



T +33(0)390214895

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

[congress.web@coe.int](mailto:congress.web@coe.int)

Ref. CG-PR 011 (2015)

## **Combating radicalisation in Europe: Congress proposes grassroots measures**

Strasbourg, 26 March 2015 – At its 28th session in Strasbourg, the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe adopted a resolution and a recommendation on 25 March 2015 focusing on the role of local and regional authorities in combating and preventing radicalisation.

The Congress will draw up guidelines on preventing radicalisation and manifestations of hate at grassroots level, to be adopted at its 29th Session in October 2015 and create a pedagogical toolkit for use by local elected representatives when organising intercultural and inter-faith activities. It is also committed to developing training modules on human rights issues and holding a Human Rights Forum at local level on a regular basis, with the first of these taking place in Graz on 28-29 May 2015.

The measures proposed also include compiling and updating the Council of Europe's legal instruments which promote citizen participation and living together, notably the Additional Protocol to the European Charter of Local Self-Government on the right to participate in the affairs of a local authority.

The adopted texts stress the importance of involving citizens, particularly young people, for example through awareness-raising campaigns, including in schools, participation in neighbourhood councils or foreign residents' councils and the promotion of intercultural and inter-faith dialogue.

"The recent terrorist attacks in Brussels, Paris, Copenhagen and Tunis have shown that this threat is more present than ever and calls for concerted action at all levels of government. Combating terrorism is not only a national task but also entails action at local and regional level", stressed Gunn Marit Helgesen, Norway (R, EPP/CCE), who presented the texts on behalf of the rapporteur Leen Verbeek, Netherlands (R, SOC). She also pointed to the necessity of allocating additional means and resources to the Congress for the local and regional implementation of the new Council of Europe Action Plan 2015-17 to combat extremism and radicalisation leading to terrorism.

Speakers in the debate included Hugh Starkey, Professor of education for democratic citizenship and human rights education, University College London, United Kingdom, Philippe Gaudin, Head of training and research at the European Institute of Religious Sciences, Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes, France, Hans Bonte, Mayor of Vilvorde, Belgium, and Moussa Al-Hassan Diaw, expert on extremism and deradicalisation, Linz University College of Education (Austria), EUIA/RAN Europe network and Network for deradicalisation and prevention in Austria and Germany.

The adopted texts, speeches as well as the videos of the debates and interviews will be published on the Internet in the file on the 28th Session.

More information:

- [Report CG/2015\(28\)14PROV](#)
- [Presentation by Marit Helgesen, Norway \(R, EPP/CCE\)](#)
- [Congress strategy to combat radicalisation at grass-roots level](#)
- ["28th Session of the Congress" file](#)

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: Jean-Claude Frécon (France, SOC), President of the Chamber of Local Authorities: Anders Knappe (Sweden, EPP/CCE), President of the Chamber of Regions: Gudrun Mosler-Törnström (Austria, 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)