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## **Residence-based participation: a joint Congress and City of Strasbourg conference**

Strasbourg, 19.11.2013 – As part of the World Forum for Democracy, the Congress and the City of Strasbourg (France) are holding on 27 November 2013 a conference entitled "Residence-based participation: a new reality of modern democracy" .

The conference will examine the new perspectives of citizen participation at local level, in particular appropriate ways and means of encouraging all residents to become involved in the development of the community, irrespective of their origin and their legal status.

Against a background of declining democratic participation, the economic crisis and the growing diversity of European society, it's more necessary than ever to develop a new form of democracy which is not restricted to voting or nationality but based instead on residence requirements. The aim is to build a social system which is orientated towards citizens' ability to express their views and discuss the future of the local community.

The conference will be divided in two workshops, one on "citizenship and the right to vote determined by residence", introduced by Vincent Reberiou, Vice-President of the Human Rights League, and the other on "participatory democracy in an intercultural society", presented by Jean-Claude Frécon, President of the Congress Chamber of Local Authorities. Political participation, in particular its representative bodies such as foreign residents' councils, the right to vote in local elections, and local intercultural policies will be among the themes discussed.

Roland Ries, Mayor of Strasbourg and Herwig Van Staa, President of the Congress, will open the conference at 9 a.m. at la Grande Aubette in Strasbourg.

The speakers will include John Warmisham, Vice-President of the Congress and member of Salford Municipal Council (United Kingdom), Henrik Hammar, Chairman of the Örkelljunga Municipal Council (Sweden) and Congress Rapporteur on the integration of migrants through self-employment, Nawel Rafik-Elmrini, Deputy to the Mayor of Strasbourg and Congress rapporteur on education for cultural diversity, Steven Clift, Director General of E-Democracy.org, Katarina Vukobratovic, Programme Co-ordinator at the Maytree Foundation, Ben Fayot, former member of the Chamber of Deputies of the Grand-Duchy of Luxembourg and former municipal councillor of the City of Luxembourg, Ulla Kalbfleisch-Kottsieper, expert at the Ministry of Justice of Thuringen (Germany), and Alphonse Goueth, Deputy President of the French Council for Citizenship through Residence .

The conference is open to the press.

[Programme of the Conference](#)  
[Website of the Forum](#)

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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)