



ASSEMBLÉE DES RÉGIONS D'EUROPE
ASSEMBLY OF EUROPEAN REGIONS
VERSAMMLUNG DER REGIONEN EUROPAS
ASAMBLEA DE LAS REGIONES DE EUROPA
ASSEMBLEA DELLE REGIONI D'EUROPA

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SOPRON (29-30 NOVEMBER 2001)

AER Declaration

on

«The Regions for a new European Transport governance»

submitted by AER Committee C

a) Having gathered in Pola, on 2 – 3 November 2001, due to the kind invitation of Mr Jakovic, President of the Region of Istra

b) Referring to:

- The «White Paper on European Governance» (July 2001)
- The EU 2nd Report on Social and Economic Cohesion, to be followed by an intermediate and a 3rd Report on the future Cohesion Policy (2002-2004)
- The recently published «White Paper on European Transport Policy for 2010: Time to decide» (September 2001),
- The conclusions of the last meeting of the European Council on Transport (16 October 2001)

c) Taking into account the precious contributions by:

- Experts from Regions and Universities
- Commission 3 «Trans-european Networks, Transport and Information society» of the Committee of the Regions
- The following representative AER member interregional organisations: AEBR, ARGE DONAULÄNDER, CPMR
- The European Regions Airline Association – Air Safety Policy
- The European Campaign for Sustainable Cities and Towns;

d) 40 member Regions of AER Committee C, from all over Europe,

1. Consider that:

- An efficient, well-balanced and sustainable transport system is a fundamental requirement for EU social, economic and territorial cohesion in an enlarged Europe and an essential aspect of the Future Regional Policy;

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2. Welcome the White Paper, which seeks to address the key issues of:

- Congestion
- Environmental and economic sustainability
- Security of energy supply
- Fully completing the transport systems in the candidate countries and connecting these systems to the EU TENs
- Promoting the accessibility of peripheral and remote areas (including the provision of a new high capacity rail link across the Pyrenees and the inclusion of the part of the West Coast Main Line (WCML) between Coventry and Wolverhampton in the TENS network).
- Road safety
- Putting the interest of the citizen at the heart of transport policy.

3. Offer the following comments which they would like the European Commission to consider in relation to the White Paper on Transport:

- The complexity of the arrangements for the planning and delivery of transport policy within the EU will hinder the implementation of the European Transport Policy. ***The lines of responsibility and accountability for strategic transport planning, investment and management need to be clarified*** at EU, National and Sub-national level if a strategic approach is to be effective and the citizen empowered to have influence.
- If the objectives of the Transport Policy are to be achieved then ***a detailed delivery plan for the 60 actions is required***. This should set out clearly Who is expected to be responsible for What and by When and where the resources are to come from.
- Funding, as the White Paper says, is a 'headache'. However it has to be recognised that Public Transport is a service which generates extensive external economies. ***Massive up-front public investment in feasible transport alternatives is essential to achieving modal shift. Pricing policies and market forces are not enough*** and may merely provide the excuse of sustainability for high taxation without compensatory investment, in advance, in feasible alternative means of transport.
- ***The White Paper fails dismally to recognise the pivotal role of the Regions and Local Government in Transport Strategy***. Most road transport is generated and contained within the Regions and it is at that level, particularly in respect of the private motorist, that scope exists for much greater intermodality between private and public transport both bus and rail. ***Regions are particularly well placed to integrate solutions to the transport problems of the Large cities and their extensive hinterlands. The application of the European Transport Policy must in any case be***

tailored to meet the particular circumstances of geography, economy and settlement patterns within the Regions in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity.

- ***The potential of the Regions for strategic transport planning, investment and management should be recognised and they should be fully empowered and resourced to undertake that role.*** Regional and local government already have, to varying degrees, responsibility for transport planning, public transport provision, road transport infrastructure and maintenance, traffic management and road safety. They also have responsibility for the complementary social environmental and land use policies. They also provide the interface with the citizen which is the key to putting the interest of the people at the heart of the European Transport Policy.
- ***The White Paper recognises that transport objectives need to be joined up with those of other policies. It follows that such implications for other strands of EU policy, particularly Regional policy and the Structural funds and the ESDP, should be highlighted.***
- ***The problems of the peripheral and rural areas, whilst recognised, are not adequately addressed.*** Regional air transport is a sustainable means of serving many such areas and has more potential for doing so. Road transport is often the only economically feasible means of serving remote and sparsely populated areas. Indiscriminate policies to reduce dependence on air and road transport will exacerbate their economic and social problems.
- ***The problems of the ultra-peripheral regions, including the islands of continental Europe and the offshore, and remote, territories of France, Spain and Portugal need also to be considered in the European Transport Policy.***
- ***More emphasis is needed on developing the Sub-TENs. The White Paper should pave the way for a stronger Common Transport Policy objective when the Cohesion Policy and the Structural Policies are reviewed.***
- ***The environmental and safety impact of transport systems on those residents affected by their functioning could be given more consideration.*** These are issues which are particularly relevant to local and regional government. This should be acknowledged for example in the section on Road Safety where the proposed actions do not match the severity of the problem.
- ***Regions contribute to solving the problems of transport congestion and pollution by promoting the development of short-distances regional service systems.***

- ***Public transport is a public service with far reaching implications for social inclusion.*** It must to be provided in co-operation with the private sector and with a commitment to ensuring reliable, efficient, fair-price and equitable public services.

4. Invite their President, Mr Brian Greenslade, to:

- address this Final Declaration to all the relevant EU, national and regional authorities
- submit this Declaration to the next AER General Assembly's adoption (Sopron, 28 — 29 November 2001).

5. Moreover, the participating Regions:

(I.) Consider that Committee C should pay further attention to the future of CTP and suggest the following Plan of Action:

- Prepare a report with further recommendations on CTP (further developments), Regional communications and transport infrastructures, to be submitted for the adoption of Committee C, on the basis of:
 - § The experts' contributions for the meeting in Pola
 - § A data-base on Regional practices in the field of transport
- Promoting the establishment of consultative mechanism between the European Commission and the AER in the field of CTP and Regional Communications
- Achieving full co-operation with the Committee of the Regions and representative interregional organisations in order to encourage common actions in this field and to ensure full protection of Regions' rights and needs.

(II.) Entrust Sub-Committee I and II with the implementation of this Plan of action, according to their own competences and through their working groups on: 'Regional Aviation', 'Road Security', 'Transport infrastructures — Project Financing', 'Towards a common Regions' policy for sustainable transport infrastructure'.

**On the basis of common conclusions, the present
Declaration was unanimously adopted
in Pola (on November 3rd 2001)
by the following Committee C member Regions:**



ARE-AER-VRE

Alba (RO)	Mures (RO)
Arges (RO)	Nordland (N)
Baranya (H)	Norrbotten (S)
Bedfordshire (UK)	Oppland (S)
Brasov (RO)	rebroy (S)
Dalarna (S)	Pest (H)
Dambovitza (RO)	Primorsko-Goranska (HR)
Devon (UK)	R union (F)
Dolj (RO)	Salaj (RO)
Dorset (UK)	Telemark (N)
Dubrovnik & Neretva (HR)	Thuringen (D)
Friuli- Venezia-Giulia (I)	Toscana (I)
Galati (RO)	Trentino-Alto-Adige (I)
Gloucestershire (UK)	Tulcea (RO)
Halland (S)	Valle d Aosta (I)
Istra (HR)	Vesterbotten (S)
Jemtland (S)	Vesternorrland (S)
Jönköping (S)	Västergötland (S)
Limousin (F)	Wallonie (B)
Maramures (RO)	West Midlands Local Government (UK)