

THE CONGRESS OF LOCAL AND REGIONAL AUTHORITIES

Resolution 207 (2006)¹ on young people and new information and communication technologies: a new opportunity for local democracy

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

1. Calling to mind Congress Recommendation 128 (2003) on the revised European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life;
2. Calling to mind Committee of Ministers Recommendation (2004) 13 to member states on youth participation in local and regional life;
3. Wishing to disseminate the said revised charter as widely as possible and to promote good practice for its implementation, in accordance with the conclusions of the conference held in Komsomolsk, Ukraine, on 24 and 25 June 2005, on the “Implementation of the revised European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life”;
4. Taking into account the Warsaw Declaration (16-17 May 2005) and the Action Plan adopted at the 3rd Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Council of Europe, and more particularly the part of paragraph II.5 which reads: “We will also take initiatives so that our member states make use of the opportunities provided by the information society. In this connection the Council of Europe will examine how ICT² can facilitate democratic reform and practice ...” and paragraph III.3 on education for democratic citizenship;
5. Calling to mind as well the “Resolution to foster the integration of information and communication technologies (ICTs) in educational systems in Europe” adopted at the 21st Session of the Standing Conference of European Ministers of Education, held in Athens, Greece (10-12 November 2003);
6. Also calling to mind Committee of Ministers Recommendation (2004) 15 to member states on electronic governance (e-governance);
7. Congratulating the Committee of Ministers for having declared 2005 “European Year of Citizenship through Education” in order to raise the awareness of decision makers at every level, and that of the general public, of the need for every citizen to make a personal commitment so

that democracy can exist and develop, the only way of guaranteeing peace, cohesion and shared prosperity;

8. Convinced that ICTs can be very powerful tools for arousing young people’s interest in public life and encourage their preparation for democratic citizenship;

9. Also convinced that ICTs offer huge scope for new forms of youth consultation and participation in local public life, which may ultimately help to develop new forms of participatory democracy;

10. Invites the local authorities of member states:

a. to bring to the attention of as many people as possible the revised European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life;

b. to regard young people as a target audience needing a specific approach by local and regional authorities in terms of information, communication, consultation and education;

c. accordingly, to develop a specific policy, using ICTs in particular, to inform and consult young people and involve them in local public life, drawing, *inter alia*, on the recommendations and suggestions made in the explanatory memorandum to that resolution;

d. to this end, to recruit teams of young people capable of developing for their peers ICT-based tools and programmes which are attractive and appropriate and enable young people themselves to be real players in these programmes;

e. to develop websites describing the functioning and activities of local and regional authorities specially designed for young people and enabling them to play an active part in discussion forums, consultations and projects of interest to them;

f. to give their support to the provision of places where young people have easy access to ICTs, in and out of school, in both urban and rural areas;

g. to pay particular attention to ICTs’ potential to help young people who are marginalised, vulnerable, disadvantaged or experiencing learning difficulties to overcome these problems and reintegrate society;

h. to support the training of teachers and other people who work with young people outside the education system in the use of ICTs for the purposes of education for citizenship, and to contribute to the development of appropriate teaching material;

i. in partnership with non-governmental youth organisations, to support ICT-based projects to help young people to take a more open attitude to Europe and its fundamental values (human rights, democracy, the rule of law), as well as projects fostering youth mobility, modern

language learning, the discovery of other cultures, personal commitment and voluntary work;

j. to organise public events highlighting the projects carried out, so as to reward young people for participating, foster exchanges of experience and encourage creativity in this field;

11. Asks its Committee on Culture and Education to continue to exchange and disseminate good practice in this

field, particularly in the context of follow-up to the conclusions of the Komsomolsk conference.

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1. Debated and approved by the Chamber of Local Authorities on 16 March 2006 and adopted by the Standing Committee of the Congress on 17 March 2006 (see Document CPL (12) 12, draft resolution presented by D. Ghisletta (Switzerland, L, SOC) and O. Popov (Ukraine, L, SOC), rapporteurs).
 2. ICT: Information Communication Technologies.