



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

**AER Committee C**

**“Regional Policies, Territorial planning, Infrastructures, Environment, Tourism”**

**Meeting in Florence (Toscana, I) on 5-6th June 2000**

**The future of European regional policy: AER Action Plan**

On 5th and 6th June 2000, the Committee C of the Assembly of European Regions met in Florence, Tuscany (I) at a meeting which was chaired by Mr Brian Greenslade (Devonshire, UK), the Committee President. The meeting was attended by representatives of the citizens of 57 Regions from 17 countries. The meeting considered the regional aspects of a number of key issues affecting the citizens of the European Continent (membership includes Regions both from inside and outside of the EU).

In the past, Committee C has succeeded in promoting the recognition of territorial cohesion as a fundamental principle of the construction of Europe which contributed to making sure that territorial cohesion was included in article 16 (former article 7d) of the European Union Treaty.

Today, the Committee C's main fields of action cover the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), Sustainable Rural Development, Regional transport and Communications, the European Spatial Development Perspective (ESDP) and Environment, without forgetting Regional twinning (or cooperation) and specific matters linked to INTERREG III. The Committee also takes pride in its contribution to the enlargement process.

A multi-national working group has been established in order to draft a report on the AER's perspective on the future of regional policies and European governance. The group is made up of Regions from Ireland, Italy, Great Britain, Norway, Finland and Romania among others. Their work will be completed by September 2000 (next Committee C meeting in Tulcea, 22<sup>nd</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2000), in order to present the AER's contribution to Commissioner Barnier before the adoption of the next EU report on social and economic cohesion.

Under the chairmanship of Mr Hjalmarsson (Norrbotten, Sweden), work is also progressing for the enhancement of the role and the future of regional airports, particularly regarding their contribution to regional economies and the reduction of peripheral areas. This work will include the development of a sub-TEN of regional air transport.

The Committee is developing a network on environment and tourism, coordinated by Västerbotten, which will collect case studies and enable Regions to share their good practices. The President of the Committee, Mr Brian Greenslade, will be seeking the involvement of the Regions in the consultation relating to the review of the transeuropean network and in particular the acknowledgement of the importance of the regional perspective in the development of these networks.

The Committee's President will also address the EU Commission, on behalf of members, in order to announce the AER's intention to actively cooperate in the observatory which was recently opened within INTERREG III and in which a number of AER members are interested. The AER will also try to cooperate in this field with other interregional organisations as already agreed in the Conference in Grado, Friuli-Venezia Giulia, I (April 1999).



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Finally the quality of the members' contributions and the direct relevance of the issues on the agenda for the Regions have greatly contributed to the ongoing process of the political relaunch of the AER.

This political movement which promotes regionalism and stimulates cooperation between regional authorities is providing to be, as President Martini of Tuscany (I) said, even more necessary in the interests of the Regions from all over the European Continent.

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