



AER QUARTERLY REPORT (SEPTEMBER - DECEMBER 2010)

FOREWORD BY THE SECRETARY GENERAL

Dear members,

at a time, where the European budget is discussed more intensively than ever and at the eve of the 5th Cohesion Report, a milestone for the architecture of the future Cohesion Policy, AER is actively present at the stage of European policy.

This year's work on Cohesion Policy will culminate on 7 December in Brussels in a conference jointly organised with the Belgian Presidency, in presence of the Commissioner for Regional Policy, the Chairwoman of the European Parliament's Committee on Regional Policy and other high level decision makers.

I cordially invite you to participate in this crucial event and also encourage you to contribute to this important work and to join the AER Task Force on Cohesion Policy, which is part of our Committee on Economy and Regional Development.

And do not forget: General Assembly and elections this year are on 10 to 12 November in Istanbul, make sure you take part in this important event that will look at the Strategy of the European Union for the years to come, Europe 2020. Make sure you register soon, in order to have favorable prices for hotel rooms.

Klaus Klipp
Secretary General

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ECONOMIC AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE (1)**COHESION POLICY****Open Letter to José Manuel Barroso on ESF, 12 July 2010**

A letter was sent by AER President Michèle Sabban to the President of the European Commission José Manuel Barroso, to react strongly to a possible decoupling of the European Social Fund from the rest of Structural Funds. In her letter, Ms Sabban underlined that *“through the synergy between the ERDF and the ESF, cohesion policy responds, through its integrated and long-term action, not only to structural issues but also to economic difficulties”*.

Contact: e.delangle@aer.eu

The letter is available under: <http://www.aer.eu/en/news/2010/2010071201.html>

Meeting between AER President Michèle Sabban and Commissioner Johannes Hahn

On 8 September, AER President Michèle Sabban welcomed the European Commissioner for Regional policy, Johannes Hahn, at the Ile-de-France Region. During a private discussion, the AER President presented the expectations and proposals of the European regions in the fields of cohesion policy, Europe 2020 and budget review. Michèle SABBAN underlined that without a bottom-up approach in the areas of economic development, social integration and environmental policy, the gap which has already been widening for several years between the EU and its citizens will grow even more. She also recalled the dangers that would present a re-nationalization of the EU policies and a sectoralisation of the budget, which AER already voiced through an open letter to the President of the European Commission and during a meeting with him in July.

Contact: k.klipp@aer.eu and c.diegelmann@aer.eu

CLIMATE CHANGE & ENERGY**R.E.F.E.R blog**

In the frame of its partnership, AER and GE Energy launched R.E.F.E.R. (Responsible Energy for European Regions), a blog aimed at facilitating thoughts and discussion on energy matters across all regions of Europe. R.E.F.E.R. reports on the latest energy news, energy analysis and commentary about the various regional energy markets, energy efficiency, regional sustainability, secure energy supplies and public policies from across Europe. Far from being a mere publication, R.E.F.E.R. will allow the exchange of views and ideas between politicians, companies, researchers and citizens.

Contact f.huardeaux@aer.eu and c.diegelmann@aer.eu

More: <http://refer.blogactiv.eu/>

AER Peer Review in the Autonomous Republic of Vojvodina – Preparatory meeting

On 7 September, Mr Catalin Csaszar from Prahova region (RO) and Justyna Podralska, members of the AER experts team meet with the representatives of the autonomous province of Vojvodina (SRB), municipality of Temerin and Regional Secretariat for Energy in order to clarify the ultimate objectives of the energy peer review and get a better overview of the energy landscape in the region. Being foreseen for October 2010, the audit will seek to turn the municipality of Temerin into a sustainable energy community and to transfer this experience to the other municipalities in the Vojvodina region.

Contact: j.podralska@aer.eu

INNOVATION AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Jury meeting AER Innovation Award

On 1 September, the jury of the AER innovation award gathered in Brussels to evaluate the applications received in 2010 and to decide upon the winners. The decision will be unveiled and the prizes awarded during the AER General Assembly, which will take place on 11 and 12 November 2010 in Istanbul (TR). The AER Innovation Award recognises good practice in regional innovation and takes place for the 6th time this year.

