



AER QUARTERLY REPORT (OCTOBER - DECEMBER 2010)

FOREWORD BY THE SECRETARY GENERAL

Dear members,

Brussels played host to our last large event of the year. The busy conference on the Future of Cohesion Policy in the EU had an impressive list of movers and shakers in attendance, including Commissioner Hahn. In office for about one year he attended not only this meeting, but also our Energy Day in April and he met with our President, Michèle Sabban, this September in Paris. This has allowed us to develop good relations with him and his cabinet, and the same for the Commissioner for Energy.

What is more, the Commissioner at the recent Cohesion conference said that Cohesion Policy is back on the agenda again, the "leaked paper" from last year having been crucial in this. As you may remember, it was AER who triggered a public debate about it with an Open Letter to the President of the Commission. During his visit to Paris in September the Commissioner also said that our Open Letter to Barroso from July this year on the matter of the ESF being part of Cohesion Policy had a strong impact on the attempts to manage ESF funds separate from Structural Funds.

The General Assembly in Istanbul adopted our White Paper on the Future of Cohesion Policy, now we need to make sure that our positions are adopted in the consultation process.

Regarding healthcare, AER has convinced the Commission (DGs SANCO and INFSO) that regions play a key role. As a result AER is invited to organise a 'regions' session at next year's e-health ministerial conference whilst the Commission has already accepted to include regions in the governance structure of the new European Innovation Partnership on Active and Healthy Ageing.

Last but not least we again had an increase in media coverage (well above 600 press clippings against 534 in 2009, from more media and more countries). If you are on facebook please join "[Assembly of European Regions](#)" or the "[Youth Regional Network](#)", on Youtube you can find us under the AER channel "[AERRegions](#)", as well as a lot of information on energy and regions on our euractiv blog: [refer.blogactiv.eu](#)

Please enjoy the Quarterly Report on our activities from the last three months; the Annual Report for the year 2010 will reach you in the first days of the New Year.

All the best in 2011 for you and your region!

Klaus Klipp
Secretary General

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COHESION POLICY**2nd and 3rd AER workshop on structural funds, 1 and 20 October 2010**

AER organised a joint workshop for the working groups on EU funding and the task force on cohesion in Strasbourg in order to feed the White paper on future cohesion policy, with concrete proposals to improve the implementation modalities of this policy, from programming to evaluation. On this occasion the preliminary findings of the AER survey on EU Funding administrative burden and how to streamline the management of funds were presented. Contact: e.delangle@aer.eu, v.borne@aer.eu

The 3rd workshop on structural funds took place in Brussels. It aimed at exploring the added value of territorial cooperation programmes at regional level and find out what the best structures and the best level of governance are to implement cooperation programmes. Participants discussed the main implementation difficulties and elaborated common proposals for improvement. Contact: e.delangle@aer.eu

AER White Paper on Cohesion policy

The AER White Paper on Cohesion was adopted at the AER General Assembly in Istanbul on 11 November 2010. This White paper is aiming at answering many questions that European institutions raised or not and to propose concrete solutions, based on our member regions' ground experience. AER is notably calling for a recurrent political debate on cohesion policy during the programming period. AER also recommends an improved rationalisation of distribution and implementation rules, an increased decentralisation of implementation and reducing legal and financial uncertainties suffered by beneficiaries and managing authorities.

The White Paper's full version is available at: <http://www.aer.eu/main-issues/cohesion-regional-policy.html>

AER participation in a COTER round table, 16 November 2010

Thomas Andersson, chairman of the AER task force on cohesion participated to the COTER round table, along with the main European local and regional associations and Commissioner Johannes Hahn, to discuss the impact of the 5th Cohesion Report on the debate on cohesion policy post-2013 and present the AER position.

