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## Local and Regional democracy in Albania

Strasbourg 31 October 2013 - The members of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe, meeting at the 25<sup>th</sup> Congress Session in Strasbourg (France), have examined a report on the situation of local and regional democracy in Albania following a monitoring visit in December 2012.

The report notes with satisfaction that decentralisation of the state power has been a major component of democratisation in Albania and that the legislative framework is in line with the European Charter of Local Self-Government. However, in their report, Congress rapporteurs Ždenek Brož, (Czech Republic ECR) and Åke Svensson, (Sweden, SOC) regret that the regional level appears to be weak in the overall governance system, and that the local government associations are fragmented and have difficulty taking a common position.

"One of the main issues is that the relations between local leaders and councillors in Albania is overshadowed by the over-politicised environment in the country, which raises a barrier between local representatives from different political parties to such an extent that they cannot speak with a unified voice. They cannot find a consensus inside the local government associations. I think this issue is of great importance today, as the recent elections have once again changed the political landscape" explained Ždenek Brož, addressing the Session.

It is also recommended that the Albanian authorities include all local and regional authorities in their consultations and formalise the process of consultation by introducing specific legislative provisions.

The Congress also recommends to intensify the decentralisation process in Albania in the light of the Charter and to begin a reform of the territorial system that will allow communes and municipalities to carry out their responsibilities in an effective and efficient manner. It encourages the government to enhance local authorities' delegated competencies with concomitant financing and to clarify and increase the role of regional authorities.

Finally, the report invites the Albanian authorities to sign and ratify the Additional Protocol to the European Charter of Local Self-Government on the right to participate in the affairs of a local authority (CETS No. 207).

Video of the Debate : [original](#) | [French](#) | [English](#)  
[Rapport CG\(25\)11PROV](#)

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)