

Press Release

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47 members

Albania
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Armenia
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Georgia
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Iceland
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Netherlands
Norway
Poland
Portugal
Romania
Russia
San Marino
Serbia
Slovakia
Slovenia
Spain
Sweden
Switzerland
"the former Yugoslav
Republic of
Macedonia"
Turkey
Ukraine
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European Local Democracy Week 2008: thousands of events in 33 countries

Strasbourg, 12.12.2008 – The second edition of the European Local Democracy Week (ELDW) was marked by growing participation and better coordination, according to the preliminary analysis of the information received by the Council of Europe.

Thousands of events have been organised in 33 European countries where associations of local authorities designated ELDW correspondents to liaise with municipalities during the 2008 edition, with the Week's logo and posters having been translated into 16 languages.

In particular, more than 750 municipalities reported specific activities and initiatives, including at the national level, such as the release of stamps, organisation of conferences, etc. The four pilot cities – Madrid (Spain), Varna (Bulgaria), Odessa (Ukraine) and the Brussels-Capital Region (Belgium) – added visibility to this annual European event, and the city of Strasbourg, host of the Council of Europe, actively joined in by organising the 6th encounter of municipalities members of the Strasbourg Club.

A wide range of initiatives was undertaken across Europe, some examples of which include theme meetings in neighbourhood councils (Brussels), a "Migrant voters" campaign (Dublin), a round table on "Local Government and the role of women in peace building and reconstruction" (Gori, Georgia), a conference on "Using the network of twinned cities for experience-sharing on local democracy" (Amiens, France) and a communal children's council (Kelmis, Belgium). Many activities, especially in the Russian Federation and Ukraine, particularly involved young people, including visits to local institutions, school debates, and short-story competitions on local democracy.

Representatives of the Council of Europe specifically took part in the ELDW ceremonies in Aix-en-Provence (France), Brussels and Eupen (Belgium), Madrid, Strasbourg and Odessa.

More information on ELDW, including the programme of activities, list of participating municipalities, ELDW correspondents, posters and the toolkit of suggested events is available on www.coe.int/demoweeek

A joint initiative of the Council of Europe's Congress of Local and Regional Authorities and European Committee for Local and Regional Democracy, launched in 2007, the "European Local Democracy Week" (ELDW) is an annual European event (around 15 October) with simultaneous national and local events organised by participating local authorities in Council of Europe member states. The purpose is to foster knowledge of local democracy and promote the idea of democratic participation at local level.

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 : Yavuz Milden (Turkey, EPP/CD), President of the Chamber of Regions: Ludmila Sfirloaga (Romania, SOC),

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).