Contact: e.delangle@aer.eu

More information at: <http://www.aer.eu/en/news/2010/2010111601.html>

Informal Meeting of Ministers on cohesion, 22 -23 November 2010

AER attended the informal meeting of ministers responsible for cohesion policy, which took place in Liège. That was an opportunity for AER to enquire about EU Member States' current position on future cohesion policy. Two issues were mainly discussed: the link between cohesion policy and Europe 2020 and the EC proposals in terms of enhanced conditionality.

Contact for more information on the outcomes of this meeting: e.delangle@aer.eu

AER & Brussels-Capital joint conference on future Cohesion policy, 7 December

Organised with the support of the Belgian Presidency, this conference collected over 250 actors and experts involved in European cohesion policy. The high-level debate gave Regional representatives the opportunity to share views on the main issues at stake, i.e. How to best link cohesion policy and Europe 2020, would it be a good idea to enlarge the scope of indicators for eligibility to EU funds and evaluation of the programmes, or the controversial EC proposals regarding the principle of conditionality.

More information: <http://www.aer.eu/events/regional-development/2010/cohesion-bxl.html>

CLIMATE CHANGE & ENERGY

MORE4NRG thematic seminar, 8 October 2010

The conference aimed to highlight various cooperations that have to take place within a region in order to make it more sustainable - to reach the 20-20-20 objectives and to provide good living and working conditions to companies and citizens.

Two major axis were analysed:

1. Cooperation with cities and municipalities (including the Convent of Mayors)
2. Cooperation with companies and those who represent enterprises

The event gathered regional politicians and administrators, as well as representatives of the energy business sector. Contact j.podralska@aer.eu

More information: <http://www.aer.eu/en/news/2010/2010100801.html>

AER Peer Review in the Autonomous Republic of Vojvodina (SRB), 19-22 October 2010

The energy policy for the municipality of Temerin underwent a four-day review in order to design an appropriate model for sustainable energy governance to be adopted first-hand by city hall and further promoted across the whole province of Vojvodina. Co-funded by the Central European Initiative "Know-how exchange programme", the peer review strongly focused on the issue of a more rational use of energy in public and private buildings, the biggest municipal energy consumers. The audit should also contribute to the betterment of the Serbian Energy Development Strategy for Vojvodina, carried out by the regional administration since 2007. Contact j.podralska@aer.eu

More information: <http://www.aer.eu/en/news/2010/2010102201.html>

More4nrg thematic seminar in l'Aquila, 28 October 2010

The seminar aimed to present the guidelines for preparation and implementation of regional energy plans and strategies the Assembly of European Regions had developed on basis of the results from More4nrg peer reviews. The first draft of the More4nrg monitoring tool was also introduced on this occasion.

Contact: c.diegelmann@aer.eu and j.podralska@aer.eu

AER participation in the conference of Regions for Sustainable Change Project, 3 November 2010

"Regions for Sustainable Change" (RSC) is a partnership of 12 organisations from eight EU member states. The project aims to promote EU-wide shift to climate-friendly economies and seeks to identify opportunities for, as well as costs and effects of, moving to a low-carbon economy. The conference in Ancona focused on different indicators the regions across Europe can use to measure the quality of their energy and climate change policies. The AER was invited to take part in the conference to introduce the indicators it uses during energy peer reviews.



Contact j.podralska@aer.eu

More information: <http://www.rscproject.org/events.rsc.php>

AER survey on regional investment in energy projects

Launched on 10 December 2010, seeks to analyse how regional authorities handle energy investments: what kind of incentives do they use to increase business involvement in energy projects and how do they grab EU funds to shed necessary investment? How do regions select projects and how do they convince citizens of the need for implementing them. The questionnaire is available in four languages: English, French, German and Polish. It can be found under the below-mentioned link. Feedback should be sent to j.podralska@aer.eu by 24 January 2011 at the latest. The results of the survey will be presented at the European Regions Energy Day on 11 and 12 April 2011 in Brussels.

