



## **AER QUARTERLY REPORT (OCTOBER – DECEMBER 2011)**

### **ECONOMIC AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE (1)**

#### **COHESION POLICY**

##### **EU Cohesion policy 2014+ : Summit of regions, cities and municipalities**

In response to the publication of the EC legislative proposals for the future cohesion policy and to the current budget proposals, a summit of European territories was held on 21 October in St. Pölten - Niederösterreich (A). Welcoming the draft cohesion regulations, regions, cities and their representative organisations agreed that there is still a lot to do to ensure that the full impact of cohesion policy is felt on the ground. Speaking for the first time ever with one voice, they adopted the "[St. Pölten Manifesto](#)", a declaration urging the Council of the EU and the European Parliament to support regional and local interests in cohesion policy. Contact: [e.delangle@aer.eu](mailto:e.delangle@aer.eu)

##### **Governing in partnership**

##### **Joint declaration of the 4 main European interregional organisations**

At the invitation of the Council of European Municipalities and Regions, the Presidents of the Assembly of European Regions, along with CEMR, CPMR and EUROCITIES, signed the Declaration of the Presidents "[Governing in Partnership – United to build a stronger Europe](#)" This Declaration was signed at the occasion of a CEMR conference on this very topic, held in Brussels on 12/12/201, where the AER President, Michèle SABBAN, participated. Commissioners Barroso and Hahn were also present at this event. Contact: [c.diegelmann@aer.eu](mailto:c.diegelmann@aer.eu)

#### **CLIMATE CHANGE & ENERGY**

On the occasion of the ENERGAIA Exhibition, at the invitation of the region of Languedoc-Roussillon (F), AER organised a meeting of the working group on climate change and energy. The conferences entitled "Regions at the forefront of investments for energy efficiency and renewable energies" aimed at exchanging regional experience regarding energy efficiency and renewable energies. Regional representatives discussed how regional energy strategies can contribute to economic development and how Structural Funds can be used for energy efficiency measures. Contact: [c.diegelmann@aer.eu](mailto:c.diegelmann@aer.eu)

More information: <http://www.aer.eu/events/regionaldevelopment/2011/meeting-of-the-aer-working-group-on-energy-and-climate-change.html>

#### **INNOVATION AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

##### **Second Dissemination Conference on the ECREIN+ INTERREG IVC Project**

ECREIN+ project partners gathered in the region of Malopolska from 7 to 9 November, to discuss how eco-tourism can contribute to an innovative and sustainable regional development strategy. About 100 participants attended the meeting. On this occasion, various issues were addressed such as the greening of enterprises' behaviour or the revitalisation of post-industrial areas thanks to sustainable tourism strategies. Contact: [e.delangle@aer.eu](mailto:e.delangle@aer.eu)

More information: <http://www.aer.eu/main-issues/economic-development/ecreinplus.html>

### **Meeting of the AER working group on regional airports**

On 13 December, the AER working group on regional airports met in the AER Brussels office. The aim of the meeting was the presentation of a first draft of a study on "The role of regional airports in the future transportation system", commissioned by the region of Østfold (N). AER members discussed with the authors of the study from "seo economic research". Contact: [c.diegelmann@aer.eu](mailto:c.diegelmann@aer.eu).

More information: <http://www.aer.eu/events/regionaldevelopment/2011/wg-airports-study.html>

### **ENTREDI Final Conference and meeting of the AER working group on entrepreneurship and innovation**

On 14 and 15 November, members of the AER working group on entrepreneurship and innovation participated in the final conference of the INTERREG IV C project PRESERVE. The conference was preceded by a meeting of the working group, where the members discussed how they can further use the outcomes of the ENTREDI project, especially SWOT analysis to map regional business start-up policy. Contact: [c.diegelmann@aer.eu](mailto:c.diegelmann@aer.eu)

## **COMMON AGRICULTURAL POLICY AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT**

### **Meeting of the AER working group on Agriculture and rural development**

On 28/11/2011, the working group on Agriculture and rural development met in Brussels to discuss the European Commission's legislative proposals on the future CAP. A draft statement was issued, which was sent to the whole group for discussion and amendments. More information: <http://www.aer.eu/main-issues/agriculture-rural-development/working-group-on-rural-development.html> Contact: [e.delangle@aer.eu](mailto:e.delangle@aer.eu)

## **SUSTAINABLE TOURISM**

### **PRESERVE**

On 20-21 October, the Final Conference of the PRESERVE INTERREG IVC project took place in Sienna (Toscana-IT), in presence of Ms SABBAN, AER President, and Håkan SANDGREN, AER Committee 1 President. The "Preserve Best Practices" publication, a sample of successful examples of sustainable tourism projects, was unveiled at this occasion.