Contact: c.dawans@aer.eu

Working group on regional airports, 31 August, Brussels

At its launch meeting in Brussels on 11 June 2010, the group agreed to look into the revision of the state aid guidelines for regional airports, expected to take place in 2010, 5 years after its first publication.

To this effect, a few representatives of the working group met in Brussels on 31 August to discuss with experts in the field of state aid for regional airports. The objective of these meetings was, on the one hand, to understand the specificities of the upcoming debate for the revision of the guidelines and on the other to learn of the EC timing in this process. At the next meeting of the working group, Per Inge Bjerknes, county councillor in Østfold (N) and chairman of the group will present a draft AER position, which will be the basis of AER's contribution to an EC consultation which is due to open later this year.

Contact: c.diegelmann@aer.eu and c.dawans@aer.eu

TOURISM

PRESERVE peer review, 13 – 16 September, Sterea Ellada

Experts from AER, Avila (E), Alba (RO) and Jönköping (SE) met in Sterea Ellada to audit its tourism potential and strategy for sustainable tourism. Sterea Ellada is a gold mine of historical treasures (numerous archaeological sites) and natural resources (hot springs, mountains, sea). The experts carried out a series of 12 interviews stakeholders involved in the tourism development

in the region, both in the public and private sectors, through a series of precise criteria: strategy, partnership, social cohesion, community engagement, spatial planning, environment, communication and innovation. They will publish their findings and recommendations in a consolidated report.

Contact: c.dawans@aer.eu / More: <http://preserve.aer.eu/news-activities/pr-avila.html>

COMMON AGRICULTURAL POLICY AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

AER working group on agriculture and rural development, 14/09/2010

The AER working group on agriculture and rural development discussed about possible amendments to be made to the AER position on future CAP. About 15 people participated in this meeting where a work plan, mainly focused on lobbying, was drafted, to be submitted to adoption by Committee 1. Minutes of the meeting and draft amended position on CAP available under: <http://www.aer.eu/main-issues/agriculture-rural-development.html>

Access reserved to members.

Contact: e.delangle@aer.eu and j.mente@aer.eu

SOCIAL POLICY AND PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE (2)

PREVENTING ALCOHOL-RELATED HARM

Building Capacity Project concluded

The Building Capacity project, aiming at preventing alcohol-related harm across Europe by building capacity to take action against harm at all levels (local, regional, national, among stakeholders) concluded in May 2010. AER was partner to this project that was co-financed by the EC under the European Public Health Programme and organised a series of Alcohol Peer Reviews, looking at how regions can reduce alcohol-related harm in specific situations. AER published a series of 15 fact sheets and a final report, outlining the conclusions of the AER Alcohol peer reviews. In August the AER Secretariat edited and submitted the final financial and technical report for the project. More information is available under: <http://www.aer.eu/main-issues/health/alcohol-prevention/aer-alcohol-fact-sheets.html>

E-HE@LTH

The AER e-he@lth network facilitates the exchange of knowledge among regions on how the introduction of ICT in the healthcare sector can improve the quality and efficiency of services and how to overcome the challenges linked to new technologies.

Strategic Network Meeting

The AER e-he@lth network is currently developing its strategy for the coming two years. The network organised a strategic meeting on 7th September in Brussels with key regions to discuss future activities and project ideas and developed a draft strategy document. A wider consultation will be launched among member regions to further develop the network's strategy. Contact: Camille Bullot, Policy Coordinator; c.bullot@aer.eu

Ambient Assisted Living – AAL



The Ambient Assisted Living (AAL) programme is an EU funding programme supporting the development and implementation of ICT solutions for independent living for the elderly. At a meeting on 15th July in Brussels, regions' representatives discussed the idea to create a regional network within AAL. This network will contribute the regions' perspective to the themes tackled by the AAL programme and to the formulation of the upcoming AAL programme calls. AER wishes to be part of this network to represent the interests of AER members active in this area, in particular in the AER e-he@lth network and on demographic change issues. Contact: Rania Georgoutsakou, Senior Policy Coordinator; g.ourania@aer.eu.