Contact c.diegelmann@aer.eu and j.podralska@aer.eu

More information: <http://www.aer.eu/en/events/regionaldevelopment/2011/aer-survey-on-regional-investment-in-energy-projects.html>

INNOVATION AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Working group on regional airports, 7 October 2010

In this last quarter, the working group on regional airports finalised its position on state aid for regional airports after a series of meetings in Brussels last August. Indeed, 5 years after their launch, the guidelines are expected to undergo a review by the European Commission, at which point AER wishes to assert that the interest of regions will be at the heart of future revisions; ideally, the guidelines should act as a tool rather than barrier for regional development. Contact: c.diegelmann@aer.eu and c.dawans@aer.eu

AER Regional Innovation Award Ceremony, 11 November 2010

The 5th edition of the regional innovation award came to an end at the award ceremony in Istanbul (TUR). Three projects were selected by the jury to showcase successful projects and initiatives in the three categories proposed by the award: (1) Economy: Uppsala (SE) for the project "SUF-Resource Centre"; (2) People: Tampere (FI) for the project "Demola"; (3) Technology: Mecklenburg-Vorpommern (DE) for the project "Entrepreneurial Technology Transfer". Contact: c.dawans@aer.eu

More information: <http://www.aer.eu/en/news/2010/2010111201.html>

ECREIN+ Workshop, 13 December 2010

The objective of ECREIN + is to explore how regions can create and implement effective policies to support eco-innovation and green business in their territories. Project partners of ECREIN+ gathered on December 13 to discuss the possibilities for potential or existing financial instruments to support the development of eco-innovative companies in the European territory. This was the first dissemination event of the project and it gathered about 50 participants, from regional offices in Brussels and from the partner regions.



TOURISM**PRESERVE, Steering Committee Meeting (SCM), 18 November 2010**

PRESERVE partners met in Brussels on 18 November to report progress for the last quarter of 2010 which coincides with the end of the peer review phase in the PRESERVE project. Over the past two years, 6 peer reviews have been carried out in Avila (ES), Sterea Ellada (GR), Carinthia (AT), Banská Bystrica (SK), Észak-Alföld (HU) and Örebro (SE). In their SCM, partners agreed to focus on disseminating the project results for the next 12 months so as to guarantee the ripple effect to regions beyond the partnership.

More info: <http://preserve.aer.eu/>

Contact: c.dawans@aer.eu

COMMON AGRICULTURAL POLICY AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT**AER working group on agriculture and rural development, 7 October 2010**

The working group on agriculture and rural development met in Pescara, Abruzzo (I) to discuss the work plan. Its new chairman, Harry Keereweer (Gelderland, NL) was elected during the AER Committee 1 plenary meeting in Abruzzo. The amended AER position on CAP, which is the result of the debates within the working group, was adopted in the plenary session as well. Contacts:

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

More information available at: <http://www.aer.eu/main-issues/agriculture-rural-development.html>

Adoption of the AER position on CAP at the General Assembly, 11 November 2010

On 11 November in Istanbul the *AER position on the future Common Agricultural Policy and Rural Development policy of the European Union* was adopted by the General Assembly. The final text can be downloaded under: <http://www.aer.eu/main-issues/agriculture-rural-development.html>

EC communication on CAP, 18 November 2010

On 18 December 2010 the European Commission published its communication: "The CAP towards 2020: Meeting the food, natural resources and territorial challenges of the future". Annemiek Canjels (Limburg, NL) and Fons Goselink (Gelderland, NL) represented AER at the presentation of the communication in The Hague.

