

*The Bureau of the Congress*

**CG-BUR(2021)38-INF27<sup>1</sup>**

19 May 2021

## **Partnership agreement to strengthen co-operation between the city of Strasbourg and the Council of Europe**

*Document submitted for information to the Bureau of the Congress on 26 May 2021*

---

<sup>1</sup> This document is classified as confidential until it has been examined by the Bureau of the Congress.

## PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT TO STRENGTHEN CO-OPERATION BETWEEN THE CITY OF STRASBOURG AND THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE

Since 1949, the historic year in which the first meetings of the Committee of Ministers and the Parliamentary Assembly (known then as the Consultative Assembly) of the Council of Europe were held in Strasbourg, the City of Strasbourg and the Council of Europe have maintained close ties. The presence of the Council of Europe and its institutions has helped contribute directly to the status and European identity of Strasbourg, as European capital, for several decades. To strengthen their ties, the City of Strasbourg and the Council of Europe decided to cement their relationship by a partnership agreement signed on 7 May 2010 on the sixtieth anniversary of the Council of Europe. This agreement marked a specific joint commitment to promote Europe's core values – human rights, democracy and the rule of law – reflected in the implementation of joint projects and sharing of experience to advance European values.

The renewal of this agreement in 2021 is intended to further strengthen co-operation between the City of Strasbourg and the Council of Europe. It stems from a desire to promote the fundamental values of Europe and aims to encourage joint thinking on innovative local policies. As European capital and host city of the Council of Europe, Strasbourg may be a testing ground for public policy of this kind to meet the major challenges of the twenty-first century.

With this in mind, the Secretary General of the Council of Europe and the Mayor of Strasbourg:

- Determined, with due regard for the roles and remits of their respective institutions, to promote together the universal values that form the basis of open and tolerant European societies: human rights, democracy and the rule of law;
- Mindful that the presence and work of the Council of Europe have played their part in the recognition of the City of Strasbourg as the European capital of human rights, democracy and the rule of law;
- Convinced that cities, because they are closer to citizens, can help ensure the European ideal takes hold across their respective regions;
- Taking note of the results achieved over the past ten years of partnership since the partnership agreement was signed in 2010 and also of the key issues of our century such as democratic renewal, preservation of human rights, and tackling social and regional inequalities, in addition to environmental and health challenges;

Have agreed to sign this partnership agreement to strengthen co-operation between the City of Strasbourg and the Council of Europe.

### 1) Objectives and joint work

The City of Strasbourg and the Council of Europe pledge to:

- carry forward their joint thinking, sharing of good practice and exchange of information on local implementation of the values and projects promoted by the Council of Europe;
- make Strasbourg a testing ground for innovative local public policy.

This partnership agreement thus seeks to bolster exchange of experience concerning municipal responsibilities and to raise the profile of the expertise built up for the benefit of the local, national, European and international partners of the City of Strasbourg and of the Council of Europe.

Co-operation, exchange of experience and measures to raise the profile of their work will cover the following issues, amongst others:

- Democracy, governance and citizen participation at the local level;
- Human rights;

- Promotion of equality, including equality between women and men, and prevention of discrimination;
- Green transition and environmental issues;
- Culture, cultural diversity and sport;
- Young people and education for citizenship;
- Codes of conduct, ethics and transparency in public life.

## 2) Principles and forms of co-operation

In this partnership agreement, it has been agreed that co-operation between the City of Strasbourg and the Council of Europe shall take the following forms as far as possible:

- a) Establishing contact between the departments of the City of Strasbourg and of the Council of Europe working on similar themes in order to encourage information-sharing and good practice;
- b) Enhancing the heritage, history and work of the Council of Europe in the European district and throughout the City of Strasbourg, in particular through (i) staging of exhibitions and events for landmark anniversaries of the Organisation, international days and/or specific activities; (ii) work on common signage also drawing attention to the European Heritage Label awarded to the City of Strasbourg in 2015 for its European district; (iii) mutual provision of premises for events pertaining to co-operation between the two institutions; (iv) input from the Council of Europe to deliberations by the City of Strasbourg on how to strengthen its European and international position; and (v) joint organisation of events relating to public policy and priority issues;
- c) Implementing joint projects aimed at ensuring work by the City of Strasbourg and the Council of Europe is entrenched in their European networks and among the citizens of Strasbourg and developing joint initiatives on social media;
- d) Strengthening the relationship between the elected representatives of the Municipal Council of the City of Strasbourg and the elected representatives sitting in the Parliamentary Assembly and the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe;
- e) Working jointly on the conditions in which staff of the Council of Europe and diplomatic missions are hosted and on the accessibility of Strasbourg.

To raise the profile of their co-operation, the City of Strasbourg and the Council of Europe will jointly develop an action plan, together with a communications policy for their common projects and will establish regular consultation on their actions and related budget modalities. These projects will be given prominence through a collaborative partnership in the fields of print media, especially the local press, the audiovisual and social media.

## 3) Political follow-up and general co-ordination

The Mayor of Strasbourg, or her deputy in charge of European relations, and the Secretary General, or Deputy Secretary General, of the Council of Europe will provide political follow-up for this partnership agreement, including through an annual meeting.

General co-ordination will be provided by the General Directorate of Services on behalf of the City of Strasbourg and by the Private Office of the Secretary General and the Deputy Secretary General on behalf of the Council of Europe.

This partnership agreement cancels and replaces the agreement signed on 7 May 2010 and will enter into force on the date of its signature by the parties. It may be amended by mutual consent of the parties, signified in writing, following regular consultation meetings. It will be reviewed five years after its entry into force. Either party may terminate this partnership agreement by giving six months' notice in writing to the other party.

Done in Strasbourg, on .....2021

For the City of Strasbourg

For the Council of Europe