EHTEL-AER--EUREGHA Symposium

The AER e-he@lth network has joined forces with the European Health Telematics Association (EHTEL) and the European Regional Health Authorities network (EUREGHA) to organise a symposium on e-health in the regions: what regions are doing today, what e-health can offer to regions and how can we get wider deployment of telehealth services in the regions? This event will mark the beginning of the cooperation between the 3 organisations, with the aim of identifying regions' needs in terms of telehealth services and the obstacles that need to be overcome in order to deploy these services more widely in Europe's regions. The event will take place in Brussels on 22-23 November and will be hosted by the Committee of the Regions.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO EXTERNAL EVENTS

EU Public Health Strategy - Committee 2 contribution

AER Committee 2 responded to the consultation launched by the Committee of the Regions on the role of the regions in implementing the EU Health Policy. AER participated to the consultation meeting with the rapporteur of the CoR opinion on this subject and also submitted an official contribution to the questionnaire launched under the CoR Subsidiarity Monitoring Network. The AER Committee 2 contribution is available under: <http://www.aer.eu/events/health-social/2010/healthinequalitiesfall2010.html>

AER contributes to the CoR Technical Platform for Cooperation in Public Health

The Committee 2 Secretariat participated in a preparatory meeting for the second meeting of the CoR Technical Platform for Cooperation in Public Health that will take place on 25 October 2010. AER is in charge of the organisation of a workshop on the prevention of alcohol-related harm and on mental health. AER member regions are invited to present their experience in the field. Contact: Rania Georgoutsakou, Senior Policy Coordinator; g.ourania@aer.eu

EMERGENCY PLANNING

FLINKMAN

AER is partner to the Flinkman project, a 2-year project co-financed under the EC Civil Protection Mechanism and aiming at the development of mechanisms to increase the coordination of all actors in the case of floods. At the occasion of the project partners meeting that took place the 22nd of July, the project's process has been evaluated and future activities have been planned. More information on the FLINKMAN project can be found at: <http://www.aer.eu/main-issues/emergency-planning.html>

In August, the first financial and technical report has been prepared by AER and submitted to the lead partner of the project (Central Macedonia-GR). Contact: Claudia Meschede, Policy Coordinator, c.meschede@aer.eu



**CULTURE, EDUCATION AND TRAINING, YOUTH & MEDIA,
INTERREGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION COMMITTEE (3)**

At its Plenary meeting on 21 September, Committee 3 held elections for the positions of Committee and Sub-Committee Presidents. Following a secret ballot, Ms Hande Özsan BOZATLI, 2nd Vice-President of the Provincial Council of Istanbul has been elected President of Committee 3. This vote will have to be ratified by the forthcoming General Assembly.

As for Sub-Committee Presidents, the following candidates have been elected by show of hands:

- Culture: Ms Kathrin HILBER (CH), educator in special education, born in 1951, Regional Councillor of St. Gallen, Member of the Social Democratic party of St. Gallen, Member of the Government since 1996, President of St. Gallen in 2001/02 and 2007/08 and former member of the lower house of the Swiss Federal Assembly from 1995 to 1996.
- Education & Training: Ms Karine GLOANEC-MAURIN (F), 52, holds a Master's degree in political science from the Sorbonne University, has held various political mandates since 1999. She is 1st Deputy Mayor of St. Agil since 2007, Deputy national secretary of the Socialist Party and President of the French national Federation of local and regional authorities for culture since 2008, Vice-President in charge of European and interregional affairs of the Centre Region and President of the Culture Committee of the Association of French Regions since 2010.
- Youth: Sonja Alice STEEN (N), born in 1953, regional councillor in Nordland and since 2007 Parliamentary leader for the Labour Party in Nordland.
- Interregional & international cooperation: Jacek PILAWA (PL), born in 1951, holds Master's degrees in agriculture and philosophy, was Deputy Mayor of Olawa in 2007 and has been regional Councillor of Dolnoslaskie since then.

