

Media Advisory

Congress of Local and Regional Authorities

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Congress delegation on a monitoring visit to Latvia

Dates: from 3 to 5 November 2010

Location: Riga, Sigulda

Description: The Council of Europe Congress of Local and Regional Authorities is carrying out a general monitoring mission to assess the situation of local and regional democracy in Latvia. This visit is part of the Congress' procedure for monitoring the implementation of the European Charter of Local Self-Government, which Latvia ratified in 1996.

Congress Rapporteurs Jean-Claude Frécon (France, SOC) and Philippe Leuba (Switzerland, NR) will meet Minister of Regional Development and Local Government Dagnija Stake, Chair of the Parliamentary Committee on Human Rights and Public Affairs Ingrida Circene, State Secretary of Finance Martins Bicevskis and Latvian Ombudsman Roman Apsitis, as well as representatives of the Constitutional Court and of Riga's City Council.

Meetings are also scheduled with Andris Teikmanis, Secretary of State in the Foreign Affairs Ministry, and Andris Jausleinis, Chairman of the Latvian Association of Local and Regional Governments, as well as with experts and academics from the University of Latvia.

Following the visit, a report will be submitted to the Congress' Monitoring Committee.

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The Congress' latest recommendation on the situation of local and regional democracy in Latvia was adopted in May 1998. In December 2008, the Congress adopted a recommendation on local democracy in Latvia, concerning the participation of non-citizens in public and political life at local level. In December 2008, the Congress also held an exchange of views on this subject with Oskars Kastens, Special Assignments Minister for Social Integration.

Contact in Riga:

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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).