On 7 November, PRESERVE partners organised a presentation of the project achievements and some "hidden treasures" from the partner regions at the Committee of the Regions in Brussels.

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**ACTIVE AND HEALTHY AGEING****Getting ready for European Year 2012**

2012 will be dedicated to Active Ageing and Intergenerational Solidarity. This represents an opportunity to raise awareness about the changes that need to be made and the policies that work when it comes to promoting active ageing. European level organisations have created a coalition to better coordinate activities during this year and share expertise. AER has joined this coalition to promote the role and needs of the regions and to bring expertise in this area to its members.

The identification of active and healthy ageing as a key priority for AER Committee 2 for 2012-2013 reflects AER's commitment to this topic. In the beginning of 2012, AER will launch a survey on AER member regions' activities on Demographic Change and Active ageing. This survey will gather good practices from the regions in the field of demographic change and identify the main challenges regions are facing.

All AER members are invited to participate to the AER conference "Perspectives on ageing" organised by the region of North Karelia (FIN) and in cooperation with other stakeholders, that will discuss how regions can tackle the health and long-term care aspects of ageing.

For further information on this event and to register:

<http://www.aer.eu/events/health-social/2012/ageingperspectives.html>

Contact: Camille Bullo, Policy Coordinator, [c.bullo@aer.eu](mailto:c.bullo@aer.eu); +33 3 68 46 00 87

**EQUAL EUROPE FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES****Regional implementation strategies are essential**

During the seminar held on 20<sup>th</sup> September in La Rochelle (Poitou-Charentes-F), member regions discussed the added value of developing a regional strategy for the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities. Such strategies must be developed in close cooperation with the disability movement and must encompass all relevant departments within the regional and local authorities, as well as all other local stakeholders. Three AER members (Poitou-Charentes-F, Värmland-S and Hessen-D) presented how and why their region developed an implementation strategy, the obstacles they encountered and how they overcame these.

All presentations and the conclusions of the meeting are available at:

<http://www.aer.eu/events/health-social/2011/agenda-22-and-regional-disabilities-strategies.html>

**AER project on disability issues**

The members of the AER Working group meeting on 21<sup>st</sup> September further developed the project concept to address the lack of awareness and knowledge of the UN Convention on the rights of people with disabilities. This project will support participating regions to develop education and awareness campaigns around the UN Convention targeting regional politicians and officers within the regions. The aim of this project is to further deploy the UN Convention in the regions by training key politicians and officers to take the disability agenda forward in their respective work areas.

We expect to submit this project for EC-cofinancing under the current call of the Grundtvic programme (deadline 2 February 2012).

For further information and to join, please contact: [c.meschede@aer.eu](mailto:c.meschede@aer.eu); +33 3 88 22 74 35

**E-HEALTH****Building Capacity for the regions**

Adopt a clear vision, develop sufficient IT infrastructure and stay away from technology

fascination: these are some of the recommendations made during the first AER capacity-building workshop on e-health that took place in Covasna (RO) on 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2011. This pilot event was the first in a series of workshops AER is organising to support regions in the implementation of e-health policies and tools.

All presentations and the conclusions of the meeting are available at:

<http://www.aer.eu/events/health-social/2011/building-ehealth-capacity.html>

Contact: Camille Bullo, Policy Coordinator, [c.bullo@aer.eu](mailto:c.bullo@aer.eu); +33 3 68 46 00 87

Working with all stakeholders is also a precondition to the successful realisation of e-health. To this end, AER regularly meets with representatives from the industry and health professionals' organisations to discuss the priorities of each organisation in the field of e-health, to identify possible synergies and to explore the possibility of cooperation.