CULTURE

AER sustains ENCATC and the Louvre Museum in analysing the relations between museums/galleries and local and regional development

Following contacts in June and early July, AER has become the interface for the Louvre Museum and ENCATC (European Network of Cultural Administration Training Centers) in a project under the Culture 2000 programme which looks at the role of museums and galleries with regard to local and regional development and the synergies that can be derived from it. Conclusions will inform a policy document that will be handed to the European Commission at a conference in December in Brussels and for which AER has been invited to actively participate. Replies to the questionnaires are still welcome.

Further information and the questionnaire can be found at: <http://encatc.org/questionnaires/> (please select "local authorities" to complete the questionnaire).

AER participates in an ENCATC working group meeting

In order to further strengthen our links with ENCATC and discover their work first hand, AER was invited to participate in a working group meeting on cultural observatories on 8/9 September in Bilbao. This meeting was an opportunity to meet with the president of the network and some of its most engaged members and further define how our collaboration could take shape especially in

the field of cultural trainings for our regions' cultural managers. AER is currently waiting for concrete financial and administrative proposals about how this joint work could be organized.

Progress on the culture and health conference

A draft programme for the culture and health conference to take place in Istanbul at the end of September / beginning of October 2011 (exact date to be confirmed) has been agreed upon by the working group "culture and health". The conference will take place over one day and will focus on the scientific arguments showcasing the utility of culture in the treatment/accompaniment of some diseases. Further details will be available soon.

EDUCATION & TRAINING

Fostering Youth entrepreneurship strategies (YES) in the European Regions

In the framework of the INTERREG IVC project, AER has submitted its first 6 months report which has been approved by our first level controller. The Analysis working Group is currently finalising the questionnaire that will be used in the interviews to be carried out by the regional partners with their stakeholders and by the AER with its members. Information, up-dates on the project as well as the possibility to sign up for a newsletter are available at: <http://www.young-entrepreneurs.eu/>.

Youth employment issues tackled at an AER conference

Before its plenary meeting in Nordland, AER organized a conference on youth employment, building notably on conclusions from AER's Youth regional network meeting in December 2009. Participants discussed together with public administrations' experts and NGO representatives the transition from school to the labour market by focusing amongst other things on disabled young people. They furthermore addressed entrepreneurship as one means to build a career. The agenda and presentations of the conference are available at: <http://www.aer.eu/events/committee-3-culture-education-interregional-cooperation/2010/c3svolvaer.html>

YOUTH

"Youth on the Move"

During the AER Summer School 2010, young people participated in the youth session co-organised with the AER Youth Regional Network (YRN) on the topic of learning mobility. The aim of the session was to discuss "Youth on the Move", a new flagship initiative launched by the European Commission, which aims at boosting learning and labour mobility of young Europeans. As a follow-up to the discussions, a common position of members of the AER Youth Regional Network and participants of the AER Summer Schools 2010 was submitted to the Commissionaire on Education, Culture and Youth. More information is available at: <http://www.facebook.com/#!/pages/AER-Youth-Regional-Network/126742887362107?ref=ts>

Youth Ambassadors Project 2010

As in past editions, young participants of the AER Summer Schools have been encouraged to become Youth Ambassadors. As a Youth Ambassador, they commit to organise a follow-up activity on the Summer Schools' topic in order to share their acquired knowledge with other young people in their region. The deadline for stating their interest to become a Youth Ambassador is 30 October 2010. Further information is available at: <http://www.aer.eu/main-issues/youth/aer-youth-ambassadors-project.html>



Review of the AER Most Youth Friendly European Region Award

Committee 3, at its meeting on 21 September in Svolvær (N), has decided to change the composition of the Jury ([former competition guidelines](#)). Starting with the next edition to be launched in spring 2011, the jury will be composed of a group of AER member regions that will be supported by the AER Youth Regional Network. AER member regions are already invited now to express their interest for one of the two topics proposed for the MYFER edition 2011:

- Regional practices regarding the European Year of Volunteering or
- Regional practices promoting the Inclusion of Disadvantaged Youth.