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

More information: <http://www.aer.eu/en/news/2010/2010111901.html>

SOCIAL POLICY AND PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE (2)**COMMITTEE 2 GENERAL****New Committee 2 Presidium has been elected**

Committee 2 President: Vladimir Kosic (Friuli Venezia Giulia-I)

Committee 2 Vice-Presidents: Agneta Granström(Norrbotten-S) and Karsten Uno Petersen (Syddanmark-DK)

Committee 2 contribution – European Innovation Partnership on Healthy and Active Ageing

The Active and Healthy Ageing Innovation Partnership (AHAIP) is a new EU initiative that aims to link several European Commission Directorates and funding programmes and to promote



initiatives for healthy and active ageing. It is the first in a series of partnerships that will be launched under the Innovation Union flagship initiative of the Europe 2020 strategy. The European Commission has launched a consultation to identify original project ideas that can support the wide-scale implementation of innovative concepts and speed up the take up of research by the market. AER is preparing a response to this consultation, which will include members' project needs and will call for the inclusion of regions in the governance mechanism of this new partnership. For further information and to contribute, please contact Camille Bullo (c.bullo@aer.eu).

Health and social policy in the future cohesion policy

Catarina Segersten Larsson (Värmland-S) represented Committee 2 at the AER Conference on cohesion policy (Brussels, 7 December 2010) and outlined the Committee's key demands of future cohesion policy: cohesion policy should continue to support regions' initiatives to guarantee territorial and social cohesion for their citizens, in particular as regards access to health and social services and investing in responses to demographic change. The Committee calls for going beyond GDP as the sole indicator for allocating funds and including indicators of the accessibility of health and social services, the age pyramid and demographic forecasts as well as the use of ICT, to assess priority actions under the funds and their impact.

COMBATING HEALTH INEQUALITIES

Outcomes of the AER Conference Health Inequalities

Health inequalities are all about the impact that a person's environment, how and where they grow up, live and work, has on their levels of health. Across Europe we note gaps in life expectancy and levels of health among countries, regions and also different social groups. The AER conference (Brussels, 7 October 2010) highlighted the ethical and political obligation on the regions to address health inequalities and guarantee all citizens with a good quality of life. Members concluded that we need further indicators for economic growth and territorial cohesion, moving beyond GDP, so as to have a rounded picture of the economic and social situation in a region and be able to develop holistic policy responses. To access the conclusions of the conference and the presentations made, please click [here](#).

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. Further information available [here](#).

EHTEL-AER-EUREGHA Symposium

The AER e-he@lth network 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 are regions doing today, what can e-health offer to regions and how can we get wider deployment of telehealth services in the regions? During this event, that took place on 22-23 November 2010 in Brussels, AER member regions presented the message of the AER e-he@lth network: there can be no future in health without e-health; e-health should become a standard part of healthcare organisation and delivery; regions are working towards dropping the 'e' from e-health; to implement e-health successfully, we need medium- to long-term financial and political commitments that are shared by all stakeholders (regional authorities, industry, the patients, healthcare services, the insurance sector etc.).

Renewing Health project- Meeting of the Users Advisory Board

The Renewing Health project is piloting and assessing telemedicine services in 7 regions – 5 of

which are AER members – with the aim of creating the needed evidence to support the wide-scale deployment of telemedicine across Europe. AER is a member of the Users Advisory Board that will provide guidance to the partners and help ensure that the project produces clear and valid evidence on the impact of telehealth on quality of life and patient empowerment. During the second meeting of the UAB on 2 November in Brussels, the evaluation of the project outcomes and the development of a User Requirements manual were discussed. Further information on the project is available at: www.renewinghealth.eu

EQUAL EUROPE FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

The aim of this AER Working Group is to raise awareness among regions about disabilities and to support regions in developing and implementing policies in this area. The group is focusing on the implementation of the United Nations Convention on the rights of people with disabilities and in particular the obligations it places on public authorities as regards awareness-raising, accessibility, health and habilitation/rehabilitation. Further information on the group is available [here](#).

AER Publication – A region’s handbook to understanding and implementing the UN Convention on the rights of people with disabilities

The AER has developed a handbook for regional politicians and officers outlining the UN Convention: what is it about, what obligations does it create, what should regions be doing about it? The handbook is already available on line [here](#). Printed versions are available on demand from the AER Secretariat (c.meschede@aer.eu). The handbook will be supplemented with examples of regional policies to implement the convention in specific policy areas, based on the outcomes of the AER network meetings.

