



20 October 2009

Declaration of Innsbruck

The Presidents who took part in the XIII Conference of European Regional Legislative Assemblies¹ (CALRE),

Parlement de la Région de Bruxelles-Capitale
Parlament der Deutschsprachigen Gemeinschaft Belgiens
Parlement de la Communauté Française de Belgique
Vlaams Parlement
Parlement Wallon
Álands Lagting
Landtag von Baden-Württemberg
Bayerischer Landtag
Landtag Mecklenburg-Vorpommern
Landtag Nordrhein-Westfalen
Landtag Rheinland-Pfalz
Schleswig-Holsteinischer Landtag
Parlamento de Andalucía
Cortes de Aragón
Parlamento de Canarias
Parlamento de Cantabria
Cortes de Castilla-La Mancha
Parlament de Catalunya
Eusko Legebiltzarra – Parlamento Vasco
Asamblea de Extremadura
Asamblea de Madrid
Asamblea Regional de Murcia
Parlamento de Navarra
Parlamento de la Rioja
Corts Valencianes
National Assembly for Wales
Consiglio Regionale dell’Abruzzo
Consiglio della Provincia Autonoma di Bolzano - Südtiroler Landtag
Consiglio Regionale della Emilia Romagna
Consiglio Regionale della Regione Autonoma Friuli Venezia Giulia
Consiglio Regionale della Liguria
Consiglio Regionale della Lombardia

¹ In the Declaration of Innsbruck, the term ‘region’ also comprises provinces and other territorial subdivisions with legislative power; ‘regional assemblies’ also comprises the assemblies of provinces and those of other territorial subdivisions with legislative power.



Consiglio Regionale della Sardegna
Consiglio Regionale della Toscana
Consiglio Regionale del Trentino-Alto Adige – Regionalrat der Autonomen Region
Trentino-Südtirol
Consiglio della Provincia Autonoma di Trento
Consiglio Regionale del Veneto
Burgenländischer Landtag
Kärntner Landtag
Niederösterreichischer Landtag
Tiroler Landtag
Vorarlberger Landtag
Wiener Landtag
Assembleia Legislativa da Região Autónoma dos Açores
Assembleia Legislativa da Região Autónoma da Madeira

in Innsbruck from 18 to 20 October 2009 have by mutual agreement adopted the following declaration:

1. Reform Treaty

CALRE hopes the ratification process will soon be concluded and the Treaty of Lisbon will become effective a.s.a.p.

An all-including, open and participative reflection about the future of Europe is necessary.

In order to achieve more transparency, efficiency and participation, the rights of parliament on a regional, national and European level must be enhanced.

The reform treaty constitutes great progress for the legal position of regions, namely

- the recognition of regional and local self governance,
- the extension of the principle of subsidiarity including entities on a local and regional level,
- better demarcation of competences,
- the early warning system for subsidiarity control,
- the recognition of regional parliaments with legislative power in the subsidiarity protocol and consultation through national parliaments according to the distribution of competences in individual member states,
- the right of the Committee of the Regions (CoR) to take legal action in case of a violation of the subsidiarity principle.



2. Role of regional parliaments

European Unification has to take place bottom-up.

Whereas the governments of member states have decisive influence on the decisions to be made at a European level, regional parliaments have hardly any effective control mechanisms at their disposal. This makes European decision-making non-transparent for citizens and has caused growing alienation between them and European bodies.

Regional parliaments are particularly appropriate to overcome alienation between European citizens and the EU.

CALRE invites the European institutions to make intensive use of and/or extend permanent procedure for the active participation of European regions and provinces with legislative powers.

3. Regional policy

Regional policy is a major means of boosting European cohesion.

Considering the importance of EU regional policy and particularly of cohesion policy as a key element of growth and socio-economic development of the European regions, special attention must be given to the negotiations on Structural Fund period 2014-2020 to achieve added value for all European regions. The identification of strategic objectives and the resulting prioritisation of actions must be strictly in keeping with the principle of institutional participation and that of subsidiarity whilst taking regional and local authorities into account.