INTERREGIONAL & INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

AER participates in the launch of a regional fund for youth employment in Shkodra

At the invitation of the UN, President Michèle SABBAN participated on 1 & 2 July in Tirana (AL) in the launch of the first regional fund for youth employment. This fund, which is established in the region of Shkodra, is the first to be managed by a region and will hopefully pave the way for further decentralisation in Albania. On this occasion, President Sabban had further meetings, amongst others with the Albanian President, the Prime Minister and Presidents of the Albanian regions. These meetings were an opportunity to promote subsidiarity. As follow-up activities, AER is organizing a collaboration between Durrës and Naples port authorities, a peer review on entrepreneurship with the Shkodra region and financial support from UN programmes. A conference on decentralization will also be organized in Tirana in 2011 and AER is currently organizing a series of visits and meetings for the economic adviser to the Prime Minister and other Albanian officials wanting to learn more about subsidiarity, a hot topic for this country which aims at becoming an EU candidate country. Following these visits AER is pleased to announce that the last Albanian region not to be a member, Fier, has now joined our assembly.

ARLEM sets to work

The two ARLEM Commissions SUDEV and ECOTER met on 2 July. AER, in the person of President Michèle SABBAN, follows in particular the work of the SUDEV Commission that is in charge of drafting a report on "Local water management" (Rapporteur: Valcárcel Siso [Murcia/E]) before the next plenary meeting on 29 January 2011 in Agadir. As a result of the discussions, the report will probably need to take into account the (non-adopted) water convention and address the issues of water governance, climate change, managing demand and the financing of water. It shall also include proposals for a Mediterranean climate plan and the adoption of a Euro-Mediterranean water strategy. The draft report should be ready by mid-September.

For further information, please contact the secretariat of Committee 3 (Mathieu Mori, Senior Policy coordinator, m.mori@aer.eu, Tel./Fax +33/(0)88 22 74 47; Doris Materne, Policy coordinator, d.materne@aer.eu, Tel./Fax +33/(0)88 22 74 43; Justyna Hejman, Youth & Citizenship Officer, j.hejman@aer.eu, Tel./Fax +33/(0)88 22 74 46).

EURODYSSEY

Working Group undertakes to design a European Observatory on professional mobility

The Working Group composed of Açores, Ile-de-France, Franche-Comté, Picardie, Champagne-Ardenne, Catalunya, Rhône-Alpes and the AER secretariat has continued its work concerning possibilities to apply for funding for a project under the Leonardo programme. The project proposal

has been further elaborated and will notably aim at creating an interregional observatory on the professional mobility of young people (Mobilobs).

Azores host visit of LOJIQ/Quebec representative

Following the signing of an agreement between LOJIQ (Les Offices jeunesse internationaux du Québec) and AER in November 2009, the Eurodyssey General secretariat welcomed from 19 to 26 August Caroline Doyon in the Azores. In a fact-finding mission, Ms Doyon visited companies, institutions and service providers in order to learn about the implementation and functioning of the Eurodyssey programme in the Açores and the underlying conditions and principles. The visit should result in first exchanges between the Açores and Quebec.

Eurodyssey website opened to youngsters and companies

Since 13 September, the Eurodyssey website is fully operational and incorporates new features. From now on, youngsters and companies will register online and submit their applications respectively traineeship offers via the website. These features have been combined with statistical tools that will allow us, by and by, to enrich the Eurodyssey website also from this point of view.

Eurodyssey Forum to decide on Presidency and Secretariat

The Eurodyssey Forum on 30 September & 1 October will decide on the Region that will host the Presidency and Secretariat of the Programme for the next two years. The Region of Açores (P) is, to date, the only candidate.

