



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

Sopron, 30th November 2001

Press Release

17th AER General Assembly: Main outcome

320 representatives from the Regions of 25 European countries met at the first ever AER General Assembly in a Central and Eastern European accession country on 29-30th November 2001, Sopron, Hungary.

Participants took part in discussion on enlargement, new European Governance and the need to strengthen regionalism especially in Central and Eastern Europe. A round table allowed views and experience to be exchanged between the Regions in applicant countries, EU Regions and Regions which will find themselves located on the future periphery of the Union.

Following the debates, the 250 member Regions of the AER adopted the enclosed "Sopron Declaration".

In addition to other decisions concerning regular AER initiatives, the following was decided upon:

- Nomination of Nordland (N) as the "Most Youth-friendly Region", a new AER initiative; Thüringen (D) and Timis (RO) both received a Prize of Recognition in runners up position (*see separate Press release*);
- Election of Mr Chistoph E Palmer, State Minister for Baden-Württemberg (D), as President of the AER Institutional Affairs Committee and of Mr Klaus Klipp as AER Secretary General (*see separate Press release*);

"Our decision to hold the General Assembly in Sopron takes the current developments in Europe into account" stated Liese Prokop. "The Regions - within the EU and in accession countries – need to be consulted by the European Commission and their national Governments when decisions are made concerning enlargement. Regional transport, spatial planning, waste management, agricultural policy, youth policy or the integration of minorities are just a few areas where Regions are heavily effected by EU policy" she added.

"I would also like to thank the President of Győr-Moson-Sopron, Mr Ferenc Ivanics, and his team for being a great host for this General Assembly and for making sure that the organisation of our conference was perfect" concluded Mrs Liese Prokop.

Created in 1985, the AER is a political organisation of the Regions in Europe and the speaker for their interests at European and International level. Its mission: bring together the regions of Europe and allow them to be, together, actors in the construction of Europe and European integration. The AER currently has 250 member regions from 25 European countries and 12 interregional organisations. The AER headquarters are in Strasbourg (F).

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