Network project idea under development

The network is developing a proposal for an interregional cooperation project to be submitted for EC co-financing. The aim of the project is to support regions to learn from each other how best to achieve accessibility for people with disabilities and how best to raise awareness about disability issues in their regions. The network is currently looking for suitable EU funding programmes to apply to. For further information, please contact Claudia Meschede (c.meschede@aer.eu).

CONTRIBUTIONS TO EXTERNAL EVENTS

AER contributes to the second meeting of the CoR/DG SANCO Technical Platform for Cooperation in Public Health

The Committee of the Regions has set up, in cooperation with the European Commission Health and Consumers DG (SANCO), a technical platform on health. The second meeting of the platform was dedicated to the role of the regions in implementing the European Health Strategy. AER spoke of the challenges regions encounter when implementing European and other policies in health and presented the key outcomes of the members’ indicative survey on the impact of the economic crisis on public health policy and the survey on EU funding. AER also organised a workshop on the prevention of alcohol-related harm, which was an occasion to present the conclusions of the AER work in this area and to showcase examples of good regional policy.

CULTURE, EDUCATION AND TRAINING, YOUTH AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION (3)

CULTURE

Cooperation with ENCATC: Conference and White Paper on “Museums and local authorities” and cultural managers training



In the framework of the cooperation with the European Network of Cultural Administration Training Centers (ENCATC), Karine Gloanec Maurin (Centre – F), Chair of the Sub-Committee on education and training spoke on behalf of AER at the conference “Museums & Municipalities/Regions in Europe - Working relationships, perspectives and management” which took place on 9 and 10 December 2010 in Brussels. The conference presented the results of the survey that had been carried with the support of the AER. It also gathered recommendations for the project's concluding White paper on “Museums and Local Authorities” which will be submitted to the European Commission at the beginning of 2011 and will address the role of museums in local/regional development.

Committee 3 used the conference as an opportunity to discuss the partnership both organizations could enter in order to provide AER members with training activities in the field of culture. Concrete proposals have been put on the table and are currently being refined. AER aims at launching the first training academy on culture in 2011.

For further information on the conference: <http://www.encatc.org/pages/index.php?id=189>

Culture and Health conference takes shape

The Culture and Health Working Group met on 10 December in Brussels to further elaborate the programme and agenda for the conference and to decide on potential speakers. First details on the one-day conference, which will take place in Istanbul in the second half of September 2011 and will be organised in combination with meetings of Committee 2 and 3, will be circulated soon.

AER advocates maintaining spending levels on culture in the Consultation on the future EU Culture programme

In the framework of the European Commission consultation on the future of the Culture programme, AER submitted a position paper in which it argued for continuing investment in culture and cultural and arts education. Culture is indeed crucial in terms of regional development, EU cohesion, creativity, innovation and employment. AER also expressed its hope that the Open Method of Coordination would not result in a further transfer of competence in the field of culture to the EU level, highlighting the importance of subsidiarity in this field.

EDUCATION & TRAINING

YES: Youth Entrepreneurship Strategies' partners define entrepreneurship education

On 19 & 20 October the YES project partners met in Zilina (SK) and discussed the advancement of the project. Most partners had held meetings with their regional reference panel and collected feedback which they were able to use for finalising the methodology to be used in the mapping of regional strategies and policies on entrepreneurship education. The participants agreed on the project group's definition of entrepreneurship education which, amongst others, can be found on the project website: www.young-entrepreneurs.eu.

A dissemination event on the Youth Entrepreneurship Strategies will be organised in Brussels in the form of a Breakfast Briefing on 27 January.

Educational passport proposed to European Commission

AER took the opportunity of the EU consultation on the future of the Lifelong Learning programme to lobby for its longstanding project to establish an educational passport that would improve the monitoring of the pupils' achievements beyond mere grades and facilitate their integration into a new class following a geographical move.