## EMERGENCY PLANNING

### **FLINKMAN Final Conference**

The closing conference of the FLINKMAN project took place in Thessaloniki (GR) on 9<sup>th</sup> December. This 2-year project, co-financed under the European Civil Protection Financial Instrument, aimed to improve flood risk management by developing a framework for cooperation among all players involved in flood management: politicians, agencies, experts and citizens. The conclusions of the project show that the most successful plans are those where all stakeholders are engaged early on in the process.

AER's role was to disseminate the knowledge generated by the member regions active in the project; to this end, the AER Summer 2011 Thematic Dossier was dedicated how regions tackle natural disasters – available [here](#).

The end of this project also marks the conclusion of AER's Emergency Planning Network, which operated during 2007-2009 and focused on how European regions can develop joint strategies and share their resources when facing emergencies.

Contact: Claudia Meschede, Policy Coordinator, [c.meschede@aer.eu](mailto:c.meschede@aer.eu); +33 3 88 22 74 35

### **Regular Committee 2 updates**

Want to receive regular updates on Committee 2 work and policy developments? Register for the Committee 2 newsletter- "What's new, Committee 2?" (contact: [c.bullo@aer.eu](mailto:c.bullo@aer.eu)). All editions are also available online: <http://www.aer.eu/about-aer/committee-2-social-policy-and-public-health/newsletter-of-committee-2.html>

## STANDING COMMITTEE ON EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

### **STANDING UP FOR EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IN AER**

In 2011, the AER Standing Committee on Equal Opportunities (SCEO) has unfortunately not had the capacity to reach its full potential and implement its 2011 work programme, which foresaw two own events, along with increased cooperation with the other AER bodies, and a survey of regional competences in equal opportunities.

In September 2011 Monica Carlsson, President of the AER Standing Committee on Equal Opportunities (Norrbotten, S) presented a declaration of the SCEO requesting the allocation of human resources within the AER Secretariat to allow it to fulfil the mission it was given by the AER General Assembly that created the Standing Committee in Belfort in November 2009.

This declaration was amended by the AER Bureau, meeting 29-30 September 2011, and was unanimously adopted by the AER General Assembly. It now calls on the new AER Secretary General to present proposals for the allocation of staff in the AER Secretariat at the first Bureau meeting in 2012.

### **A look into the future**

The AER SCEO proposes to focus on the following themes in 2012:

#### **1/ Draft an AER Inclusion Strategy**

Following the discussions in the AER 2011 General Assembly (Azores, 24-25 November 2011) regarding the development of an AER action plan on Roma Inclusion and the need for a broader strategy on inclusion issues within AER, SCEO will take the lead in developing an AER Inclusion strategy for all. Roma inclusion will be an important aspect of this strategy, but its scope will be broader and cover inclusion of all persons, irrespective of nationality, sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation.

This strategy will be developed based on the knowledge and experience of all AER member regions. SCEO will liaise with the other AER bodies to ensure that it covers all policy areas in which AER is active and that all AER members engage in its implementation, both within AER and in the regions.

#### **2/ Review regional competences in the field of equal opportunities**

Regional competences in the field of equal opportunities vary, with some regions having powers in a wide range of areas (gender equality, disability, youth, elderly) while others adopting a more limited approach. Some regions implement equal opportunities policies without having a direct competence in the field. AER SCEO will map regional competences and actions in this field, to create a basis for supporting exchange of knowledge and expertise among members in this area.

#### **3/ Continue to mainstream equal opportunities across the work of all AER bodies**

Contribute the equal opportunities perspective to the events and policy positions of the other AER bodies.

For further information on any of the above, please contact: Ourania Georgoutsakou, Senior Policy Coordinator, AER Social Policy and Public Health Committee, [g.ourania@aer.eu](mailto:g.ourania@aer.eu); +32 2 880 95 65

## **CULTURE, EDUCATION AND TRAINING, YOUTH AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION**

### **COMMITTEE (3)**

#### **CULTURE**

#### **Members give support to AER's activity in the field of culture and health**

AER's Declaration on Culture and Health, which had been prepared and voted on by our Istanbul conference in September, has received massive support from members at the General Assembly in Ponta Delgada. Committees 2 and 3 thus received the mandate not only to raise awareness about the issue but also to promote culture and health initiatives in European and regional policies and to act as a catalyst for cooperation in this field.

