



**UCLG Committee on Social
Inclusion and Participative Democracy**

**WORKING GROUP MEETING
“HUMAN RIGHTS AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS”**

COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL INCLUSION AND PARTICIPATIVE DEMOCRACY

11 DECEMBER 2009, BARCELONA

MINUTES



Ajuntament de Barcelona



The meeting of the "Human Rights and Local Governments" Working Group of the Committee on Social Inclusion and Participative Democracy (CSIPD) of United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) was held in the Picasso Museum in Barcelona, on 11 December 2009, between 10.30 a.m. and 4.00 p.m.

The opening speeches were given by the Barcelona City Council Councillor for Civil Rights, Mr. Quim Mestre, on behalf of the President of the the CSIPD, Mr. Ricard Gomà, Deputy Mayor of Barcelona for Citizenship and Social Action. In his speech, Mr. Quim Mestre reiterated the city's commitment to safeguarding human rights, and recalled Barcelona City Council's decision to organise the first "Cities for Human Rights" Conference in 1998, which two years later would lead to the European Charter for the Safeguarding of Human Rights in the City. The Councillor for Civil Rights also stressed the importance of work within networks in "locally-guaranteed rights" becoming a fact of everyday life for citizens and not mere statements of intentions.

A total of 21 people representing 14 cities and institutions attended the meeting, and the following issues were discussed:¹:

1. SUMMARY OF 10 YEARS OF THE EUROPEAN CHARTER FOR THE SAFEGUARDING OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE CITY AND OUTLOOK FOR THE FUTURE: 2010 – 2011 WORKING PLAN

Summary of 10 Years of the European Charter

Saint-Denis, as the city that hosted the process that led to the production of the European Charter for the Safeguarding of Human Rights in the City in 2000, briefly outlined the history of the Charter's 10 years of existence, underlining the achievements of each of the biennial conferences organised since 1998. The conferences to date have been held in Barcelona (1998), Saint-Denis (2000), Venice (2002), Nuremberg (2004), Lyon (2006) and Geneva (2008). As a result of this work, the Charter today has over 400 European signatory cities.

Outlook for the future: 2010 – 2011 working plan

The CSIPD Executive Technical Secretary presented the proposal for the 2010 – 2011 Working Plan for the group of cities that will make up the CSIPD "Human Rights and Local Governments" Working Group, the main objective of which will be to promote the European Charter and to organise the 7th Conference. Beforehand, she briefly reviewed the mission and work of UCLG and the CSIPD.

The proposal for the 2010 – 2011 Working Plan received a positive reception. The cities attending made the following contributions:

Ljubljana thought that the fact that political pressure was beginning to be exerted on European institutions was positive, and Saint-Denis added that the final declaration of the 7th Conference, and the conclusions of the themed panels, should be presented to the European Union and to the Council of Europe by a delegation of mayors. Saint-Denis also suggested working towards the Council of Europe formally adopting the European Charter in order to give it greater legal value. Similar initiatives should also be undertaken with regard to the European Union, according to this city.

As regards the legal value of the Charter, Barcelona Provincial Council explained that some years ago, it endorsed the production of a guide for signatory local governments for the adaptation of their legal regulations to the Charter. This adaptation of municipal regulations will also make it possible to confer legal value on the Charter in each town.

¹The full documentation of the reunion can be consulted at: [Documentation of the Meeting of the CSIPD "Human Rights and Local Governments" Working Group](#).



Ljubljana stressed the need to move from rights to action in this new phase of work on the Charter and together with San Sebastián, proposed the creation of a website showing the work being done and a virtual forum for cities participating in the group to be able to contact each other. The CSIPD Executive Technical Secretary explained that the Committee has a website (www.cities-localgovernments.org/CISDP), which has a virtual forum and can be used by the group.

San Sebastián also said that greater efforts must be made not to duplicate international networks and structures, and Saint-Denis said that for precisely this reason, the mayors of Barcelona, Saint-Denis, Geneva and Lyon had decided to use a permanent international structure that was already in existence, the international federation of United Cities and Local Governments, to start a new phase in the promotion of the European Charter.

Barcelona Provincial Council proposed a new initiative for the Working Plan: the development of a joint reflection on the impact of the European Charter on European towns after these 10 years of its existence. Saint-Denis agreed with the idea and added that the conclusions of this reflection could be presented at the Tuzla Conference.

2. PRESENTATION OF THE 7TH CONFERENCE OF THE EUROPEAN CHARTER FOR THE SAFEGUARDING OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE CITY: 7 – 9 OCTOBER 2010. TUZLA, BOSNIA HERZEGOVINA

After a short video introducing the city of Tuzla was shown, the city's mayor, Mr. Jasmin Imamovic, presented the plan for the 7th Charter Conference and announced that it will be held from 7 to 9 October 2010, and will be entitled "Local authorities providers of quality of life and individual welfare"². The following themed areas were then submitted for the participants' assessment:

- the right to live in an environment of harmonious diversity based on equality, non-discrimination and tolerance;
- the right to high quality public services;
- the right to live in a healthy and human environment and the obligation of local authorities to ensure sustainable and harmonious development.

