



T +33(0)390214895

[www.coe.int/congress](http://www.coe.int/congress)

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## Local and regional democracy in Hungary

Strasbourg 31 October 2013 - The Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe meeting in Strasbourg (France) on 29 October 2013 examined a report on local and regional democracy in Hungary, prepared following a monitoring visit to the country in May 2012. Congress Rapporteurs Artur TORRES PEREIRA (Portugal, EPP/CCE) and Devrim ÇUKUR (Turkey, SOC) welcomed the ratification by Hungary of the Additional Protocol to the European Charter of Local Self-Government on the right to participate in the affairs of a local authority in June 2010. They regretted, however, that this positive step was overshadowed by the recent reforms, which led to a deterioration of the legislative framework on local and regional issues in Hungary.

"I am concerned by the current recentralisation of powers and competences which go against the principles laid down in the Charter" stated Artur TORRES PEREIRA. "Local authorities are not consulted properly or in due time on matters of interest for them. In addition, they do not dispose of an effective legal remedy to protect their interests", he added.

The report also underlines the fact that the local authorities in Hungary remain strongly dependent on government grants.

It is therefore recommended that the Hungarian authorities take steps to guarantee, in legal and practical terms, the implementation of the principle of self-government and the financial autonomy of local and regional authorities as set out in the Charter. Congress recommendation also strongly encourages the Hungarian authorities to clearly define the competences of local and regional authorities and calls on the Hungarian Government to put in place an effective consultation procedure.

Finally, Devrim Cukur praised Hungary's very active participation in the formation of Euroregions and in transfrontier cooperation. He welcomed the declared intention of the Hungarian government to sign the third Additional Protocol to the European Outline Convention on Transfrontier cooperation. He drew attention, however, to the weak position of the regional level and suggested a reform "to transform counties into economic development bodies capable of handling the management of European funds".

Video of the debate : [original](#) | [French](#) | [English](#)  
[Report CG\(25\)7PROV](#)

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: Herwig Van Staa (Austria, EPP/DC), President of the Chamber of Regions: Nataliya Romanova (Ukraine, IDLG), 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), European Conservatives & Reformists Group (ECR)