For further information, please go to the Eurodyssey website: <http://www.eurodyssee.eu/>, or contact André Craveiro, Operational coordinator of the Eurodyssey programme, andre.LM.craveiro@azores.gov.pt, Tel. +351/296/ 30 80 23, or Doris Materne, Policy coordinator, d.materne@aer.eu, Tel./Fax +33/(0)/88 22 74 43

SUMMER SCHOOL

AER Summer Schools 2010 on Mobility

From 22nd to 27th August 2010 the 15th AER Summer School and Youth Summer School took place in the Swiss cantons of St.Gallen and Thurgau. For the first time, two regions organized this event together. During five days regional politicians, civil servants, experts and young people discussed the different facets of urban, rural and interregional mobility, its advantages for a growing economy but also the increasing challenges caused by transport and traffic. The question of how to enhance mobility while at the same time reducing congestion, accidents and pollution is a common challenge to all regions and major cities in Europe.

Participants and experts of this year's AER Summer Schools shared best practices and experience during three plenary sessions, nine workshops and five study visits. New models of urban transportation were presented by Italian, British and Swiss experts. A Swedish-Dutch moderated workshop was dedicated to the accessibility of rural areas. The possibilities of interregional crossborder transportation networks were highlighted by projects of the International Lake Constance Conference (Germany, Switzerland, Austria, Principality of Liechtenstein) and the Regio Basiliensis (Germany, Switzerland, France). Last but not least, participants focused on the development of regional airports.

Participants agreed that, in many circumstances, mobility is too cheap. This is of course true for

private means of transport but also for public transport, notably where prices in commuter traffic do not cover its real costs and lead to wrong incentives. Efficient and effective transport can significantly contribute to achieving objectives in a wide range of policy domains, such as socio-economic objectives, energy dependency or climate change. As a conclusion, priority should be given to public transport and slow traffic systems, as investing in roads leads generally to more traffic, a decreasing quality of public transport and an increase in the demand for investments in new roads.

For further information, please consult the Summer Schools' webpage: <http://www.aer.eu/events/summer-school/2000-2009/aerss2010.html>, or contact the secretariat of Committee 3 (Mathieu Mori, Senior Policy coordinator, m.mori@aer.eu, Tel./Fax +33/(0)88 22 74 47; Doris Materne, Policy coordinator, d.materne@aer.eu, Tel./Fax +33/(0)88 22 74 43; Justyna Hejman, Youth & Citizenship Officer, j.hejman@aer.eu, Tel./Fax +33/(0)88 22 74 46).

STANDING COMMITTEE ON INSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Regionalism

AER 25th Anniversary Conference – 14 June 2010 Brussels– Hosted by the region of Brussels Capital and officially titled “From Subsidiarity to Success: Strong Regions for a Strong Europe,” this conference was an opportunity to celebrate the AER’s 25th anniversary, to take stock of the last 25 years in terms of regional achievements, to discuss current challenges and opportunities for regions and to look at the prospects for regions in the coming years. Keynote speakers included Jordi PUJOL, former AER president, Danuta HUBNER, Member of the European Parliament, Knud ANDERSEN, Vice-President of the Congress, Karl-Heinz LAMBERTZ, President of the German speaking Community of Belgium and Mercedes BRESSO, President of the Committee of the Regions. The Conference was also the opportunity for Peter STRAUB, President of the Landtag of Baden-Württemberg and President of the AER Standing Committee Institutional Affairs, to unveil the updated AER Regionalism Report (see below), which contains latest information on the state of regions in Europe. The report of the Conference, which entails all speeches and debates which took place, will soon be available on the [AER's website](#).

AER Regionalism Report 2010 - Update – As mentioned in our last quarterly, this report represents an update to the AER’s 2006 Regionalism Report and attempts to, using the AER’s benchmarks for good regional democracy and specific profiles of each country, gain a better understanding of how regions have developed in the past 25 years and what is at stake for the regions today. The 2010 AER Regionalism report was first unveiled in June, at the occasion of the AER 25th Anniversary Conference. Throughout August and in September some adjustments have been made/ will be made to the June. Country maps have been replaced by the ones from the AER Tabula which highlight the regions. Furthermore, information entailed in the AER Study ‘From Subsidiarity to Success’ published in May 2009 will be added to the report. The changes will be made available in the following weeks.

