



T +33(0)390214895

www.coe.int/congress

congress.web@coe.int

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Declaration on “Regional and minority languages in Europe today”

Strasbourg, 11 February 2014 – The Bureau of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe adopted, on 10 February 2014, a Declaration on “Regional and minority languages in Europe today”.

“The Bureau noted that the current context of economic and social crisis in Europe is seen as not being conducive to increased efforts to promote regional or minority languages. It remains however convinced that progress can be made, and results achieved, when the political will is there and when the various players at local, regional, national and European level join forces.

In this connection, the Bureau welcomed the fact that a large majority of the French National Assembly voted, on 28 January 2014, in favour of a constitutional amendment permitting the ratification of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages by France, 15 years after its signature.

The Bureau calls on Iceland, Italy and Malta, which have also signed the Charter but not yet ratified it, to follow France’s positive example. In addition, it invites the authorities of Albania, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova, the Russian Federation and “the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia” to ratify the Charter which they committed to do when they joined the Council of Europe.

The Congress – and in particular its Chamber of Regions – will continue to follow up this issue, in close cooperation with the relevant monitoring bodies of the Council of Europe.”

[Full text of the Declaration](#)
[European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages](#)

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)