



**Sub-Committee on Education and Training
Ustron, 15th May 2008**

Draft Minutes

Chair : Stuart DORWARD, Head of Business Development - Recreation & Heritage Department (Hampshire)

The following regions were represented:

Bekes (H), Devon (GB), Dolnoslaskie (PL), Hampshire (GB), Heves (H), Jämtland (S), Østfold (N), Slaskie (PL), Västernorrland (S)

1.	Stuart DORWARD explained the absence of Sub-Committee chair David KIRK and gave his apologies.	
2.	Adoption of the Draft Agenda The draft agenda was unanimously adopted.	
3.	Adoption of the Minutes of the last meeting The minutes were unanimously adopted.	
4.	<p><u>Report on the activities of the Comenius Regio Working Group</u></p> <p>Malgorzata KUCINSKA informed about the Comenius Regio Working Group, which was created under the European Life-Long Learning Programme to involve local and regional educational authorities to participate in educational partnerships. AER was invited to participate in the group and convinced the EU Commission to extend the possibility of partnership to interregional and not just cross-border cooperation.</p> <p>The programme will start in 2009 and has the following objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Developing and exchanging best practices - Developing tools for sustainable cooperation - Offering European learning experiences to teachers and students - Encouraging cooperation activities between local and regional authorities <p>Funding (up to 40.000€ for each partner) becomes available for partnerships in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project meetings - Exchange of staff - Job shadowing 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Peer reviews - Summer schools - Conferences - Evaluation activities <p>The procedure is the same as for the Comenius Programme. This means that only regional and local educational authorities can apply and that applications should be done at the respective national agencies. The first call will be made at the beginning of 2009.</p> <p>Conditions :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Limited to partnerships between 2 Regions only - Each Region must involve the local or regional authority, at least one school and one relevant local partner (youth organisation, museum, etc) <p>Members welcomed this development.</p> <p>Saxon SPENCE (Devon) commented that limiting the cooperation to two partner Regions would simplify cooperation and that AER would be a great platform for finding a partner and for initiating the cooperation.</p> <p>Stuart DORWARD (Hampshire) asked for more information to be put on the website.</p>	<p>Information on Comenius Regio to be made available online</p>
<p>5.</p>	<p><u>Project for an AER Network of School Work Placements in Europe's Regions – ANSWER</u></p> <p>Doris MATERNE presented AER's ANSWER project which aims at providing pupils (16-18 years) with the opportunity of a short term internship abroad (2-3 weeks). The procedure is similar to the Eurodyssey Programme in the sense that the Regions would be the intermediary between the companies and the schools.</p> <p>Against the background of the difficulties regions already experience in seeking work placements in their regions for their own students, members expressed strong reservations concerning the practicality of programme:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - target group is young and might not yet know about its definite professional orientations - regardless of problems concerning safety and insurance, companies might lack interest in candidates from abroad for short term traineeships - difficulty to integrate people in such a short time, even more so if they have language difficulties - students in that age-group are usually busy preparing for their final exams that have a great impact on their future 	

	<p>Saxon SPENCE (Devon) thought that traineeships directly arranged in the context of existing school partnerships in cooperation with the respective regional enterprise networks would be much more realistic.</p>	<p>The future work on the ANSWER project is to take account of Committee 3's reservations.</p>
<p>6.</p>	<p><u>Mobility in vocational training – « High Level Expert Forum on Mobility » and the AER Eurodyssey programme</u></p> <p>Doris MATERNE informed the participants that the Commission had offered the AER to participate in the High Level Expert Forum on Mobility, which consists of members from universities, the public and the private sector.</p> <p>Members agreed that it would be good idea to participate. A representative for AER still has to be found though.</p> <p><u>Eurodyssey :</u></p> <p>André CRAVEIRO informed the members that, alongside the 30 active member Regions, a number of Regions is currently in sponsorship. He also informed on the status of this years preparations of the EURODYSSSEY forum, which will take place in Ponta Delgada (Azores) on 11-12th September on the topic "Professional Mobility: Reinforcing Regional Identity in a United Europe". The forum consists of two half day conferences and 4 workshops. Registration will start next week and can be available online at: http://www.eurodyssee2008azores.eu/</p> <p>Saxon SPENCE (Devon) offered to provide a report to a future meeting of the Sub Committee on Devon's experience as a relatively new participant in the EURODYSSSEY programme.</p>	<p>Persons/Regions interested in representing the AER/Committee 3 on the High Level group are invited to make themselves known to the Committee 3 secretariat.</p>
<p>7.</p>	<p><u>Progress report concerning the European Credit System for vocational training (ECVET)</u></p> <p>Doris MATERNE informed the participants that the Commission had presented its proposal for the ECVET - a comprehensive system for EU wide recognition and harmonization of national and vocational educational training qualifications on April 10.</p> <p>The main target of ECVET is to sustain and increase mobility and to create an integrated European labour market. ECVET is supposed complement and reinforce existing mobility instruments such as the European Credit and Transfer System for Higher Education (ECTS). In the long run it should achieve more access and better choice with regard to life long learning (formal and informal).</p> <p>In the same context, the European Commission also proposes a European Quality Assurance Reference Framework, a tool that enables member states to exchange best practices in VET</p>	

