THE SPECIFITY OF THE ASSEMBLY OF EUROPEAN REGIONS

	ASSEMBLY OF EUROPEAN REGIONS	COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS	CONGRESS OF LOCAL AND REGIONAL AUTHORITIES
ESTABLISHED	1985	1994	1994
STRUCTURE	**Association** of member regions	**Advisory body** of the EU	**Consultative organ** of the Council of Europe
MEMBERS	The regions as entities are members of AER. Membership is not linked to a person or a function. **Membership is voluntary**	Both **regional and local levels are represented**, but there is no separation between them. Members are individuals appointed for the four-year terms by their national government; therefore, they are <u>meant to be representing local and regional interests across their country.</u>	The Congress is **composed of representatives of the local and regional level** differentiated by use of a two-chamber system. Members are individuals nominated by their national governments.
WORK STRUCTURE	AER is composed of 3 Committees and 3 Standing Committees: Economy and regional development (Committee 1) Social policy and public Health (Committee 2) Culture, education and interregional cooperation (Committee 3) Standing Committee on Institutional Affairs Standing Committee on Equal Opportunities Standing Committee on Monitoring and Evaluation **Each member is involved in the committee(s) it chooses.** The members set the topics to be looked at by both the committees as well as the body as a whole.	The Committee of the Regions is composed of six Committees[1] which composition and powers are fixed at the beginning of each four-year term. The commissions are **representative of the overall composition of the Committee** in terms of gender, political party and nationality. Each belongs to at least one commission.	**Each member of the Congress is represented in one of three Statutory Committees[2]**, which examine matters referred by the bureau or delegated to them. Following the adoption by the Committee of Ministers of the revised Charter of the Congress on 19 January 2011, the former Standing Committee has been replaced by a Statutory Forum, comprising the Presidents of all national delegations and the members of the Bureau. The Forum acts on behalf of the Congress between sessions. The Forum convened by the President, as necessary, between the sessions of the Congress. The chairs of committees and presidents of political groups participate without voting rights.

---

[1] Currently (02/2008) the six Commissions deal with: Territorial Cohesion Policy; Economic and Social Policy; Sustainable Development; Culture, Education and Research; Constitutional Affairs and European Governance and administrative and financial affairs.
[2] Monitoring, Governance, Current Affairs. More information available under:
http://www.coe.int/t/congress/Fonctionnement/statutory-committees/default_en.asp?mytabsmenu=2

	ASSEMBLY OF EUROPEAN REGIONS	COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS	CONGRESS OF LOCAL AND REGIONAL AUTHORITIES
POLITICAL AND NATIONAL GROUPS	**No political or national groupings**. Discussions and debates are part of AER work. The multitude of experiences and opinions of the politicians representing our members compose our strength.	Members are appointed on the proposal of the Member States and are part of a **political party** and **a national delegation**. Political parties play an important role; the composition of commissions is only decided upon after negotiations between the parties.	Each State has its own procedure to appoint members and the number of representatives is pre-established. The Congress is organised by **national delegations** as well as **political parties**, although the parties are not as strong as those of the CoR**.**
INFLUENCE ON DECISION-MAKING	AER Regions **work together** to lobby the EU by **working closely with AER contacts** in the EP, Commission and Council. AER takes into account the views of its members and **federates Member Regions** that are lobbying for similar issues.	The CoR is **consulted** by the Commission on issues concerning the local or regional level. Its opinion is non-binding. According to the Lisbon Treaty, it can take a Commissions' decision to the European Court of Justice, if the decision does not comply with principle of subsidiarity.	The Congress **advises** the Committee of Ministers and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe on all aspects of local and regional policy.
	ASSEMBLY OF EUROPEAN REGIONS	**COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS**	**CONGRESS OF LOCAL AND REGIONAL AUTHORITIES**
PANEUROPEAN NETWORK	60% of AER members come from the EU 40% come from outside the EU	Only EU members are represented	Members of the Council of Europe are represented (47 States)
CONCRETE PROJECTS	AER developed a variety of programmes, which allow us to **work closely with citizens**: -**Eurodyssée**: exchange programme between regions allowing young graduates to gain their first work experience in a partner region - **Summer Schools**: Once a year, the Summer Schools bring together officers and young people interested in European issues, to debate, exchange experience and good practices on a topic of common concern. - **European Citizens' Forum:** Allow true participation of the citizens in the European process. They foster debates between citizens, regional politicians and representatives of the European Union on the future of Europe. - **AER Youth Regional Network (YRN)** : conceived as a common platform of youth regional organisations/councils/parliaments in wider Europe. The AER YRN is Europe's only platform of regional youth councils, parliaments and organisations, and works on the most fundamental issues of today	No projects directly linked to the citizens; this is a **purely advisory body**.	Supports various projects linked to the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe: -**NALAS**: partners towns in Former Yugoslavia with towns in Western Europe to aid democratic reforms -**LDA**: networking for local authorities in South Eastern Europe Contributed to the launch of ENTO: -**ENTO**: European Network of Training Organisations for local and regional authorities. Its main aim is to develop the capacity of local and regional authorities to fulfil their roles by ensuring that their staff are well trained and qualified.

	(sustainable development, professional life and youth entrepreneurship, culture and education, health and social affairs as well as communication and media).		

AER key information

- **Open membership**: any region can join; active membership is limited to regional entities
- **No political or national groups**: agreements are reached through discussion, interest groups emerge on each issue
- **Meetings**: two Committee Plenary meetings per year, two Presidium meetings, two Bureau meetings and one General Assembly
- **Citizen-centred organisation**: AER programmes directly involve the citizens and bring Europe closer to its citizens
- **Work programme**: the members decide, in each committee, which are the political priorities for the coming year. The regions themselves decide which topics should be discussed (**no pre-set agenda**)

More information can be found on our website: www.aer.eu

Created by LK, 18/02/2008
Updated by AC, 04/08/2011