The full text of this report, and its 2006 counterpart, can be accessed [here](#).

Participation of AER Standing Committee Institutional Affairs Secretariat at FYROM Regional policy conference

The seminar ‘Overcoming Regional Disparities – How to achieve a better, EU-coherent implementation of regional policies?’ organised jointly by the Mazedonian Ministry of Territorial Cooperation and the German development organisation (GTZ) in Ohrid on 6 and 7 September dealt with European Regional Policy and future policy developments as well as the

alignment of national and regional development strategies with EU regional policy. The program was aimed at high-level executives and decision makers as well as at practitioners from ministries and other governmental structures, regional institutions and civil society organizations working on regional development in SEE/Caucasus countries, EU member states and institutions of the European Union.

The AER Standing Committee Institutional Affairs Secretariat took part as a speaker in this event, to present the AER activities and positions in the field of regional policy. AER has been invited to the follow-up Conference to this event, due to take place in Serbia next year.

Communicating Europe

AER Communication Award

This year's Communication Award entailed two categories:

- Communicating the European Citizens' Initiative, a new democratic instrument which could help enhancing citizens' ownership with the EU but needs to be promoted
- Communicating received European funding, again an important way to show the added-value of the EU

Nine applications were submitted. The Jury, made up of academics and communication experts, met on 20 September in Strasbourg to evaluate the applications and to come to a decision regarding the winner. This decision will be made official during the GA in Istanbul on 11 – 12 November.

Further information on the Award is available under:

<http://www.aer.eu/en/events/standing-committee-on-institutional-affairs/2010/aer-communicating-europe-award-2010.html>

AER European Citizens' Forum in Nordland (N) : "Norway in the EU – will it ever happen?"

The AER European Citizens' Forum was held on 20 September 2010 in Svolvær, Nordland (N) on the occasion of the Plenary Meeting of the AER Committee 3. During this open event, citizens of Nordland had the chance to discuss with regional politicians and local activists the main reasons "for" and "against" joining the EU. The substantial debate, which provided some food for thought to reflect upon the EU's enlargement with Norway, was preceded by arguments presented the Chair of the Nordland Council as well as local activists. For further information, please contact the AER Secretariat (Justyna Hejman, Tel. +33/(0)3/88 22 74 46; j.hejman@aer.eu) or visit the AER website: <http://www.aer.eu/events/standing-committee-on-institutional-affairs/2010/european-citizens-forum-nordland.html>

Training/Capacity building

AER Training Academy Introductory Course - Institutional lobbying/ EU Decision making

This Training Academy carried out on 9 and 10 September at the AER office in Brussels was focused on four core topics. First of all, it dealt with political decision-making processes. Secondly, the Lisbon Treaty and the relevant changes in the institutional set up were discussed. The next step was the issue of institutional lobbying, being divided into the theoretical background, the different phases and, based on that, the strategies to pursue. Lastly, several regional case studies on lobbying the various European institutions were presented and analysed.

The course was attended by regional officers and politicians from AER member regions who intended to learn more about lobbying on a European level or who needed an introduction or an update on European institutions. They acquired new knowledge through a combination of lectures, simulation exercises as well as exchanges of experiences with other participants.

The aim was to display how the institutions interact with European regions and how the institutional lobbying of the regions work. In addition to that, the participants got not only greater

insight into the practical aspects of the work of the regional Brussels offices, but also a deeper understanding of the complexities and dynamics of the EU system and the role of the regions in it.

AER Scholarship

For the third consecutive year, the AER offered a scholarship for students interested in a master-level, one-year degree, taught during the 2010-2011 academic year and focused on relevant aspects of regionalism.

The AER received 15 applications for the scholarship emanating from 15 different regions (11 countries). The AER General Secretariat evaluated the applications on the basis of their relevancy to regionalism and on other aspects of the candidates' personalities and projects according to the evaluation grid drafted by AER Secretariat.

The scholarship was finally awarded to Ms Anita Sobjak Emoka, from Bihor, Romania (Hungarian Minority).