	<p>policies.</p> <p>The ECVET proposal is awaiting decision in the parliament. If passed, however, adoption through member states is voluntary. From AERes perspective, this is an interesting tool and member states and regions would benefit from its ratification. For more information please see: www.ECVET.net</p>	<p>Secretariat will continue to monitor the situation and inform the members about the status of the ratification in parliament</p>
<p>8.</p>	<p><u>Education of migrant and travelling children – state of play and contribution in view of the AER General Assembly</u></p> <p>Doris MATERNE informed that the aspect of Migration is gaining importance at European level. This is reflected in the fact that the European Commission has planned to prepare a green paper on Migration and Education whose publication had initially been announced for April. The AER will contact the Commission in order to get a confirmation for the definite date and keep members informed.</p> <p>Doris MATERNE asked members to contribute to the GA's topic “From Migration to Integration” by submitting projects and best practices, as well as proposals for topics for discussion and speakers.</p> <p>Stuart DORWARD (Hampshire) informed that David KIRK was very interested in the subject and that he would like to get involved in the preparation of the GA.</p> <p>Saxon SPENCE (Devon) expressed her interest to be involved as well and that Devon would like to bring in its related experience and best practices.</p> <p>In order to organise an ex-ante preparation of parents and teachers in case of a school change, Saxon SPENCE promoted an approach creating a corresponding website.</p>	<p>Secretariat will contact European Commission and Committee of the Regions in order to get involved in their work on "migration and education"</p> <p>Secretariat will design and send out a questionnaire to create an inventory on best practices and projects with regard to the education of migrant and travelling children</p>
<p>9.</p>	<p><u>Stocktaking concerning the forthcoming Communication on Multilingualism</u></p> <p>Doris MATERNE informed that AER had been among the more than 2000 contributors of the Autumn consultation. The follow-up was a first draft paper which was discussed at a conference in February from which a high-level expert group drew its conclusions.</p> <p>A public hearing on April 15 had mainly focused on the high-level group's recommendations, in particular concerning the proposal for a personal adoptive language (PAL). This approach is very ambitious as it puts much emphasis on the individual's personal investment. The PAL is also much criticised by the private sector as it does not foster the emergence of one common (business) language.</p>	<p>Secretariat will</p>

	<p>The Education and Culture Council is supposed to adopt its conclusions during its meeting on 22nd May. The adoption of a Communication on multilingualism by the EU Commission is to be expected for September.</p>	<p>monitor further developments and will analyze the EU Commission's communication.</p>
<p>10.</p>	<p><u>European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT)</u></p> <p>Doris MATERNE informed that the final decision to create EIT was taken in April 2008. The EIT's governing board will identify and build up 2-3 virtual knowledge and innovation communities (KICs), instead of the six initially planned. The sectors will probably be climate change, renewable energies and the next generation of information and communication technologies. The geographical base for the administration remains unclear. Its budget until 2013 is €308million. This will only cover the basic administrative costs.</p> <p>With regard to the initial objective, which was to build a competitor for the MIT, the project was significantly downscaled (reflected in limited scope of topics). It will probably create competition among universities and regions to be included. In reply to Saxon SPENCE, Doris MATERNE confirmed that the risk of brain drain that Committee 3 had feared in the past would be reduced due to the virtual nature of the KICs.</p> <p>Jean Eric ALIRA (Dolnoslaskie) hoped that Committee 3 would support the candidacy of Wroclaw for hosting the EIT's seat.</p> <p>The Sub-Committee expressed its appreciation for the Wroclaw initiative.</p>	
<p>11.</p>	<p><u>Any Other business</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rainbow Paper II (Recommendations to civil society organisations and the European Union on how to practice respect for cultural diversity) <p>Stuart DORWARD invited the participants' comments on the Paper that had already been put to discussion at the Culture Sub-Committee.</p> <p>Saxon SPENCE (Devon) expressed her support for the proposal previously made concerning the importance of good practices and the necessity to enhance integrative measure in all educational policies from the earliest stage possible.</p> <p>Doris MATERNE suggested to also consider including integrative measures aiming at the linguistic development for parents of immigrated children.</p>	

	<p>- Preparation of the AER General Assembly</p> <p>Doris MATERNE invited the sub-committee to think how it can contribute to the GA's subject on Migration and Integration and to come forward with proposals, if possible during the plenary.</p>	
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Strasbourg, 21st of May 2008 (JS/DM)