

Press Release

Communication Unit of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities

Ref:248a08

Tel: : +33 3 90 21 49 36

Fax : +33 3 88 41 27 51

congress.com@coe.int

www.coe.int/congress



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Universities and regions: synergies to boost cultural development

Strasbourg, 07.04.2008 – The role of universities in promoting cultural development and shaping regional identity is the theme of a seminar organised in Kazan, Russian Federation, by the Congress' Committee on Culture and Education and the authorities of the Republic of Tatarstan on 9 and 10 April.

The seminar's participants will discuss the model and modern problems of the classical university, specific partnerships between universities and regional communities, the role of universities in regional identity and development, as well as international and interregional cooperation between universities. A special session will be devoted to the project of creating a united European educational space, and the European project "The university in the formation of national elites".

President of Tatarstan Mintimer Shaimiyev, Chairman of the State Council (Parliament) and Congress member Farid Mukhametshin, and President of the Congress' Chamber of Regions Yavuz Mildon will open the seminar on Wednesday 9 April at 2.00 pm in the Parliament Building. The participants will then hear presentations by university professors and academicians, as well as Congress Vice-President Günther Krug and Hans Ulrich Stöckling and Chairman of the Working Group on Interregional Cooperation Karl-Heinz Lambertz. On Thursday 10 April, Sue Bolam, Congress rapporteur and member of the Committee on Culture and Education, will present the conclusions of the seminar. **The seminar is open to the press.**

Meeting in Kazan on Tuesday 8 April, the Committee on Culture and Education will examine reports on intercultural and interreligious dialogue as an opportunity for local democracy, regional cultural identity, electronic tools for elected representatives, and integration and participation of young people in local and regional life.

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).