AER used the structured dialogue meeting organised on 15 December on the European Commission's work programme for 2012 as a starting point in order to submit the topic to the Commission. Further contacts will be sought with the Commission services in the follow-up to that

encounter.

The declaration, as adopted by the AER General Assembly, is available at: <http://www.aer.eu/events/committee-3-culture-education-interregional-cooperation/2011/cult-health.html>

### **AER contributes to the development of Roma integration strategies**

Based on the outline for a 'Pan-European Roma Strategy' which had been introduced by the Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén County Government (H) and presented for the first time at the last Committee 3 meeting in September in Istanbul, the AER General Assembly in Ponta Delgada endorsed the plans to develop an Action Plan for Roma Inclusion at the level of AER. This plan is supposed to deal in priority with the areas of economy and employment, education, health and housing. Committee 3, which was originally leading on this issue might hand over this dossier to the Standing Committee on Equal Opportunities which has recognised this issue as a part of its inclusion strategy which will be elaborated in 2012. Whoever will be leading on the issue will have to ensure that the action plan is developed into all AER Committees.

Following the General Assembly, Committee 3 represented AER at the first meeting of the Core Group for the launching of the European Alliance of Cities and Regions for Roma Inclusion. This meeting, which took place on 9 December at the initiative of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities, was a follow up to the Summit of Mayors on Roma which took place in September 2011. The Core Group is responsible for defining the goals and means of the aforementioned Alliance.

The declaration and documents in relation to the AER Action Plan are available at: <http://www.aer.eu/events/governing-bodies/2011/general-assembly-2011.html>

## **EDUCATION & TRAINING**

### **Intermediary Conference on Youth Entrepreneurship Education Strategies (YES) coming up**

Partners of the YES project will use the opportunity of their next working meeting to organise the intermediary project conference which will take place on 8 February in Pori (FIN). Ahead of the conference, they have established a list of 24 best practices, both at policy and operational level. These best practices witness effective and innovative approaches to entrepreneurship education and were selected following surveys and investigations in the regions. The partners take pride in showcasing them on the occasion of the conference.

For further information on the project and the conference, please go to the following link: <http://www.young-entrepreneurs.eu/> or contact Doris MATERNE, [d.materne@aer.eu](mailto:d.materne@ aer.eu), Tel. +33 3 88 22 74 43.

## **YOUTH**

### **AER Peer Review "Promoting Youth Employment" – Step 2**

The Azores (P) hosted the second AER Peer Review on youth employment, organised in the context of the Promoting Youth Employment (PYE) project. PYE is an intensive and innovative one-year project, funded by the EU PROGRESS programme. Its aim is to design new youth employment policies and improve existing strategies in four AER member regions: the Azores (P), Krapina-Zagorje (HR), Hampshire (UK) and Vojvodina (SRB). The project will result in 4 regional Youth Employment Action Plans as well as a compilation of good practices and universal policy pointers which will be useful for all AER members.

General information on PYE and partner regions & calendar of events: <http://www.aer.eu/main->

[issues/youth/promoting-youth-employment-pye.html](http://www.aer.eu/main-issues/youth/promoting-youth-employment-pye.html)

The Peer Review in the Azores: <http://www.aer.eu/main-issues/youth/promoting-youth-employment-pye.html>

### **Europe's most youth-friendly region: the MYFER Award goes to...**

...the region of Catalunya (E), which won the AER Most Youth Friendly European Region (MYFER) Award 2011 on Social Inclusion of Youth with Disabilities. The international jury was particularly impressed with a strong co-operation set up between a wide range of stakeholders, ranging from Catalunya's Department of Social Welfare and Family to various ministries (education, employment), resulting in a comprehensive policy designed to support 38 997 young Catalans with disabilities. The jury also awarded Dolnoslaskie (PL) with the 2011 MYFER Special Prize in recognition of the political will of the region to help youth with disabilities get into formal education systems, and the inscription of this aim in the "Development Strategy of the Lower Silesia Region by 2020".