In its position paper, AER also highlighted the importance of mobility and offered to share experience with the Commission over its longstanding Eurodyssey programme.

YOUTH

AER General Assembly

The AER General Assembly (10-12 November 2010, Istanbul, TR) saw 22 regional youth councils participate in its work. For the first time, young participants were invited to take part in the General Assembly and were given the opportunity to discuss the importance of R&D during a side-event session "*Nothing about us without us: R&D policy – what's at stake for youth?*". Another highlight for the Youth Regional Network was the adoption of a YRN resolution on enhanced cooperation between YRN and AER to be established in the next review of the AER statutes.

Europe's 1st report on Regional Youth Participation

AER Youth Regional Network is collecting information about regional youth councils, parliaments and other youth organisations in all AER member regions, which will serve as the starting point for publishing the first report on youth participation in European regions. The online questionnaire is available at : <http://www.aer.eu/main-issues/youth.html>.

INTERREGIONAL & INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

Platforma meeting & hearing, 26 October

Platforma has taken into account some of the remarks that were made by AER at the La Rabida conference. Less internal meetings will be organised and the priority will be given to best practice sharing between regional authorities on decentralised cooperation. AER will be consulted about how best to organise these meetings.

A specific Platforma working group will be set up, at the request of DG Europaid, to give them our expertise in the field of effective aid delivery. We will give our members the opportunity to participate in this working group.

Relationships with the European Commission are really good and Platforma is identified as the key stakeholder representing local and regional authorities on development issues. The dialogue with the European Parliament is also progressing with the first ad hoc audition having been organised on the 26 October in front of the Development Committee in order to introduce our objectives.

AER with other regional organisations sent a letter to the Committee of the Regions asking for a better dialogue on development issues.

The next major event will be the Platforma conference on 28-29 March 2011 at the occasion of which the guide of best practice in the field of decentralised cooperation will be launched.

European Development Days

AER was present at the European Development Days (6-7 December) and shared a stand with Platforma to present its work on development policy to the thousands participants present. Being seen at this kind of events is important to increase the visibility of regional authorities in the development world. Out of the many workshops over these two days only one was dedicated to the role of local and regional authorities. This field is still very much seen as being the pré carré of national governments. Showing our engagement in such events is therefore crucial.

R20

President Michèle SABBAN, represented AER at the launch of the R20 "Regions of Climate Change Action" initiative during the 3rd Governors' Global Climate Summit on 15 & 16 November in Sacramento (California/US). At the invitation of Governor Schwarzenegger and along with

representatives from AER member regions (Alba, Andalusia, Azores, Flevoland, Istanbul, Istria, Puglia ...) Ms Sabban signed the Charter for Regional Climate Action which aims at developing and implementing low-carbon and climate resilient projects at no net cost through cooperation among subnational governments. Other non-European Regions or networks of regions, NGOs, agencies and private companies were represented but European regions were the strongest delegation. During its first year, the R20 will facilitate public-private partnerships, share best practices, accelerate the development of green innovations and begin implementing clean energy demonstration projects. Within five years, the R20 aims to have at least twenty subnational governments enact comprehensive low-carbon policies and implement projects, using successful models from progressive subnational leaders as a guide.

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

Eurodyssey Forum celebrates its 25th anniversary

80 representatives of the Eurodyssey network met on 30 September & 1 October in Murcia (E) to celebrate the Programme's 25th anniversary. They took the opportunity to underline the value of the mobility scheme with regard to European strategies such as Lisbon and Europe 2020. Former and current trainees took part to the celebrations and shared their Eurodyssey experience with the audience. Aware of the challenges ahead, the participants discussed the need to reinvent mobility in order to provide young people with even more job opportunities.

Members elected the Azores as the Region that will host the Presidency and Secretariat of the Programme for the years 2011/2012. The topic of the Forum 2011 will be "Eurodyssey: European Regions mobilising for the employment and future of Youth".

