.

6. It also seems essential for local authorities to envisage the question of urban security from the population's standpoint, and accordingly to establish regular dialogue with their inhabitants in order to assess their expectations more accurately.

7. Similarly, they must diversify their responses to the population's security requirements and not confine themselves to the necessary but restricted police or judicial dimension.

8. The Congress is convinced that to facilitate this diversification in all the above-mentioned fields, the development of dialogue and genuine synergy among all the people involved would render equally useful the setting-up of a shared framework of data, information and analysis in order to enhance knowledge and facilitate decision making.

9. In this connection, the Congress emphasises that, in its Recommendation 197 (2006) on urban security in Europe, it has invited the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe to give its support to the participation of the Organisation, and especially of the Congress, in creating a "European Resource Centre on Urban Security" which should be the subject of co-operation among organisations, research institutes and public agencies in this field.

10. The Congress wishes to point out that this project underlines the already long-standing commitment of the Council of Europe to the promotion of urban security – in particular the Parliamentary Assembly in Recommendation 1531 (2001) on security and crime prevention in cities: setting up a European Observatory; the Congress in Resolution 99 (2000) on crime and urban insecurity in Europe: the role of local authorities; and the integrated project "Responses to violence in everyday life in a democratic society", carried out from 2002 to 2004 at the instigation of the Secretary General of the Council of Europe.

11. Having regard to the foregoing, the Congress calls on towns and cities in Council of Europe member states:

a. to set in place "local urban security partnerships" involving public authorities, politicians, the private sector and associations, the media, universities, the police and local residents, with the aim of defining each partner's role in this field;

b. to implement, on an annual basis, local urban security action plans that are based on recent statistics and diagnosis and set out a specific timetable of objectives to be attained;

c. to take practical steps to improve the urban environment (opening up public spaces, providing proper lighting, cleaning pavements and the fronts of buildings), since a poor environment is known to be a cause of real or perceived urban insecurity;

d. to back the development of a well trained municipal police force reflecting the composition of the local population and able to forge links of co-operation and consultation with them;

e. to foster social cohesion, namely through the creation of economic activities and jobs in disadvantaged urban areas;

f. to guarantee provision of all the basic social services in disadvantaged urban areas;

g. to develop specific curricula in schools designed to make young people aware of policies for the prevention of urban insecurity, while maintaining a high level of out-of-school activities available to all.

1. Debated and approved by the Chamber of Local Authorities on 31 May 2006 and adopted by the Standing Committee of the Congress on 1 June 2006 (see Document CPL (13) 5, draft resolution presented by J.-M. Bockel (France, L, SOC) rapporteur).