

RESOLUTION ON EU CONSTITUTIONAL TREATY

Constitutional treaty:

UBC PROPOSES EARLY CONSULTATIONS WITH LOCAL AUTHORITIES ON MATTERS AFFECTING THEM

The UBC welcomes the recognition in the Draft Constitutional Treaty of the rights of the Member States to organise regional and local government in accordance with their respective constitutions. (Art 5.1.) Participation of regional and local government and of special regions within the Member States in the preparation and decision-making of EU matters must be safeguarded primarily through measures on the national level.

The UBC emphasises that local authorities represent the level closest to the citizens. Local and regional authorities are the best-placed actors to ensure that everyday realities and citizens' aspirations are reflected in EU-level decisions. Governance, regardless of the territorial level in question, necessarily involves consultations, especially at local and regional level where representative democracy and its supervisory capacity are most intensely felt.

The Constitutional Treaty should ensure that the voice of regional and local authorities is adequately channelled into the European institutions. In order to bring the Union closer to citizens, the Union must devise new methods of participation that acknowledge the key role to be played by regional and local bodies, particularly in drawing up policies and implementing them.

The channels and modalities of local and regional authorities to influence the preparation of EU legislation should be improved in the Constitutional Treaty. The Treaty should furnish modalities for regular consultation of local and regional authorities and of organisations representing them.

The UBC proposes that the Constitutional Treaty should include provisions for an early consultation procedure in the phase prior to the drawing-up of new policies likely to have an impact on the regional and local authorities or to affect their powers.