



## **Final Resolution of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Political Conference of the European Confederation of Local Intermediate Authorities (CEPLI)**

### **“One year Treaty of Lisbon: Opportunities and Challenges for Local Intermediate Authorities and their Citizens”**

Berlin, the 10<sup>th</sup> of November 2010

The European Confederation of Local Intermediate Authorities (CEPLI) appreciates the new essential innovations of the Treaty of Lisbon. The role of local and regional authorities, and therefore the role of Local Intermediate Authorities (LIAs), is finally recognized on primary law level. The Treaty acknowledges, for the very first time in the history of the European Union, the importance and significance the local level has in the field of policy creation and administration for its citizens.

From now on, it is necessary to put in place and develop the content of this innovation, which implies the upholding of the fundamental principles of local self-government, fiscal autonomy, subsidiarity, multi-level governance and cultural diversity in the political everyday business and in all the EU strategies and policies.

As directly involved actors for the implementation of European law, the Local Intermediate Authorities can, also with respect to their key position between national government and citizens, have an important contribution to this process.

We appreciate the legitimation of the principle of local self-government in the Treaty of Lisbon also with regard to the ongoing territorial reforms in many EU Member States. Given the extensive territorial reforms taking place, the enforcement of the right to self-administration and of the principle of subsidiarity is essential for LIAs.

CEPLI would therefore like to express its attachment to the principles of subsidiarity and free local administration which seems to be questioned through these reforms. CEPLI reminds that those principles were already enshrined into the European Chart of Local Self-Government of 1985 which has been ratified by all the European Union countries.

Moreover, CEPLI recalls that the inclusion of the territorial cohesion as one of the fundamental values of the European Union represented a considerable step forward for its economic and social cohesion. This cohesion will not happen without the contribution of Local Intermediate Authorities or without the intervention of all the territorial levels of EU. In this context, we reaffirm our determination to play a significant part in shaping the future of the EU as fully committed partners and in terms of a real multi-level governance. Thus, the political and administrative decentralization, which is progressing enormously throughout Europe, would find its recognition on European policy level.

It is essential that every European Union institution listens to the voice of the European local intermediate authorities. We will continue to try to be more involved by

playing a constructive role in the further dialogue with these institutions and to work in order to ensure that EU procedures constantly take into account the on-site realities and create a real European added value for the benefit of all citizens.

Local Intermediate Authorities wish to play a role as equal partners in the definition of the European strategies and policies. Political and administrative decentralization generates quickly and concrete ways for the implementation of the European policies. In this context, it is essential that each of the EU institutions listen and acknowledge the voice of local authorities.

On this note we believe today in the importance of involving the LIAs in the process of the future of the European Cohesion Policy as well as in the debate about the new Europe 2020 strategy whereby LIA's can effectively contribute and play an important role regarding the objectives and potentially some flagship initiatives. We also think that instruments and procedures to put into practice the multilevel governance must be more clarified and formalized by the competent authorities at all levels, taking also into account, for example the CoR proposition on territorial pacts.

As responsible authorities for services of general interests, the Local Intermediate Authorities meet the public requirements where needed. LIA's are playing an essential role in bringing Europe closer to citizens by implementing European and national regulations, the intermediate level having even a strategic position. LIAs are a necessary linkage, covering a relevant territory and working in close cooperation with both regional and local level, having the necessary tools for achieving valuable results. Only at intermediate level is possible to have a correct vision founded on facts, each territory having its own geographic, economic and social features. In this sense LIAs are essential for restructuring the territory and to ensure balanced and equal access to services.

The economical and financial crises lead us to adapt our strategies to the new expectations with innovative answers.

As stated before, the redefinition and expansion of the principle of subsidiarity in the Treaty of Lisbon represent an important innovation and it is now time to give it some substance. Here, we would like to support especially the Committee of the Regions in the exercise of its new competencies, e.g the subsidiarity monitoring network and the EU 2020 Monitoring Platform.

The Treaty of Lisbon has opened larger opportunities for LIAs to participate in the European process in order to solve the major challenges they are facing at local level. It is up to us to succeed to have bigger influence on European decisions and even if it's hard, it is also a chance that we should not miss. We are also determined to continue to be active inside our Confederation, being aware that the networking activities could be an important and needful support to our members and their communities.

CEPLI will continue to take part in the coming discussions with the EU institutions in a constructive spirit. And it will work for a European integration that always takes into account the realities of the territory and that provides added value to citizens' quality of life.

*The European Confederation of Intermediate Local Authorities (CEPLI) is the first European confederation grouping National associations of Intermediate level local authorities and associated networks, created at European level on the free decision of its members. CEPLI intends to become a model of cooperation and exchange, a reference for the national and European institutions for the benefit of its members and Europe.*