Because of their proximity to citizens, regional parliaments must act as “schools of democracy and development” and play an essential role in the promotion and dissemination of those values and principles. This should be in harmony with the Millennium Development Goals of the United Nations and in compliance with the goals of the local and regional policies of the Council of Europe and in particular with those of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities (CLRAE).

4. Charter of Regional Democracy

Europe needs strong democratic structures, also at a regional and local level.

The Presidents invite the Ministers of the Council of Europe in charge of local and regional democracy to discuss and adopt the draft of a reference framework on



regional democracy elaborated by CLRAE at the conference in Utrecht on 16 and 17 November 2009.

The Presidents see this reference framework as one step closer to the Charter of Regional Democracy.

5. The principle of subsidiarity– control and procedure

The principle of subsidiarity broadly applies to the distribution of public duties. The EU is bound to respect the principle of subsidiarity in all its legal acts.

Regional parliaments with legislative power have an important role in supervising the principle of subsidiarity.

The Presidents welcome the de-facto early warning system practised by the European Commission since September 2006.

The efficient implementation and control of the principle of subsidiarity and proportionality requires increased dialogue and cooperation with the European Commission as well as increased coordination and harmonisation with parliaments on a national and European level.

In the context of the respective national procedure of the individual member states, the Presidents wish the regional parliaments with legislative powers to be involved in a timely and efficient manner in the European legislative procedure when it comes to matters relating to them. Accordingly, they invite the national parliaments to develop procedure for information, consultation and consideration of their positions and to participate appropriately and in good time within the framework of legal action.

The Presidents invite the European Commission and the European Parliament (EP) to duly consider their statements. Every national parliament or chamber of a national parliament should be able to communicate to the EP its reasoned opinions as well as those of the respective regional parliaments with legislative powers in compliance with the principle of subsidiarity.

6. Legal action at the European Court

In future and in keeping with the Treaty of Lisbon, not only the CoR and the “second chamber of national parliaments”, but also regional parliaments with legislative powers should be granted the right to take legal action before the European Court of Justice (ECJ) in those areas falling within their sphere of competence.

The right of the Committee of the Regions (CoR) to take legal action should be defined as the right to take legal action by a minority of delegates of the CoR and/or by a minority of national delegations.



The Presidents invite the national parliaments and/or their second chambers, if so applicable, to introduce special procedure to give hearing to regional parliaments in view of their territorial importance.

This will in no way affect national regulations that are already in place and that are more favourable to regions with legislative power.

7. Cooperation with the Council of Europe, RegLeg and the CoR

The Presidents embrace the document that has been prepared to promote cooperation between CALRE, CLRAE and RegLeg and advocate the speedy conclusion of the Tripartite Agreement.

The role of the interregional groups of regions with legislative power should be strengthened in CoR and CLRAE.

The Presidents of CALRE undertake to work together with CLRAE and CoR to further develop regionalisation and democracy in Europe.

8. Cooperation with European institutions

The Presidents demand that inter-parliamentarian European structures are also opened to regional parliaments with legislative power and that regional parliaments with legislative power are involved in the IPEX website.

In particular, they call on the European Parliament to increase cooperation with CALRE. In this connection, the Presidents also draw attention to the fact that regional parliaments assume an important intermediary role to achieve more closeness to the citizen.

The Presidents point out that regional parliaments can work together with Members of the European Parliament to develop and communicate a Europe that is close to its citizens. Joint events and initiatives organised with and for citizens are not only designed to draw attention to elections but are an ongoing task.

9. Multi Level Governance

Europe is a joint task for all political levels. Every level can and must contribute to the construction of a common Europe.

Multi Level Governance means anchoring and execution of competences on the most appropriate level in compliance with the principle of subsidiarity. About two thirds of European Law is implemented by local and regional authorities.



The proximity of European regional parliaments to the citizens is of inestimable value. Multi Level Governance is therefore a matter of due participation of European citizens in the European Unification process.

That is why regional parliaments with legislative power require more participation in decisions and direct involvement in the European integration process when it comes to matters relating to them.

10. Outlook

The Presidents ask the President of CALRE to present this declaration to the national parliaments and to the bodies and institutions of the European Union, the Council of Europe and other European associations.