More information about the winners & other participants: <http://www.aer.eu/main-issues/youth/most-youth-friendly-european-region-award/competition-2011.html>

### **AER Youth Regional Network (YRN): Fall Plenary Session & Seminar on Eastern Partnership**

During the YRN Plenary held on 27 October 2011 in Wroclaw, Lower Silesia (PL), over 60 young people from more than 20 regions and 15 countries met to discuss their work plan for 2012 and to elect the YRN Presidium. On that occasion, the YRN organised a Seminar on the Eastern Partnership, as a synergy with the AER Standing Committee on Institutional Affairs.

More information about the meeting & results of YRN Presidential elections: <http://www.aer.eu/events/committee-3-culture-education-interregional-cooperation/2011/aer-youth-regional-network-fall-plenary-seminar-on-eastern-partnership.html>

## **INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION**

### **North East Asia Regional Governments Association (NEAR)**

An AER delegation led by President Michèle Sabban was invited by NEAR as guest of honour, representing Europe at the NEAR General Assembly on 1st November in Seoul (Korea). Political representatives from Norrbotten (S), Syddanmark (DK), Lower Silesia (P) and Ile de France (F) met their counterparts from Korea, China, Japan, Russia and Mongolia. AER participants were invited to participate in round tables on Environment, Energy and Transport policies. This first contact was considered by both parties to be very positive and both organisations agreed to reiterate the experience in 2012. AER has already been invited for the 2012 NEAR General Assembly which will take place on 24-27 July in the autonomous region of Ningxia Hui (China). Interested AER political representatives will be asked to come with some of their regional entrepreneurs. NEAR will be informed of the type of enterprises that will join the delegation and will match these skills with their own regional companies in order to facilitate the development of Euro-Asian commercial links. Political and commercial cooperation will hopefully be strengthened by this initiative.

For further information, please contact the secretariat of Committee 3 (Mathieu Mori, Senior Policy coordinator, [m.mori@aer.eu](mailto:m.mori@aer.eu), Tel./Fax +33 (0)3 88 22 74 47; Doris Materne, Policy coordinator, [d.materne@aer.eu](mailto:d.materne@aer.eu), Tel./Fax +33 (0)3 88 22 74 43; Justyna Hejman, Youth & Citizenship Officer, [j.hejman@aer.eu](mailto:j.hejman@aer.eu), Tel./Fax +33 (0)3 88 22 74 46.



## EURODYSSEY

The Eurodyssey Steering Committee meeting on 9 & 10 November in Barcelona was for all partners the opportunity to get a glimpse of the improvements that have been introduced in the programme's website since it went online and to get further training.

Following the discussions during the Forum in Aosta in September and the positive feedback given by a European Commission representative, a specific working group continued to prepare an application in the framework of Leonardo in view of the 2012 deadline. The project will aim not only at increasing the number of participating regions in the Eurodyssey programme, but also seek to develop a quality approach and label.

For further information, please go to the Eurodyssey website: <http://www.eurodyssee.eu/>, or contact André Craveiro, Operational coordinator of the Eurodyssey programme, [andre.LM.craveiro@azores.gov.pt](mailto:andre.LM.craveiro@azores.gov.pt), Tel. +351/296/ 30 80 23, or Doris Materne, Policy coordinator, [d.materne@aer.eu](mailto:d.materne@aer.eu), Tel./Fax +33 (0)3 88 22 74 43

## SUMMER SCHOOLS

The Summer School Organising Committee took advantage of the General Assembly in order to visit the venues for the Summer School 2012 that will take place in Ponta Delgada (Azores/P) and to hold a preparatory meeting.

On this occasion, the Organising Committee passed in review the SS 2011, examined the final accounts and exchanged on the lessons learnt. These will serve as a basis for the SS 2012, for which the tentative dates have been settled to 20<sup>th</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup> August. The big orientation for the topic will be creativity and innovation.

The Organising Committee also got first expressions of interest with regard to the potential venue of 2013.

