



T +33(0)390214895

www.coe.int/congress

congress.com@coe.int

Ref. CG-PR052(2013)

Local and regional democracy in Georgia

Strasbourg, 20.03.2013 – The members of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe, meeting at the Congress session in Strasbourg (France), have examined a report on the situation of local and regional democracy in Georgia following a monitoring visit to the country in June 2012. The recommendation adopted on 19 March notes with satisfaction that progress has been made since the visit in 2004, which is the year in which Georgia ratified the European Charter of Local Self-Government. Helena Pihlajasaari (Finland, SOC), the Congress' co-rapporteur, stressed that "a large-scale reform has taken place accompanied by a change in mentalities focused on international cooperation and integration with Europe."

The Congress also expresses concern about a number of issues such as the lack of standards to be applied to the auditing of local self-government entities, and the restricted financial autonomy of local authorities, which do not have sufficient "own resources". These represent approximately 20% of their total revenues, with the rest coming from government grants, according to Nigel Mermagen, co-rapporteur of the Congress.

Having been alerted to the recent incidents in which it is alleged that undue pressure was put on local elected representatives, the Congress had sent a fact-finding mission to the country, on the 27th and 28th of last February. The recommendation adopted calls on the Georgian authorities to take immediate and effective measures to ensure the independence of local authorities and elected representatives. However, the rapporteurs note that the current Georgian Government shows a clear political will to incorporate the guiding principles of local self-government into domestic legislation and to implement a substantial reform aimed at increased local autonomy.

At the meeting's close, Tengiz Shergelashvili, First Deputy-Minister for Regional Development and Infrastructure of Georgia, confirmed the Georgian authorities' desire to strengthen regional and local powers. "We don't want superficial local democracy, but rather an in-depth reform," he said, indicating that his government wanted, in particular, to implement the principle of subsidiarity as laid out in the European Charter of Local Self-Government.

[Report CG\(24\)10 – Local and regional democracy in Georgia](#)

Video of the debate : [original](#) – [French](#) – [English](#)

Follow us: 

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)