

Press Release

Congress of Local and Regional Authorities Communication Division

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Helping families in financial distress and preventing violence against children on the agenda of the Committee on Social Cohesion of the Congress in Linz

Strasbourg, 24.04.2009 - How can local and regional authorities protect children at risk of violence? And what is the social responsibility of regions towards overindebted households, especially in a time of severe economic downturn? These are two of the key questions which will be examined by the Committee on Social Cohesion of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe, at its meeting in Linz, Austria, on 28 and 29 April 2009. These debates will take place in the context of the current economic crisis which is set to have a particularly devastating knock-on effect on families both in financial and psychological terms.

Josef Pühringer, Governor of Upper Austria, Erich Haider, (Austria, SOC), Deputy Governor of Upper Austria and Congress member, and Valério Prignachi, President of the Committee on social cohesion (Italy, EPP/CD), will open the meeting on 28 April.

Two draft reports will be examined, the first, presented by Patrizia Muratore (Italy, GILD), on the social responsibility of regions towards households at risk of overindebtedness and usury, and the second, presented by Pia Bosch I Codola (Spain, SOC), on preventing violence against children, with the participation of elected representatives and specialists. At the end of the debates, the draft resolutions and recommendations will be adopted by the Committee, to be discussed during the 17th Plenary Session of the Congress, in October 2009.

The Committee members will also discuss how sustainable gender equality can be achieved in local and regional political and administrative life and give their own personal experiences and examples of good practice. This work is aimed at presenting texts for adoption during the 18th Plenary Session, in 2010.

More information : www.coe.int/congress-socialcohesion

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).