For further information: <http://aersummerschool.nl> or please contact the secretariat of Committee 3 (Mathieu Mori, Senior Policy coordinator, [m.mori@aer.eu](mailto:m.mori@aer.eu), Tel./Fax +33 (0)3 88 22 74 47; Doris Materne, Policy coordinator, [d.materne@aer.eu](mailto:d.materne@aer.eu), Tel./Fax +33 (0)3 88 22 74 43; Justyna Hejman, Youth & Citizenship Officer, [j.hejman@aer.eu](mailto:j.hejman@aer.eu), Tel./Fax +33 (0)3 88 22 74 46).

## Standing committee on Institutional affairs

### Regionalism in Europe

The Standing Committee closely followed the current debates about the territorial reform in Hungary. On 21 November, the Hungarian National Parliament approved the National Government's proposal for modification of the Act of Self-Governments. According to this from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2012 all educational, social, health-care and cultural institutions presently under the supervision of the County Governments will be handed-over to the County Government Offices.

The proposal of the National Government also foresees that the Regional Development Councils (RDC - non-elected) will cease to operate. All tasks and responsibilities of the RDC-s will be handed-over to the elected County Assemblies, the Intermediate Bodies (IB) of the Regional Operative Programs (ROP) would be the administrations of the County Governments. Should these amendments also be adopted by the National Parliament in the course of 2012, they might come into force from January 2013.

These changes and their impact on policy implementation in Hungary, as well as the future management of EU funds, are outlined in the updated version of the AER regionalism report for Hungary, available under :

<http://www.aer.eu/main-issues/regional-democracy/aer-regionalism-report/aer-regionalism-report->

[by-country.html](#)

The Standing COmmittee also monitored the debates over territorial reforms in Romania, which is at the heart of the political debates in the country, before next year's general elections. More information under :

<http://www.aer.eu/main-issues/regional-democracy/aer-regionalism-report.html>

### Macro-regions

The development and implementation of macro-regions on European level has become an important feature when discussing the design and implementation of cohesion policy and other territorial policies. AER therefore organised a breakfast briefing with Mr. Olivier Baudelet, representative from the European Commission, DG Regio and in charge of implementing the Danube Strategy. This meeting allowed members to find out more about current development policies, but also to debate the relevance and challenges of macro-regions. Currently, there are two macro-regions which the European Council has asked the European Commission to implement: the Baltic Sea strategy and the Danube Strategy. Whether new strategies will be developed depends on the decisions of the member states and the first evaluation report of the Baltic Sea Strategy available from 2013 onwards. AER is monitoring the developments of the macro-regions concept and making sure that the voice and interest of the regions is fully taken into account.

### Neighbourhood policy

On 24 November 2011 in Ponta Delgada, the AER General Assembly adopted the position on future ENP prepared by the Standing Committee Institutional Affairs. The events in Europe's Southern Neighbourhood in the Spring shed new light on the EU's review of its Neighbourhood policy. In its position, AER asks for an **effective European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP)**, based on the principles of multilevel governance and partnership, with Regions as key actors. This policy should, in our eyes, target the South and the East, and **foster the process of decentralisation** in relevant countries. A breakfast briefing on ENP and the involvement of Regions will take place on 13 December in Brussels.

This position, which completes the AER position on the Black Sea (Batumi Declaration) adopted in April, is available under:

<http://www.aer.eu/main-issues/interregional-and-international-cooperation/european-neighbourhood-policy.html>

The Polish Presidency of the EU was an opportunity for our Committee to deal with another aspect of future ENP - the issue of **youth mobility under the Eastern Partnership**. The Lower Silesia region (PL) was host to the AER seminar on the Eastern Partnership (EaP): "Youth Mobility – Going East!", which was organised on 28 October in Wroclaw. During the seminar nearly 70 members of the AER Youth Regional Network (YRN) discussed the existing and arising opportunities for youth, in the framework of the current European Neighbourhood Policy reform. International speakers included Members of the European Parliament, representatives of the European Commission, AER member regions from the EaP countries and international think-tanks. As a result of the discussions, the YRN members adopted the Wroclaw Declaration, calling regional and national stakeholders to ensure that the regional youth mobility programmes remain inclusive and accessible to all young people, irrespective of their geographical background.

