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Local and regional democracy in Poland

Strasbourg, 27 March 2015 – The Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe adopted on 26 March a recommendation on the situation of local and regional democracy in Poland following a visit to the country from 20 to 23 May 2014 by Jos Wienen (Netherlands, EPP/CCE), rapporteur on local democracy, and Cynthia Hughes (United Kingdom SOC), rapporteur on regional democracy. The debate was attended by Stanisław Huskowski, State Secretary at the Ministry of Administration and Digitisation, Poland.

Introducing the report, Jos Wienen said that “the local and regional reforms carried out in Poland since 1990 have succeeded not only in decentralising the country’s administration but also in laying the foundations for a democratic civil society”. The report, which is globally positive, welcomes the fact that the scope of local self-government is respected and that Polish local government bodies enjoy wide scope for autonomous policy-making. His co-rapporteur, Cynthia Hughes, stressed that “the system of local governance is considered by all stakeholders in Poland as an important part of the democratic system”.

The Congress nevertheless recommends that the national authorities ensure concomitant financing of delegated tasks and that regulatory frameworks do not restrict the exercise of local government competences. The government is also asked to clarify the division of responsibilities on the governance of public spaces, if possible through legislation. Lastly, the Polish authorities are invited to ratify the Additional Protocol to the European Charter of Local Self-Government on the right to participate in the affairs of a local authority.

This is the second monitoring report on the situation of local and regional democracy in Poland since the Charter entered into force in 1994. The first dates back to 2002.

Poland signed the European Charter of Local Self-Government (ETS No 122) on 19 February 1993 and ratified it on 22 November 1993. The Charter came into force in Poland on 1 March 1994 with no restrictions.

More information :

- [Report CG/2015\(28\)12PROV](#)
- [Video of the debate](#)

Presentation of the report :

- [Jos Wienen, Pays-Bas \(PPE/CCE\)](#)
- [Cynthia Hughes, Royaume-Uni \(SOC\)](#)

Mediabox Interview:

- [Jos Wienen, Pays-Bas \(PPE/CCE\)](#)

[File « 28th Session of the Congress »](#)

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)