



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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Press Release

AER Centurio 2000: Results

The evaluation seminar 2000 for the Centurio programme of the Assembly of European Regions took place on 6th December 2000 in Seinäjoki (FIN), bringing together both trainees from regional administrations in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe and coordinators from the host Regions in Western Europe.

Around 30 traineeships were included in the edition 2000 of Centurio with candidates from Hungary, Poland, Romania and Slovakia, representing ten countries. The "Centurio for the Balkans" branch of Centurio was launched for the first time by the AER this year. This branch organised around ten traineeships for high-ranking civil servants and political representatives from various Cantons in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

The Region of South Ostrobothnia accepted two trainees in Centurio 2000: Grzegorz Reizer from Woj. Podkarpackie (PL) and Angela Vörös from Hajdu Bihar (H) under the coordination of Mr Timo Urpala, Head of the Department of Regional Development. "We are delighted to be able to make, thanks to the AER, at our level, a real contribution for the Regions in applicant countries to prepare for joining the European Union or to develop democracy in the other countries in Central and Eastern Europe" stated Timo Urpala of the Regional Council. "We are proud of the interregional partnerships which are currently being set up with the two Regions" he concluded.

Centurio is an AER training programme which exists since 1994 and aims at the promotion of the exchange of experience and know-how between political representatives and civil servants of the Regions of Europe. Through this programme, the trainees become familiar with the organisation of regional administrations in Western Europe as well as the techniques and instruments of interregional and cross-border cooperation. They also gain further knowledge of the Community "acquis" and the development of cooperation projects. "We are delighted with the positive outcome of Centurio 2000, however we are disappointed that we were not able to accept more trainees due to insufficient host Regions" said Laura De Rose, Centurio Head within the AER. "In 2001, we hope that more Regions from Western Europe will participate in the programme which will celebrate its 8th edition and we hope that the scandinavian Regions will be particularly active next year" she added.

In order to strengthen Centurio, it was decided, at this meeting, to create a standing Centurio Committee which will be made up of former trainees and coordinators, the future "ambassadors" for Centurio throughout Europe, and chaired by one of the AER Vice Presidents. It was also decided to link future editions of Centurio and the Summer School, another AER training programme for the Regions of Central and Eastern Europe. This meeting was also the starting point for cooperation with the European Institute of Public Administration (EIPA/Barcelona) in the field of training and the repetition of Centurio in the Balkans in 2001.

It must not be forgotten that Centurio 2000 received funding from the European Commission.

The AER is the political movement of the Regions of Europe committed since 1985 to the promotion of regionalism in Europe and the development of interregional cooperation.

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