

# THE CONGRESS OF LOCAL AND REGIONAL AUTHORITIES

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## Resolution 219 (2006)<sup>1</sup> on reconciling heritage and modernity

1. The Congress, bearing in mind the proposal submitted by the Committee on Culture and Education, notes that it is still difficult to strike a balance between protection of the historic urban heritage as an essential part of our cultural identity, and the need to modernise/adapt this heritage, which houses populations that must be allowed to continue to live in these neighbourhoods.

2. The Congress considers that a merely defensive approach to preserving an urban reality bequeathed by history is insufficient. Towns and cities evolve similarly to living organisms, and they must be able to react and adapt to the requirements of the time.

3. The Committee on Culture and Education is convinced that the Council of Europe and Congress texts on relations between heritage and modernity provide a major legal reference point that can be used to guide local public authorities and the inhabitants of historic towns and cities and involve them more closely. This legal *acquis* should prompt us to encourage citizens to participate more actively in designing and implementing projects to transform their architectural environment in their town or city.

4. The committee is convinced that the new information and communication technologies can provide novel opportunities for citizen consultation and participation, particularly in co-operation with the government departments responsible for spatial management.

5. The Congress invites local authorities in member countries to:

*a.* promote openness in the decisions taken by municipal councillors in order to boost citizen confidence in the

relevant decision-making processes, and accordingly to promote openness in, and maximum publicity for, major construction and urban planning projects;

*b.* create forums for permanent exchange with local populations, making the latter genuine stakeholders in the development of their neighbourhoods;

*c.* co-operate with these exchange forums in developing websites as a means of interaction for the local authorities and the inhabitants, enabling them to participate actively in discussions and consultations on projects affecting them, and make maximum use of popular referendums on Internet, taking advantage of the flexibility and low cost of the new technologies;

*d.* open invitations to tender for architects to members of the local population in the neighbourhoods affected. The selection panels involved should comprise experts who have previously contributed to qualitative improvements to the urban area in question;

6. The Congress invites its Committee on Culture and Education to:

*a.* continue to consider this issue, particularly by inviting the towns and municipalities represented in the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe to transmit information on any good practices they have initiated (see the explanatory memorandum – Doc. CPL(13)2 Part II –to this resolution);

*b.* enlarge the debate on these issues to a conference to be held in Innsbruck (Austria) on reconciling heritage and modernity.

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1. Debated and adopted by the Chamber of Local Authorities on 30 May 2006, and adopted by the Standing Committee of the Congress on 1 June 2006 (see Document CPL (13) 2, draft resolution presented by H. Zach (Austria, L, EPP/CD) and S. Davis (United Kingdom, L, SOC), rapporteurs.