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Réf. CG-PR 018 (2014)

Local and regional democracy in Sweden

Strasbourg, 27.03.2014 – The Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe examined a report and a recommendation on the situation of local and regional democracy in Sweden today. These texts follow a monitoring visit to the country by the co-rapporteurs Luzette Wagenaar-Kroon (Netherlands, EPP/CCE) and Gudrun Mosler-Törnström (Austria, SOC) in September 2013.

The rapporteurs emphasised the high quality of Swedish local democracy, which comply, on the whole, with the provisions of the European Charter of Local Self-Government. In particular, they welcomed the recent incorporation of the principle of proportionality in the Swedish Constitution, intended to ensure that restrictions on local self-government do not exceed what is necessary, and the granting of regional development competences to numerous county councils.

Nevertheless, the Congress recommends that the Swedish authorities introduce the subsidiarity principle into the Swedish Constitution to ensure that the division of powers between State and local authorities remains in conformity with the Charter, in law and in practice. It invites the Swedish authorities to index state grants and to allow local authorities stronger involvement in the estimation of cost implications of any new state legislation concerning them. The Congress also recommends setting up a consultation system regulated by law.

"The Swedish government has amended the country's Constitution and introduced the principle of proportionality. It is now important to incorporate the subsidiarity principle too. This will provide a solid guarantee, in law, for local and regional democracy in Sweden", said Gudrun Mosler-Törnström, when presenting the report.

Sweden signed the European Charter of Local Self-Government on 4 October 1988 and ratified it on 29 August 1989. The countries having ratified the Charter are bound by its provisions. The convention imposes respect for a minimum core of principles that form the first European foundation for local self-government. The Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe ensures that those principles are respected.

Document : [CG\(26\)12PROV](#)

More information : [File 26th Session](#)

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)