

f@ctsheet AER&YOUTH

Youth participation in regional and European decision-making processes has been a key priority of the Assembly of European Regions (AER) since its creation in 1985. AER has been reiterating the fact that young people are a major human resource for development and key agents for social change, economic growth and technological innovation through various programmes and initiatives:

1985 AER launches its first programme **Eurodyyssey**, designed to promote and encourage youth mobility. A precursor for European programmes, Eurodyyssey leads to thousands of young people being able to gain professional experience in other Regions, improve their foreign language skills and gain in mutual understanding.

2001 AER's first competition for the **most youth-friendly European Region (MYFER)** is launched. Open also open to non-member regions, the competition offers the European regions every two years the chance to make their projects and initiatives in youth issues known to a wider public and to spread the good experience gained in this work. For the first time the **AER Youth Summer School** takes place.

2008 AER launches the **Youth Regional Network**, Europe's first and only platform of regional youth councils, parliaments and organisations. The role of this platform is to ensure permanent exchange and cooperation between the youth representatives and politicians to make sure that the youth dimension is integrated into main areas of each AER Committee's work.

2010 In order to ensure that YRN functions as a genuine platform linking regional youth councils/parliaments/NGOs with AER and its activities, the AER General Assembly agrees to adopt the **Declaration on Enhanced Cooperation with YRN**, which marks the recognition of its role and commitment within AER, among AER member regions & at the European level.