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## **Youth Delegates participate in the Congress Session for the first time**

Strasbourg, 17 October 2014 - "Empowering youth: a shared responsibility for cities and regions": was the theme of the 27<sup>th</sup> Session of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe held from 14 to 16 October in Strasbourg.

For the first time young delegates, aged 16 to 30 years, from 34 different countries, took part in the Congress' session and spoke at all the debates, sitting together with the members of the Congress in the hemicycle. They also participated in the meetings of the three Congress committees.

On 15 October a special youth debate was on the agenda of the Session. The Youth Delegates decided on the two topics of the debate, namely "Youth (Un)employment" and "Co-management and the setting up of joint decision-making bodies". Both topics were introduced by the Youth Delegates and debated together with members of the Congress. To ensure everyone's voice was heard, including those who were not able to be there, comments on Twitter were screened live in the hemicycle with the hashtag #youthsession2014. "Involving youth in decision making is the way to build citizenship and responsibility for contributing to society," was only one of many comments on Twitter.

On 16 October the Youth Delegates issued their recommendations to the elected representatives of the Congress, aimed at empowering young people in Europe to participate in the public debate and decision-making process.

A debriefing was held on the same day where the young people presented their conclusions in the presence of members of the Congress and Congress President Jean-Claude Frécon. He said "It was refreshing to see so many engaged young people amongst us. Your contributions were valued here and we hope to be able to continue this initiative in the future."

[Declaration of youth delegates](#)

[Video Media Box](#)

[Interviews MediaBox of young delegates](#)

[27th Session website](#)

[List of Young delegates](#)

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: Jean-Claude Frécon (France, SOC), President of the Chamber of Local Authorities: Anders Knappe (Sweden, EPP/CCE), President of the Chamber of Regions: Gudrun Mosler-Törnström (Austria, SOC)

Political Groups: Socialist Group (SOC), Group of the European People's Party – Christian Democrats (EPP/CD), Independent and Liberal Democrat Group (ILDG), European Conservatives & Reformists Group (ECR)