



## The Assembly of European Regions (AER) & the AER Youth Regional Network

### AER Peer Review on Youth Employment

#### Background – what is AER Peer Review?

Developed by AER, a 'peer review' methodology allows regional authorities to assess and improve their performance in key areas of regional responsibility. A peer review is a mentoring visit undertaken by a group of regional authorities to a host region, in order to identify current strengths and weaknesses in a specific policy area. Peer reviews can help regional authorities to understand how well they are working and support them in making improvements. They provide a good opportunity for regional representatives to learn from one another. Until now it has been implemented in other areas of the AER's work including alcohol policies and renewable energies.

#### AER Peer Review on Youth Employment

##### 1. What?

A tool enabling AER member regions assessment and improvement of their regional performance in the field of youth employment.

##### 2. Why?

The review aims at identifying both the strengths and weaknesses inherent in the host region's youth employment policies. The key objectives of the project are:

- To create more employment opportunities for young people;
- To identify the points of youth employment policies that can be improved by regional authorities;
- To enable the host region the exchange of good practices with regions that have successfully tackled youth unemployment.

##### 3. How?

It is organised in the form of a maximum 5-day long **study visit** to a **host region** that would like to improve the situation in youth employment in their region. It involves an international **experts' team** selected from AER member regions which developed a number of successful initiatives boosting youth employment. Experts will be selected upon submitting a questionnaire by the host region in order to ensure mostly relevant exchange of information between regions involved in a peer review.

The AER Peer Review on Youth Employment aims at involving regional authorities, the private

sector and youth groups (e.g. regional youth councils).

#### 4. Methodology

A multinational team of experts will provide some advice on enhancing regional policies and practices in the field of youth employment on the following basis:

##### Step 1

Portfolio building - a host region fills in a questionnaire that outlines their youth employment projects and policies.

##### Step 2

Study visit - visit by an experts' team to a host region in order to exchange practices and identify the regional potential in the field of youth employment.

##### Step 3

Monitoring and evaluation - Regional responses to the list of recommendations on the basis of the list submitted by the experts' team upon their visit to the host region.

In 3 those steps, the following areas will be covered: Education and training; Administrative framework: Funding opportunities; Cooperation with the private sector.

#### Participating regions and expert teams

Each interested region could chose to host a review, contribute to one or more teams, or do both. As far as possible, each team would consist of experts from at least three different countries, in order to ensure that the members will be able to contribute expertise and complimentary approaches to youth employment policy issues. The host region would therefore have the opportunity to draw upon a number of different models and to identify those parts of each model that are the most relevant to their own circumstances.

#### Study visit

Each peer review team will undertake a 5-day visit to a host region. The study visits can involve interviews with politicians responsible for youth employment policies, youth officers, young people, youth councils and NGOs, as well as site visits.

On the final day of the visit, the experts' team will be asked to present key findings to senior staff, the youth council and to regional politicians. The experts' team will also produce an in-depth assessment report within one month after the visit. The host region should commit to presenting the review report to its political bodies in order to ensure that the recommendations in the report are discussed thoroughly and options for their implementation are properly identified.

All peer review teams and the representatives of the host regions will meet in the final phase of the project in order to evaluate the pilot initiatives. During this evaluation they will assess the effectiveness of the peer reviews, make suggestions for improvement of the methodology and put into place a framework for the further continuation of the youth policy peer review scheme.

#### Toolkit

A toolkit will provide all participants involved in the Youth Peer Review with an indispensable source of reference when evaluating regional youth employment policies and will include:

- a portfolio for the host region, to gather information about youth employment projects and initiatives;
- a checklist for the experts' team, to assist them in collecting information;

#### Contact person:

Justyna HEJMAN  
[www.aer.eu](http://www.aer.eu) / [j.hejman@ aer.eu](mailto:j.hejman@ aer.eu)  
 Fax / Tel: +33 (0)388 227 446  
 6 rue Oberlin, F-67000 STRASBOURG



- a final report template.

### Benefits for the regions

- In-depth analysis of youth employment situation.
- Tailor-made list of recommendations on how to improve regional youth employment initiatives.
- Recommendation of funding opportunities for youth employment programmes.
- Access to experiences and good practices from other regions.

### Obligations of the regions

- Sharing youth employment policies with other regions and AER Secretariat.
- Identifying a regional unit responsible for regional/national youth employment initiatives.
- Reporting on the fulfillment of list of recommendations.
- Developing tools to follow up youth employment programmes at regional level.

### Timetable

The AER Secretariat and the AER Youth Regional Network will be responsible for:

What?	When?	Who?
Regions inform the AER Secretariat about their interest in the project	Until 1 April 2010	-
<b>Identifying the host region</b>	1 May 2010	AER Secretariat
Step 1 – Portfolio building	June 2010	Host region submits the questionnaire
<b>Identifying an expert team</b>	July 2010	AER Secretariat
Step 2 – Study visit	Between July and August 2010	A visit to a host region by a team of experts
A list of recommendations	No later than 1 month after the study visit	Team of experts
Step 3 – Monitoring and evaluation	October 2010 – December 2010	A host region

### Budget

Regions participating in the project are asked to cover expenses of a study visit (transfer and accommodation of experts' team).

Nonetheless, depending on the number of interests, AER will attempt at applying for funding for a youth policy peer review scheme under Action 4.3 of the Youth in Action programme.



**Contact person:**  
Justyna HEJMAN  
www.aer.eu / j.hejman@ aer.eu  
Fax / Tel: +33 (0)388 227 446  
6 rue Oberlin, F-67000 STRASBOURG

[www.aer.eu](http://www.aer.eu)