The Wroclaw Declaration can be downloaded under:

<http://www.aer.eu/en/events/standing-committee-on-institutional-affairs/2011/eapseminarpoland.html>

### Europe 2020 - REALM project

Hampshire County Council, together with the AER and Brussels Education Services (BES) are project partners of a recently awarded Grundtvig project called: Regional Adult Learning Multipliers



and the Europe 2020 Flagship Initiatives (REALM). The project was officially launched on 29<sup>th</sup> November 2011 in Brussels by Cllr. Keith MANS (Executive Member for Communities and International Relations, Hampshire County Council). REALM Project, a 12 month training and awareness raising programme for **regional adult learning** fonctionnaires focusing on the **Europe2020 Strategy's Flagship Initiatives**.

This project will deliver **four seminars during 2012** addressing each of the seven flagship initiatives and the European Year 2012 and their inter-relationship to adult learning in regions of the EU. For further information, please check following website:

<http://www.aer.eu/main-issues/future-of-europe/europe-2020-realm.html>

<http://www.realm-project.eu>

### **Priorities 2012**

The priorities and draft programme of the Standing Committee for 2012 were adopted at the General Assembly in Ponta Delgada are available under:

<http://www.aer.eu/about-aer/standing-committee-on-institutional-affairs.html>

## **AER BRUSSELS OFFICE**

### **OFFERING AER MEMBERS THE LATEST IN BRUSSELS**

#### **AER Daily Monitoring**

A key mission of the AER Brussels office is to regularly liaise with our members' Brussels representation offices and to keep them up to date with the latest developments in the EU and the regions.

To this end, the AER Brussels office sends out to members a Daily Monitoring of news articles on the various policy areas AER is active in.

#### **AER Breakfast Briefings**

We also organise AER Breakfast Briefings – this is a series of monthly events addressed to members' Brussels offices that:

- ▶ Provide an opportunity for AER members' Brussels officers to liaise with each other in an informal manner
- ▶ Inform them about the latest developments in specific policy and programme areas and allow them to speak directly with EU representatives working in these areas

#### **Europe's Macro-regions - 17 November 2011**

Macro-regions were developed in the middle of the current programming period, in order to facilitate and improve cooperation in specific geographical areas taking into account the specific territorial characteristics and historical links of a wider territory. The Baltic Sea strategy set the example of how a macro-regional strategy could look like, the Danube strategy followed soon after together with many other proposals for macro-regional strategies such as the Adriatic-Ionian macro-region. AER organised a Breakfast Briefing to allow regional representatives to learn more about this issue and to discuss with the European Commission how such strategies can bring an added value to the regions and to interregional cooperation.

#### **Europe's Neighbourhood Policy Review - 13 December 2011**

In 2010 the European Commission started a process of reviewing the current ENP and its financial

instruments. On 25 of May 2011, in the midst of the events of the Arab Spring, it published a Communication setting out its vision and strategy on how the ENP should work and operate in the future. This Breakfast Briefing brought together representatives from the regions to discuss the issue with the European Commission what the new approach consists of, what role is foreseen for the regions and how to increase participation of regions not only as regards cross-border cooperation, but from across Europe in order to strengthen regionalism, subsidiarity and grass-roots participation in Europe's neighbourhood.

#### REALM project launch - 29 November 2011

Hampshire County Council, together with the AER and Brussels Education Services (BES) are partners in the project 'Regional Adult Learning Multipliers and the Europe 2020 Flagship Initiatives' (REALM), which was recently awarded EC co-financing under the Grundtvig programme. The project was officially launched with a *Lunch Briefing*, an event similar in format to the AER Breakfast Briefings. Participants learned of the latest developments in the European Innovation Partnership on Active and Healthy Ageing and discussed with the Commission what priorities this action foresees and how regions can get involved.

