



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

Strasbourg, 9th October 2000

Press Release

AER Conference:

"Regions and Culture in the Europe of tomorrow"

Nearly 150 regional representatives charged with culture from twenty odd countries are expected, at the invitation of Mr Claude Ruey, State Councillor for the Canton of Vaud (CH) and AER Vice-President, on **25th and 26th October 2000 in Nyon** at a Conference organised by the Assembly of European Regions on the theme of: *"The Responsibilities and Competences of the Regions in the field of culture in the Europe of tomorrow"*.

The aim of this Conference is to analyse the impact of the introduction of qualified majority voting on Regional autonomy and to adopt a joint position for the Regions of Europe in view of the upcoming Intergovernmental Conference (IGC). The current system of unanimous voting (Art.151, EC Treaty) encourages the application of the highly valued notion of subsidiarity in the Regions of Europe due to the action of EU institutions being limited to the support of the independent cultural policies of the member States, whilst respecting the national and regional diversity of these States. A change in this system could go against the principle of respecting national identity (Art. 3, EC Treaty) and the regional identities which create it. It could also leave the door open to the globalisation of cultural policies and to the centralisation of European decision-making at the expense of regional authorities in particular. It is therefore of primordial importance that regional decision-makers and actors in the field of culture express themselves on the role of the Regions in the drawing up of cultural policies in Europe in order to be able to influence future European perspectives.

The Conference also aims to evaluate the impact of EU cultural programmes on cultural policies at regional level. It will also be the occasion to present the results of a survey undertaken by the AER on the cultural initiatives of the Regions and interregional cooperation programmes.

Other AER meetings are planned for this week in Nyon:

Culture, Education and Training, Youth, Media and Sport Committee on 24th October

Institutional Affairs Committee on 26th October

Executive Bureau of the AER on 27th October, this meeting will prepare other AER political positions in view of the IGC (European Council in Nice, 7-9th December 2000) and the AER General Assembly (Seinäjoki, 7th and 8th December 2000).

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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