

THE CONGRESS OF LOCAL AND REGIONAL AUTHORITIES

Recommendation 295 (2010)¹ Social time, leisure time: which local time planning policy?

1. In their search for time equality, increasing numbers of European local and regional authorities are adopting time-based approaches and setting up “time offices” with a view to improving their citizens’ quality of life by attuning the organisation of public and private services more to changes in living patterns.

2. This new approach to urban and spatial management seeks to reconcile urban time with social time in the light of the lifestyle changes brought about by changes in working patterns and social attitudes.

3. Time planning policies view time both as a resource and as a cultural medium, and call traditional spatial planning mechanisms into question. They have resulted in the development of new types of bodies (time offices) and new forms of local participation and co-operation (such as local civil dialogue and public-private partnerships).

4. These policies must be implemented at local level, but states can play a major role in publicising them and establishing them. Some pioneering countries² have even adopted national and regional legislation making time offices and time-use planning obligatory.

5. The Council of Europe, for its part, has been dealing implicitly with time policies for many years through its European Social Charter (ETS No. 35, 1961), its revised European Social Charter (ETS No. 163, 1996)³ and the work of the Steering Committee for Equality between Women and Men (CDEG) on reconciling work and private life.

6. Being aware of the inequalities that can result from the distribution of time, the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe believes that the

Council of Europe should acknowledge the emergence of time policies and promote their establishment.

7. Accordingly, it recommends that the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe call on member states to:

a. foster increased awareness of changes in the pattern of urban life, including through the media;

b. promote time planning policies at local level and encourage their adoption everywhere;

c. pursue policies encouraging authorities to set up time offices in urban areas, promote practical measures and support private undertakings adopting time planning policies;

d. take full advantage of existing knowledge and skills and set up centres of excellence, which local authorities can use as reference points;

e. disseminate best practices and encourage networking;

f. identify the tools and instruments for setting up and supporting time policies which are available at national level and in other countries, foster their development and encourage scientific evaluation thereof;

g. promote research in this field, particularly by creating specific academic subjects and “time laboratories”.

8. Lastly, the Congress calls on the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe to take account of the “right to time”. It recommends that it call on the relevant Council of Europe bodies, particularly those dealing with gender equality and social cohesion, to address time management policies explicitly and incorporate time management into their activities, along with the concepts of “time welfare” and “temporal quality of life”.

1. Debated and approved by the Chamber of Local Authorities on 26 October 2010 and adopted by the Congress on 28 October 2010, 3rd Sitting (see Document [CPL\(19\)3](#), explanatory memorandum), rapporteur: C. Tascon-Mennetrier, France (L, SOC).

2. Italy, for example.

3. Article 22 – The right to take part in the determination and improvement of the working conditions and working environment, Article 23 – The right of elderly persons to social protection, Article 26 – The right to dignity at work, Article 27 – The right of workers with family responsibilities to equal opportunities and equal treatment.