Participants were also briefed on the REALM project, a 12 month training and awareness-raising programme for regional adult learning officers focusing on the Europe2020 Strategy's Flagship Initiatives. This project will deliver four seminars during 2012 addressing each of the seven flagship initiatives and the European Year 2012 and their inter-relationship to adult learning in regions of the EU. A limited number of places are available regions to join the project's seminars in Brussels on a travel paid basis. Regions interested in taking this opportunity should contact the Secretariat ([r.kramer@aer.eu](mailto:r.kramer@aer.eu); +32 2 880 9563)

Further details available at: <http://www.aer.eu/events/standing-committee-on-institutional-affairs/2011/aerlunchbriefingrealm.html>

For further information on AER Breakfast Briefings and to view upcoming events: <http://www.aer.eu/events/aer-breakfast-briefings/2011.html> Contact: Regine Kramer, Policy Coordinator, [r.kramer@aer.eu](mailto:r.kramer@aer.eu); +32 2 880 9563

#### **PROMOTING AER IN BRUSSELS**

The AER Brussels office regularly receives delegations from regions to inform them about AER's work and identify how the region can contribute to AER and profit from membership. In the last 3 months we have met and welcomed representatives from 10 different regions: Alsace (F), Olomouc (CZ), Østfold (N), Vojvodina (SRB), Lodz (PL), Vinnytsia (FIN), Pomorskie (PL), Flevoland (NL), Jönköping (S), Noord-Brabant (NL). The office also has an ambassadorial role and introduces non-member regions to AER.

If you are interested in visiting the AER Brussels office, please contact us!  
Contact: [aer.brussels@aer.eu](mailto:aer.brussels@aer.eu); +32 2 880 95 60

Finally, the AER Brussels office has a key role in liaising with EU institutions in Brussels to promote AER members' views and to ensure AER is up to date on the latest policy developments in the EU. We often meet with policy officers from the various EU institutions and we also participate to consultations and meetings organised by the European Commission, the European Parliament and the Committee of the Regions.



## FORTHCOMING EVENTS

### ECONOMIC AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE (1)

Date	Location	Event
20-21 March 2012	Denizli (TR)	Joint Committee 1, SCEO and Committee 3 Presidium meeting
25-27 April	Jönköping (S)	Committee 1 plenary meeting

### SOCIAL POLICY AND PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE (2)

Date	Location	Event
18-19 January	Copenhagen (DK)	Launch of European Year 2012 on Active Ageing and Intergenerational Solidarity
19 March	Joensuu, North Karelia (FIN)	AER Committee 2 Plenary Session
20-21 March	Joensuu, North Karelia (FIN)	Conference on "Perspectives on Ageing" and study visits
7-9 May	Copenhagen (DK)	Interministerial Conference on e-health and World of Health IT Conference
19-20 June	Luleå, Norrbotten (S)	Artic Light e-he@lth Conference

### CULTURE, EDUCATION AND TRAINING, YOUTH AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION COMMITTEE (3)

Date	Location	Event
23-24 January	Tunis (Tunisia)	Meeting with the new government and First meeting of the Tunisia Steering Group
30 January	Bari (I)	ARLEM General Assembly
30 January-3 February	Krapina Zagorje (HR)	PYE Peer Review
8-10 February	Pori (FIN)	YES Intermediary Conference
22 February	Strasbourg (F)	Core Group meeting on Roma
21 March	Edirne (TR)	Joint Presidium Meeting with Com1 and SCEO
26-30 March	Hampshire (UK)	PYE Peer Review
22 May	Brussels (B)	PYE Steering Group meeting
23 May	Brussels (B)	PYE Final Conference
End of May (tbc)	Vienna (A)	Committee 3 Spring Plenary – Joint Conference – YRN Plenary meeting
24-27 July	Ningxia Hui (China)	NEAR General Assembly
Mid September (tbc)	Västernorrland (S)	Committee 3 Spring Plenary
First semester (tbc)	Tbc	Training Academy on youth funding (EU and EAP)
Second semester (tbc)	Albania	Training Academy for cultural managers

### Eurodyssey

<b>Date</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Event</b>
6-7 February	Paris (F)	Eurodyssey Steering Committee
End of September (tbc)	Tbc	Eurodyssey Forum

### Summer School

<b>Date</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Event</b>
2 <sup>nd</sup> half of February	Brussels (B)	Summer School Organising Committee
20-25 August (tbc)	Ponta Delgada (P)	Summer School 2012