

# Press Release

## Communication Unit of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities

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## Ukraine keeps its efforts to develop a concept of state regional policy in accordance with the European Charter of Local Self-Government

Yalta, 04.04.2008 – "The new state regional policy in Ukraine, combined with the decentralisation of government authority and the enhancement of the organisational, legal and financial powers of regional and local authorities, should become a genuine instrument for the rapid development of the country and for ensuring its unity, and for guaranteeing a high standard of living and securing people's rights and freedoms", in accordance with the recommendations of the Council of Europe. These are the main conclusions drawn by participants in a conference on the reform of regional policy in Ukraine, which was held in Yalta, Ukraine, on 3 April 2008.

The Ukrainian minister for regional development and honorary member of the Council of Europe's Congress of Local and Regional Authorities, Vasyl Kubida, the President of the Supreme Council of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea, Ukraine, and Congress member, Anatoliy Grytsenko, as well as the President of the Congress Chamber of Regions, Yavuz Mildon and the President of the Congress Working Group Regions with Legislative Power, Jean-Claude van Cauwenberghe, took part in the conference.

Participants stressed the importance of developing self-government at sub-national level, with effective rights and power, in conformity with the European Charter of Local Self-Government, which will celebrate the 20th anniversary of its entry into force on 1 September this year. They expressed their support for the draft European Charter of Regional Democracy, which is due to be adopted at the next Congress Plenary Session (Strasbourg, 27-29 May 2008).

The organisation of an international conference on the theme of transfrontier co-operation and the development of the Dnieper Euroregion, which will be held in Chernigiv on 30 June and 1 July 2008, was announced at the event. The Ukrainian authorities also asked the Council of Europe to consider the possibility of organising a European conference in Ukraine in 2009 for representatives of national associations of local and regional authorities in the framework of the "European Local Democracy Week".

The Congress has two chambers, the Chamber of Local Authorities and the Chamber of Regions. It brings together 318 full and 318 substitute members representing more than 200 000 European territorial communities. President of the Congress Halvdan Skard (Norway, SOC), President of the Chamber of Regions: Yavuz Mildon (EPP/CD, Turkey), President of the Chamber of Local Authorities : Ian Micallef (Malta, EPP/CD). Political Groups : Socialist Group (SOC), Group of the European People's Party – Christian Democrats (EPP/CD), Independent and Liberal Democrat Group (ILDG).