Survey on professional mobility

During the forum, the working group on professional mobility discussed a proposal made by the Azores to launch a study on professional mobility among pupils reaching the end of their studies. The Azores are currently finalising a questionnaire whose draft had been discussed at the occasion of the Forum in Murcia. The survey will be carried among 8 representative regions of the Eurodyssey network and is supposed to reach about 10 000 young people. The results of this survey will be known during the first semester of 2011.

The Eurodyssey Secretariat promotes the Programme

Members of the Eurodyssey secretariat promoted the Programme at the occasion of several AER meetings (Bureau and Institutional affairs meetings in Porec (14-15 October), General Assembly (Istanbul, 11-12 November). Secretariat members as well as other regional Eurodyssey coordinators were actively involved in the "Youth on the Move" conference on 15 October in Bordeaux on the topic "The Regions at the heart of European and international Mobility for the Youth". Three out of the four roundtables included representatives from Eurodyssey and addressed issues such as interregional cooperation and networking, international student mobility, regions favouring access to mobility schemes and funding.

For further information, please go to the Eurodyssey website: <http://www.eurodyssey.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 SCHOOLS

AER Summer Schools 2011 on "Youth in a changing society"

Preparations of the 16th Summer School and 10th Youth Summer School have started. A meeting of the Organising Committee will take place on 18 & 19 January and will check the proposed venue in Flevoland and work on the content.

The Organising Committee is working closely together with the Youth Regional Network. Given the chosen topic, important input is expected from the YRN concerning the agenda and proposals for speakers.

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).

STANDING COMMITTEE ON INSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Statutory matters

New Committee presidency - During the AER Bureau which took place on 14/15 October in Porec, Istria (HR), the Standing Committee on Institutional Affairs elected its new president, Roy PERRY, County Councillor from Hampshire county (UK). Mr. Perry, who has been Vice-President of the SC INST replaced Peter STRAUB, President of the Landtag of Baden-Württemberg (DE), whose mandate of 4 years of SC INST president ended in 2010. Peter STRAUB has been a committed member of the AER and served the cause of regions as a politically influential personality for many years. Together with him Lars-Gerhard WESTBERG, regional councillor from Västra-Götaland (SE), left the AER due to his retirement. The SC INST is thankful for the work and contribution of these two politicians.

Regional Democracy – Interregional cooperation

AER President Michèle Sabban at the Plenary Session of the Congress - AER President Michèle SABBAN addressed the members of the Chamber of the Regions of the Congress on 26 October. She reasserted that AER, which has an observatory status at the Congress, would continue to support the Congress, as it did during its recent reform and review of its links with the intergovernmental sector, as the unique body within the Council of Europe having mandate to monitor compliance with the European Charter of Local Self-Government.

EGTC – The AER adopted a position on the European Grouping for Territorial Cooperation during its General Assembly in Istanbul. The EGTC legislation is currently under revision by the European Commission. Stakeholders have been asked to make contributions in order to improve this legal instrument to enhance transnational cooperation on regional level. Besides the policy input, AER has committed itself to promote the EGTC amongst its regions, to increase the visibility of the EGTC and the awareness on how to best use this instrument.

EU Budget Review - With the crisis and the severe constraints on public budgets, the allocation of financial means to a common EU budget has come under severe attack by many EU member states and other stakeholders. To understand which issues are at stake, the SC INST organised during the AER Bureau meeting in Porec, Istria (HR) a debate on the EU Budget Review and the stakes for further EU spending in the new financial period from 2014-2020. The AER Bureau and later the AER General Assembly adopted a position paper on what regions think should be the priorities and main items of concern when developing the EU Budget framework for 2014-2020.

