



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

Press release

Does the Draft European Constitutional Treaty meet the expectations of the regions?

Brussels, 4th April 2003

With the theme – Governance closer to the citizens of an enlarged Europe – the political Bureau of the Assembly of European Regions (AER), which brings 50 regional representatives from 28 countries together, is meeting today to examine the first draft articles of the Constitutional Treaty. While acknowledging the progress the Convention has made in creating the current draft articles, the Bureau reiterates the regional demand for the integration in the future Constitutional Treaty of four amendment proposals of the AER.

- Regional identity and local and cultural diversity

"We welcome the inclusion of the notion of "local and regional identity" in article 9, but we nonetheless demand that it be amongst the basic principles of the Union, thus within the first articles of the Treaty", stated Liese Prokop, AER President, "Even though cultural diversity is referred to in article 3, we nonetheless feel it must also be integrated within the basic values of the Union", she added.

- The Principle of Subsidiarity

The principle of subsidiarity as proposed in article 8 does not meet our demands as it does not extend to the regional level. Mr. Peter Straub, President of the Institutional Committee of the AER, argued for a review of the question of the division of competencies, "The distribution of competencies as formulated in the draft Treaty is not in favour of the application of the principle of subsidiarity".

- The Protocol on Subsidiarity and Proportionality

While welcoming the protocol on subsidiarity and proportionality as it responds to AER concerns to a certain extent, the Bureau requests that the Convention integrates two amendments. First, in systems with bicameral parliaments, to allow each chamber the right to participate in an "early warning system". Second, to give both national chambers of parliament, as well as regions with legislative powers, the right to bring actions before the European Court of Justice.

To help bring about a final Treaty that will be acceptable to the citizens of Europe, the representatives of the AER commit themselves to reinforce their work towards the Convention.

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