

Andreas Kiefer, Secretary General of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe – Introduction to the Newsletter 29th Session

Strasbourg, 6 November 2015

Dear members,

We are pleased to offer you this newsletter summarising the main activities of the 29th session. We hope you will find it useful and urge you to distribute it widely among those around you so as to publicise the work of the Congress and your work as a local or regional elected representative in the European institutions.

245 members of the Congress took part in the 29th session. The figure is up over 25%, as 195 members took part in the 27th session in October 2014.

This increase demonstrates the members' growing interest in the work of their assembly.

You will find below some facts and figures intended to give you a clearer picture of the communication and publicity tools which we provide for you and which I urge you to use as widely as possible in your activities.

The services and tools intended to make members' work easier and raise their profiles, in particular during the sessions, include the new electronic voting system, the near real-time publication of news, videos, photos and speeches on the Congress website, live webcasting of the debates on the Council of Europe portal, a practical handbook, a smartphone app, a Twitter feed and the media box.

The media box is a mobile video studio in which around 40 video recordings were made over the three days of the session, with 70% being interviews with rapporteurs or guests relating to thematic debates, 20% on-camera messages and presentations and 10% interviews requested by media representatives. The links to these recordings were posted on the Council of Europe's YouTube account.

The Twitter feed under the hashtag #youthsession2015 generated some 226 tweets during the debates, about half of which were displayed on the screens in the chamber. These tweets were mainly posted by young people (youth delegates and their friends on the social media) and by Congress members present at the session.

The discussions at the session led to the adoption of 13 resolutions and 8 recommendations. A total of 16 reports were debated and one declaration was adopted.

In terms of media coverage, 23 news items and 11 press releases were published, along with four articles drafted by journalists for the web site.