



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

Regional policy (Original in French)
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Press Release

**What cohesion policy for an enlarged Europe?
AER European Conference - 14th -15th November 2002 - Pécs, Baranya, Hungary**

What objectives for the future cohesion policy? How to more efficiently support the regional policies of the Regions and to encourage their sustainable development? What lessons can be learnt from the current experience of the Regions in terms of structural fund management? How to set up a new type of governance including the Regions, States and the European Union?

Over 220 regional Presidents, Ministers and politicians in charge of regional development are expected at the AER Conference in Pécs whose main objective is to answer these few essential questions and to define the project of the Regions for a new European cohesion and regional development policy. The Conference also aims to promote innovative regional practices in favour of sustainable development, the sharing of know-how and the exchange of experience with Regions in future European Union (EU) member states.

Many Regions contributed to the preparation of this debate by participating in the discussion forum launched by the AER at the beginning of the year. Relevant proposals have already been put forward regarding the objectives of the new regional policy. This should continue to ensure economic, social and territorial cohesion while guaranteeing support for all lesser-developed European Regions. To this end, this policy should remain one of the EU's main objectives. In fact, the Regions are against any attempt to "renationalise" this policy.

The new regional policy must also be defined with increased coordination with other cohesion related EU policies as a major concern while guaranteeing the implementation of the principles of subsidiarity and partnership. This must be based on real collaboration between the EU, the States and the Regions and contribute significantly to the development of interregional, cross-border and transnational cooperation.

The AER Conference will assist in opening up a dialogue and collaboration in this field between the representatives of the European institutions, States and Regions. Luciano Caveri, President of the European Parliament's Committee on Regional policies, Transport and Tourism and Jean-Charles Leygues, Director of the Directorate General on Regional policy within the European Commission will join speakers at the Conference as well as representatives of national authorities from various European countries.

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 has 250 member Regions and 12 member interregional organisations. The AER headquarters are in Strasbourg (F).

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