Europe 2030 Project – The crisis but also on-going key issues of concern such as climate change make clear that Europe is at the crossroads: this is the vision of the Reflection Group which published the Europe 2030 Project report, a vision that AER members share, as their position on this report show. In this position, prepared by SC INST and adopted in Istanbul, AER regrets the limited role recognised to Regions underlining, via concrete examples, that no major challenges can be tackled without the help of the Regions. The reason the Lisbon Strategy failed was that it did not recognise this reality. To prevent another such failure, the position ends by a call for a change of culture and political practices, to ensure the conditions for active participation by our Regions in the definition and implementation of the objectives of the Union.

Communicating Europe and Citizenship

AER European Citizens' Forum – Together with the region of Istria and members of the AER bureau a European citizens' Forum was held in Porec, Istria (HR) on the topic of European integration and its impact on the citizens. The participants' primary concern with regards to Croatia's accession to the EU was that they would have to comply with Europe's regulations and standards. However, when asked if Croatian regions and their citizens would benefit from EU accession, 90% of participants answered "yes".

For more information about the Forum in Istria please visit our website at:

<http://www.aer.eu/events/standing-committee-on-institutional-affairs/2010/ecf-istria.html>

AER Communication Award – The winner of the 2010 AER Communicating Europe Award was announced officially during the AER General Assembly in Istanbul. In the presence of the some Jury members, the prize was handed over by AER President Michèle Sabban to the winning region of Rhône-Alpes. A special mention award was given to the region of Vrancea (RO) for their special efforts on integrating Roma into their society. 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>

Black Sea cooperation

Towards a second AER Black Sea Regions Conference – The SC INST secretariat participated in the annual conference of the Black Sea Cross border Cooperation programme. The Standing Committee aims at promoting interregional cooperation in this area, raising awareness of this programme amongst its partner regions and to create a joint project on regional development cooperation in this area. Following its first AER Regional Black Sea conference in February 2010, the Standing Committee is organising a second conference in March 2011 in Batumi, Adjara (GE). For more information, please check our website regularly!

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

ECONOMIC AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE (1)

Date	Location	Event
31 January or 01 February	Brussels (B)	Meeting of the Task Force on cohesion
02 February	Brussels (B)	Meeting of the Working group on Agriculture and Rural development
24-25 March	Østfold (N)	AER Committee 1 plenary meeting and thematic conference on entrepreneurship
11-12 April	Brussels (B)	2 nd European regions Energy Day
January	Strasbourg (F)	AER Regional Innovation Award
24 March 2010	Østfold (N)	Working group on regional airports
24 March 2010	Østfold (N)	Seminar on CAP

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

Youth & Interregional & international cooperation

Date	Location	Event
27 January 2011	Brussels (B)	Breakfast Briefing on YES Youth entrepreneurship education strategies and youth mobility
2-3 February 2011	Lodz (PL)	Meeting of YES (Youth entrepreneurship strategies) project partners
21-22 February 2011	Strasbourg (F)	YRN Presidium Meeting
28-29 March 2011	Brussels (B)	PLATFORMA local and regional authorities for development - final conference for period 2009/2010
18 & 19 April 2011	Centre (F)	YES Dissemination conference & Committee 3 Plenary meeting
19 & 20 April 2011	Centre (F)	5th Youth Regional Network Meeting
11-12 May 2011	Estonia	Meeting of YES (Youth entrepreneurship strategies) project partners
2 nd half of September 2011	Istanbul (TR)	Conference Culture and Health & Committee 3 Plenary meeting

EURODYSSEY

Date	Location	Event
7-8 February 2011	Paris (F)	Eurodissey Steering Committee
14-15 April 2011	Lyon (F)	Eurodissey Steering Committee
08-09 September 2011	Aosta (I)	Eurodissey annual Forum – "Eurodissey: European Regions mobilising for the employment and future of Youth"

SUMMMER SCHOOLS

Date	Location	Event
18-19 January 2011	Almere (NL)	Organising committee AER Summer School
22-27 August 2011	Lelystad (NL)	AER Summer Schools (Adult & youth) "Youth in a changing society"