



**European Committee
of the Regions**

Brussels, 9 March 2018

181st MEETING OF THE EUROPEAN COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS BUREAU

- 21 MARCH 2018 -

ITEM 8)

**COOPERATION WITH THE CONGRESS OF LOCAL AND REGIONAL AUTHORITIES
OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE:
REVISION OF THE COOPERATION AGREEMENT
BETWEEN THE COR AND THE CONGRESS**

Submitted by the Secretary-general

FOR DECISION

SUMMARY

Bureau meeting: 181

Date: 21/03/2018

Item 8)

**Cooperation with the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe:
Revision of the cooperation agreement between the CoR and the Congress**

Type:

- Document for information / debate
- Document for decision
- Recommendation to the Assembly

Short description:

The European Committee of the Regions and the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe have agreed to update the cooperation agreement signed in 2009. This revision was discussed and agreed upon at the meeting of the CoR-Congress High-Level Group on 16 January 2018. According to Rule 39 of the CoR's Rules of Procedure, the agreement will be signed by the president. Like the previous agreement, it will be in English only.

The Bureau is asked to approve:

the attached updated cooperation agreement between the European Committee of the Regions and the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe.

Remarks:

1. Introduction

The European Committee of the Regions and the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe have agreed to update the cooperation agreement signed in 2009. This revision was discussed and agreed upon at the meeting of the CoR-Congress High-Level Group on 16 January 2018. According to Rule 39 of the CoR's Rules of Procedure, the agreement will be signed by the president. Like the previous agreement, it will be in English only. The agreement will be signed at the Congress plenary session on 27-28 March 2018.

The update mainly concerns:

- a streamlined process of cooperation with the establishment of a High-Level Group (HLG) meeting once a year, bringing together the president, the first vice-president and the CIVEX chair and the Congress president and the presidents of the Congress's two Chambers;
- better synergies between the two institutions and a focus on avoiding overlaps;
- focus on a few annual political priorities set by the HLG;
- linking CoR-Congress relations more closely to the overarching political work carried out between the European Union and the Council of Europe.

PROPOSAL:

Bureau members are asked to approve the attached revised cooperation agreement between the European Committee of the Regions and the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe.

REVISED COOPERATION AGREEMENT

BETWEEN

THE EUROPEAN COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS

AND

THE CONGRESS OF LOCAL AND REGIONAL AUTHORITIES

OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE

THE EUROPEAN COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS AND THE CONGRESS OF LOCAL AND REGIONAL AUTHORITIES OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE,

Having regard to Article 305 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union,

Having regard to Article 2 of the Statutory Resolution relating to the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe,

Having regard to the Memorandum of Understanding between the European Union and the Council of Europe signed on 23 May 2007, providing the framework for enhanced cooperation and political dialogue between the two organisations,

Having regard to the decisions of the Bureau of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe of 2 February 2018 and of the Bureau of the European Committee of the Regions of 21 March 2018 concerning the present Cooperation Agreement,

HAVE AGREED AS FOLLOWS

I. Objectives

1. The two institutions will cooperate to reinforce local and regional democracy, devolution and self-government in Europe; to guarantee the respect of established local and regional competences by national and European authorities; and to strengthen the citizens' confidence in the European values and in democratic institutions at local, regional, national and European level. In pursuing these objectives, the two institutions will support each other and jointly promote the ideal of good, multilevel governance in Europe and beyond.
2. As regards cooperation concerning their member States, both institutions will focus their cooperation in particular on promoting the principles of the European Charter of Local Self-Government and their implementation. As regards cooperation concerning non-EU member States, the two institutions will also focus on the EU's Eastern Partnership Programme and the Union for the Mediterranean as well as on areas of mutual interest with regard to candidate and potential candidate countries for EU membership.

II. Modalities of the cooperation

1. The Presidents of the two institutions will address the Plenary Session of the partner institution every second year in rotation to ensure a high-level annual exchange of views involving all members.
- 2.1. The two institutions establish a High-Level Group composed of the two Presidents, the First Vice-President and the CIVEX Chairperson of the European Committee of the Regions, the President of the Congress' Chamber of Regions and the President of the Congress' Chamber of Local Authorities. Other members of the Committee and of the Congress can be associated with the work of the High-Level Group as observers.

- 2.2. The High-Level Group will meet once a year to take stock of the on-going cooperation, to define thematic and political priorities for cooperation and to fix common activities. The agenda of the meeting will be prepared by the two Secretaries General in consultation with the Presidents.
- 2.3. The Presidency of the High-Level Group will rotate every year between the two institutions and is held by the President of the institution. The Vice-Presidency of the High Level Group is ensured by the President of the institution other than the one holding the Presidency. The institution holding the Presidency provides the secretariat.
- 2.4. The High-Level Group will evaluate regularly the development of the cooperation between the two institutions and give an evaluation report to their respective Bureaux.
- 2.5. The High-Level Group cannot make binding decisions on behalf of both institutions.
3. The chairpersons, rapporteurs and secretariats of the Commissions of the European Committee of the Regions and of the Congress Committees exchange information on activities of mutual interest. The two institutions will follow each other's statutory meetings to ensure a good flow of information.
4. The two institutions will complement each other in partnership without encroaching on each other's competences, and while respecting each other's nature and priorities. The decision on which institution will take the leading role within joint projects will be based on the specific remits and experiences of both parties.
5. Where appropriate and in matters on which the two institutions share the same position, they will outline the position of the other institution in their respective texts to be adopted.
6. The Presidents and Secretaries General institutions will instruct their respective Secretariats to provide the administrative support and follow-up to the provisions mentioned above and make sure that common activities are carried out in an appropriate way.

III. Financial provisions

The present agreement does not imply financial engagements other than the ones taken respectively by the two institutions according to their internal rules.

IV. Revision of the Cooperation Agreement

The present Cooperation Agreement can be revised by mutual agreement at the initiative of one of the two institutions.

Strasbourg,

Karl-Heinz Lambertz
President
European Committee of the Regions

Gudrun Mosler-Törnström
President
Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of
the Council of Europe