The proposal received a positive reaction from those participating.

Bobigny and Saint-Denis both emphasised the symbolic value of holding the next conference in Tuzla, as it will be the first time that the event is organised in a city in Eastern Europe, and one which has also experienced a failure to respect human rights and peace in its recent history.

Plaine Commune highlighted the need to reinforce the political presence at the Conference in Tuzla, given that it has gradually declined at recent conferences.

Saint-Denis proposed the collective construction of the Conference and invited the cities present to a meeting in the town on 19 February 2010 to discuss the organisation of the three themed panels. In this respect, it called for the cities that so wish to send their proposals for contents and experts to the CSIPD Executive Technical Secretary. Bobigny suggested that this call should be sent to more Eastern European cities, which have a traditionally lower profile in work on the Charter.

Plaine Commune suggested that each city should promote debates with its civil society for the latter to participate in the writing of the final declaration of the Conference. The town also added that each local government should raise awareness of the declaration in its territory after the Conference in Tuzla.

² All the details of this presentation can be found at: [Proposal for the 7th Conference of the European Charter for the Safeguarding of Human Rights in the City, Tuzla 2010.](http://www.cities-localgovernments.org/CISDP)



Bobigny highlighted the need to invite representatives of European institutions to the Conference and suggested asking the Belgian government for its co-operation, as it holds the European Union presidency in the second half of 2010. Saint-Denis proposed inviting European Parliamentarians and the Commissioners for Democracy, Public Services and the Environment. Ljubljana noted that the current European Commissioner for the Environment is Slovenian and that it could make arrangements on this issue at a municipal level.

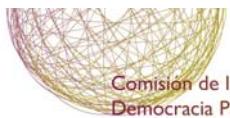
3. CALL FOR THE PRESENTATION OF POLICIES OF IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CHARTER

The CSIPD Executive Technical Secretary called for the presentation of policies and experiences of implementation of the Charter, and said that the deadline is April 2010. The most innovative initiatives, which will be selected based on several quality criteria for consideration by the participants, will meet around a debating round table that will be part of the 4th World Forum on Human Rights (Nantes, 28 June – 1 July). These experiences will subsequently be the basis for the production of a leaflet which will be presented at the next Charter Conference if sufficient resources are available for it to be published.

Tuzla suggested that if there was a lack of resources, it could be published as a digital leaflet, which would be cheaper and would enable its widespread dissemination.

Finally, Barcelona Provincial Council declared that it was making its experiences compiled in the province of Barcelona and various studies of the Charter available to other cities. It also added that the policies and experiences gathered by the CSIPD should lead to the provision of technical assistance to signatory towns to achieve greater implementation of the Charter.

The policy presentation file can be downloaded at: [Policy presentation file](#).



APPENDIX 1. AGENDA

10:30 – 11h Welcome

11h – 13h Outcome of the 10 years of the *European Charter on Human Rights in the City* and prospects for the future: Work Plan 2010 – 2011

13h – 14h Lunch

14h – 15h Presentation of the *7th Conference of the European Charter on Human Rights in the City: 7th – 9th October 2010. Tuzla, Bosnia Herzegovina*

15h – 16h Call for best policies implementing the European Charter



APPENDIX 2. LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

CITY	COUNTRY	REPRESENTATIVE	POSITION
Barcelona	Spain	Quim MESTRE	City Councillor for Civil Rights
		Lupe PULIDO	Director of the Office for Non-Discrimination
		Josep Lluís MARJALIZO	Project Officer. Civil Rights Department
Bobigny	France	Djamel SANDID	International Relations Advisor to the Mayor's Office
Consell Insular de Mallorca	Spain	Neus TRUYOL	Coordinator of the Observatory on Local Policies
Diputació de Barcelona	Spain	Manel BRINQUIS	Head of the Citizen's Participation Office. Equality and Citizenship Department
		Elixabete URRETA VIZCAYA	Project officer on Citizen Participation. Equality and Citizenship Department
Gavà	Spain	Elsa BLANCO	City Councillor for Equality and Citizenship
		Nicolás SANZ	Coordinator of the Equality and Citizenship Department
Ljubljana	Slovenia	Mitja MERSOL	City Councillor
Lleida	Spain	Pilar NADAL	Project Officer. Civil Rights Department
Lyon	France	Rodolphe PERRIN	Advisor to the Mayor
Nantes	France	Séverine CALZA	SPIDH Project Officer
Plaine Commune	France	Céline DAVIET	International Relations Advisor to the President's Office
Saint-Denis	France	Gilles SMADJA	Head of the Mayor's Office
		Deborah KONARE	Project officer. Mayor's Office
San Sebastián	Spain	Txuri Aranburu	Head of the Mayor's Office
Strasbourg	France	Tanja HANNEMAN	Project officer. European and International Relations Service
Tuzla	Bosnia Herzegovina	Jasmin IMAMOVIC	Mayor
		Muhamed MESIC	Advisor to the Mayor
CISDP		Eva GARCIA CHUECA	Executive Technical Secretariat

* Permanent International Secretary for "Human Rights and Local Governments", Nantes - Pays de Loire

