

Press Release

Congress of Local and Regional Authorities

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Congress Rapporteurs: "Bulgaria is pursuing its policy of decentralisation"

Sofia, 29.11.2010 – At the end of the monitoring mission from 24 to 26 November 2010, the Rapporteurs of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe welcomed the decentralisation efforts in Bulgaria since the ratification of the Charter of Local Self-Government in 1995, and the establishment of a strengthened regulatory and legislative frame aimed at a more effective exercise of local democracy.

"This process continues but the fiscal and financial framework is still not commensurate with the tasks and real needs of local authorities," stated Rapporteur Artur Torres Pereira (Portugal, EPP/CD).

"If a real regionalisation project is not on the agenda, restructuring of the territorial administration is needed, as well as a better definition of local government financing," added Rapporteur Johan Sauwens (Belgium, EPP/CD).

The Rapporteurs welcomed the spirit of dialogue and cooperation in which the monitoring mission to assess the situation of local and regional democracy in Bulgaria took place.

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The latest recommendation of the Congress on the situation of local democracy in Bulgaria was adopted in May 1998. Following this visit, a report will be submitted to the Congress' Monitoring Committee, at one of its meetings in 2011.

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: Keith Whitmore (United Kingdom, ILDG), President of the Chamber of Regions: Herwig van Staa (Austria, EPP/CD)

President of the Chamber of Local Authorities: Jean-Paul Frécon (France, SOC)

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