Just as last year, the scholarship will cover tuition fees and living costs up to 11 500EUR for the year.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

After a successful conference on women entrepreneurship, which was attended by more than 200 participants, and a two-day training academy on that same subject, as well as a active part in the 25th anniversary celebration, SCEO organized in Valencia, ES, a European Seminar entitled „Women and Social Policies at times of economic crisis“, that was attended by 50 participants.

The Comunidad Valenciana presented its new Law on the Protection of Maternity, and then a series of round tables were organized on how the current economic crisis still affects social policies (and, in particular, those concerning women) in European Regions, on social policies in favor of women and on how public administrations can encourage companies to be socially responsible and to implement gender equality.

Apart from local experts, specialists from France, Italy and Serbia shared their knowledge and insight with our participants. As the financial crisis was literally *man*-made by Golden Boys in Wall Streets, SCEO decided to encourage European Regions to take effective steps, notably through legislation, to encourage gender balance in corporate and political positions of responsibility, including on boards of directors, and in local and regional public institutions, administrations and organizations which should set an example. Binding targets are of course needed to ensure the equal representation of women and men.

SCEO – which was created at the last General Assembly in 2009 – also adopted its new mandate, to be submitted to the AER Bureau and General Assembly later this year.

Furthermore, during this meeting, the President and Vice Presidents of our Standing Committee were elected. Mrs. Monica Carlsson, County Commissioner in charge of Equal Opportunities in Norrbotten (SE), was reelected as President, while Mrs. Ciarletta, Consigliera di Parità in Calabria (IT) and Mrs. Sedlarevic, Vice President of the Legislative Assembly of Vojvodina (SR), were reelected as Vice-Presidents.

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FORTHCOMING EVENTS

ECONOMIC AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE (1)

Date	Location	Event
7-9 October	Abruzzo (I)	AER Committee1 Autumn plenary meeting and MORE4NRG conference
18-22 October	Vojvodina (SRB)	AER Peer Review on energy efficient municipalities
25 October	Berlin (D)	AER Euractiv workshop on smart grids
27/28 October	Rome / Abruzzo	MORE4NRG Steering Committee / Monitoring Board Meeting, Mutual Learning Event
18 November	Brussels (B)	PRESERVE Steering Committee Meeting
23/24 November	Brussels (B) (tbc)	ECREIN+ dissemination conference
7 December	Brussels (B)	AER and Brussels-Capital (B) joint conference under the Belgian Presidency on Future Cohesion Policy

SOCIAL POLICY AND PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE (2)

Date	Location	Event
7-8 October	Brussels (B)	AER Committee 2 autumn plenary and Conference on health inequalities
25 October	Brussels (B)	AER contribution to the CoR Technical Platform meeting "European Health Strategy and Health Prevention: The role of local and regional authorities"
22-23 November	Brussels (B)	e-he@lth EHTEL/AER/Euregha Joint Symposium "eHealth in Europe's Regions: acting for citizens' health"

CULTURE, EDUCATION AND TRAINING, YOUTH & MEDIA, INTERREGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION COMMITTEE (3)

YOUTH & INTERREGIONAL & INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

Date	Location	Event
30 November 2010		Deadline EU Public consultation on next-generation EU programmes - education and training
February 2011 (tbc)	Alsace (F)	5th Youth Regional Network Meeting
Spring 2011		Launch of Most Youth-friendly European Region Award
Spring 2011 (tbc)	tbc	Spring meetings of Committee 3
Late September or beginning of October 2011 (tbc)	Istanbul (TR)	Health and Culture conference & Committee 3 Sub-Committee & Plenary meetings

EURODYSSEY

Date	Location	Event
29 September 2010	Murcia (E)	Working Group "Mobilobs"
30 September & 1 October 2010	Murcia (E)	Eurodyssey Forum 2010
25 & 26 November 2010	Strasbourg, France	Eurodyssey Steering Committee

SUMMMER SCHOOLS

Date	Location	Event
22 – 27 August 2011	Lelystad (Flevoland/NL)	Adult and Youth Summer School 2011 on "Youth in a changing society"