



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

The AER working for equal opportunities for men and women

The annual Conference of the working group of the Assembly of European Regions (AER) responsible for equal opportunities for men and women took place on 2nd November 2001 in Tällberg (Dalarna, Sweden). Three issues were on the agenda for this working session which was chaired by Mrs Carin Palmcrantz, First Vice-President of the County Council of Dalarna: the role of men in gaining greater gender equality, trafficking in women from Eastern and Central Europe and domestic violence.

The meeting allowed delegates from the Regions of Europe to discuss their experience and good practices in the presence of representatives from the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe and the International Office for Migration.

A final declaration was adopted and will be submitted to the AER General Assembly on 29th and 30th November 2001 in Sopron (Hungary). This text invites the Regions of Europe to actively and political practice gender quality within their political and administrative bodies whilst highlighting mens' roles. "*This is a society-wide problem which does not affect women only*" states the final declaration whilst condemning the trafficking of women from Eastern and Central Europe and declaring that "*it is thanks to the existance of a organised market and demand for prostitution in Western Europe that these women, hounded by poverty, are able to turn to this hideous trafficking which is both possible and profitable*". Finally, the declaration feels that domestic violence should not be considered as a private problem, but as a social one which requires action by the social services in the Regions.

Prior to this meeting, the working group held a working lunch in the company of Mrs Margareta Winberg, Swedish Minister for gender equality. This lunch-debate was held on 1st in Stockholm at the Swedish Government headquarters and allowed the delegates from the Regions of Europe attending this meeting to receive information on the initiatives taken by Sweden concerning gender equality.

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: to bring together the Regions of Europe and to allow them to be, together, actors in the construction of Europe and European integration. The AER currently has 250 member Regions from 25 countries as well as 12 interregional organisations

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