



GT/JS/DM

2008-07-30

To the members of Committee 3

and

Persons concerned with / involved / interested in
the education of migrant and travelling children
as well as the integration of migrants

Dear Sir/Madam,

Following the last AER Committee 3 meeting in Ustron (PL)¹ and in the framework of the preparation of our next General Assembly (13-15 November, Tampere/FI)², we would like to propose to the regions the opportunity to initiate a new collaboration in the field of education and integration of migrants, including the education of travelling and migrant children.

When trying to integrate migrants and their families and to connect travelling communities with society, education plays a central role. Education is not only essential in personal development but also helps an individual to gain autonomy and to have access to self-sustaining activities.

On the other hand, ensuring continuity in education with these target groups is a major concern. Recent research shows that, due to language problems alone, an educational gap of 6 to 24 months exists between migrant and indigenous children of the same age group. Early school leaving and school dropout are often the consequence.

The AER wants to enhance the regions' ability to tackle these problems

- (a) by inventorying and creating an exchange on regional policies and best practices in this field,
- (b) by developing strategies to improve the management of educational challenges in relation to migration, in particular with a view to facilitating transition and
- (c) by initiating interregional cooperation on this issue.

Attached you will find a questionnaire containing questions related to migration, education and integration. Your answers will provide us with the basic information in order to start interregional cooperation in this field.

¹ <http://www.aer.eu/events/committee-3-culture-education-interregional-cooperation/2008/com3ustron.html>

² <http://www.aer.eu/events/governing-bodies/2008/ga.html>

As you will know, the European Commission is currently also highlighting the education of migrant children in the framework of its Renewed Social Agenda³ in order to achieve the Lisbon objectives. In this context, the European Commission has recently published a Green Paper titled "Migration & Mobility: challenges and opportunities for EU education systems", on which a consultation process has been opened until 31 December 2008.

All relevant documents concerning the Green Paper and the consultation process can be found at: http://ec.europa.eu/education/news/news490_en.htm. A Press Pack containing different features concerning migration is available at: http://europa.eu/press_room/press_packs/migration/index_en.htm.

AER is planning to submit on behalf of its members a contribution to the consultation process. Against this background, we would be very grateful if, by means of the attached questionnaire,

- you express your readiness to cooperate in a working group that we wish to set up on the education of migrant and travelling children and/or
- you state your interest in working together with the secretariat of Committee 3 on the drafting of AER's answer to the Commission's consultation.

Whereas the work on the answer to the Green Paper will take place on the basis of written exchanges, the working group on the education of migrant and travelling children, once constituted, will decide on its working methodology and agenda.

We also take the opportunity to draw your attention to the fact that this year's AER General Assembly offers you with the Open Space session a perfect platform for showcasing your region's success stories regarding the integration of migrants and the development of adapted solutions. In order to request a slot for your presentation, please download the corresponding form (EN, FR, IT)⁴.

We look forward to receiving your contributions and thank you very much in advance for your cooperation.

Yours faithfully,



Jascha SCHEELE
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Committee 3 "Culture, Education, interregional co-operation"

Enc.

³ Renewed Social Agenda: The elements of the package - <http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=MEMO/08/471&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

⁴ EN: http://www.aer.eu/fileadmin/user_upload/GoverningBodies/GeneralAssembly/Events/AG-2008_Tampere/1-EN-ContributionForm.doc
FR: http://www.aer.eu/fileadmin/user_upload/GoverningBodies/GeneralAssembly/Events/AG-2008_Tampere/1-FR-ContributionForm.doc
IT: http://www.aer.eu/fileadmin/user_upload/GoverningBodies/GeneralAssembly/Events/AG-2008_Tampere/1-IT-ContributionForm.doc