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## **Europe's regions at the centre of Congress's events in Innsbruck (Austria)**

Strasbourg, 25 May 2012. – From 30 May to 2 June, Innsbruck (Tyrol, Austria) will be the venue of a series of events on regionalisation, multi-level governance and transfrontier regional co-operation, organised by and in co-operation with the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe.

At the International Conference on the Role of Regions with Legislative Power in Council of Europe and European Union member states - which will take place on 1 June - special attention will be paid to the development of various systems of regional democracy, including federal and regionalised countries and regions with special status in Europe. This conference, co-organised by the State Region of Tyrol, the Conference of European Regions with Legislative Power (REGLEG) and the Congress, will also focus on current challenges for regionalisation, crossborder co-operation and on needs to ensure democracy, transparency and human rights at regional level of government. Among the keynote speakers will be Luis Durnwalder, President of the Autonomous Province Bozen/Südtirol, Giovanni Kessler, Director of the European Anti-Fraud-Office (OLAF) and Harry Kopietz, President of the Regional Parliament of Vienna. Günther Platter, Governor of the Tyrol, will open the conference and the President of the Congress Chamber of Regions, Herwig van Staa (EPP/DC, Austria), will present the "Declaration of Innsbruck" to be adopted at the end of the event.

Transfrontier co-operation will be also the topic of a seminar organised by the Congress and the Kehl am Rhein-based Euro-Institut, in the run-up to the conference, on 30 May. Case studies relating to three different Euroregions (Tirol-Südtirol, Upper-Rhine and Yaroslavl) will be discussed under the chairmanship of Karl-Heinz Lambertz (SOC, Belgium), Chair of the Governance Committee of the Congress of the Council of Europe.

The Governance Committee of the Congress will then hold a meeting on 31 May. in order to adopt draft texts dedicated to the role of second tier local authorities, consultation rights for local and regional authorities and the role of Macroregions in Europe. A discussion between the members of the Governance Committee on the changes undergoing in the Arab countries' local and regional institutions will round up this meeting.

On 2 June, Congress President Keith Whitmore will be awarded the Emperor Maximilian Prize, the European Prize for Regional and Local Politics of the Land of Tyrol and the City of Innsbruck, in the Giant Hall of the Imperial Castle.

### Conference venue:

Congress Innsbruck, Rennweg 3, A-6020 Innsbruck

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Programme: [www.coe.int/innsbruck](http://www.coe.int/innsbruck)

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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: 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-Claude 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).