



**DOLNY  
ŚLĄSK**

## **Dolnoslaskie Political Statement**

### **AER proposes a new deal to the European Parliament:**

#### **further subsidiarity for a better Europe, focused on the citizens and closer to their needs**

*Statement adopted at the AER General Assembly in Wrocław, on 28 May 2014.*

*Rapporteurs: Anna Magyar (Csongrad-HU), Jean-Luc Vanraes (Bruxelles-Capitale-BE), Rodrigo Oliveira (Açores-PT) and Johan Edstav (Uppsala-SE)*

*Wrocław, Dolnoslaskie (PL), 28 May 2014*

With stronger powers granted to the European Parliament thanks to the Lisbon Treaty, the European Union (EU) elections 2014 are the most important elections to date. The Assembly of European Regions (AER) wishes to congratulate the newly elected and re-elected MEPs and call upon them to use the European grass root expertise of the regional level.

AER notes the low turnout of European voters and the increased tendency towards eurosceptic parties. We hope that, together with the European Parliament, other EU institutions and member states we can continue building a better Europe based on democracy, Human Rights and Gender Equality. AER encourages the Parliament and the Commission to continue their collaborative work across wider Europe as well as with its neighbouring regions. It is our duty to help citizens feel European and make clear to them how Europe improves their lives. We realise that a considerable share of European voters supports a strong cooperation in the framework of the EU. We, as regional politicians, are in constant dialogue with citizens in every parcel of the European territory. We want a better Europe, a Europe focused on what matters to citizens and closer to their needs. This is why subsidiarity must be key in the European decision making process and the priority must be given to the following issues:

- **Use the regional expertise to design cohesion policies.** Regions are at the forefront of the citizens' need. They must therefore be involved, from the very beginning, in the drafting of partnership agreements and operational programmes for a social, territorial and inclusive regional policy.
- **Defend Youth employment at regional level.** AER calls for the EU to acknowledge the true added value of regional programmes for youth mobility and employment. Every year, the AER's Eurodisney Programme sends hundreds of young women and men across wider Europe to gain professional experience after their studies, and help them both equally

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Assembly of European Regions

6 Rue Oberlin - F-67000 Strasbourg  
Tel.: +33 3 88 22 07 07 - Fax : +33 3 88 75 67 19  
E-mail : [secretariat@aer.eu](mailto:secretariat@aer.eu)

210 Avenue Louise - B-1050 Bruxelles  
Tel./Fax : +32 2 880 95 60  
E-mail : [aer.brussels@aer.eu](mailto:aer.brussels@aer.eu)

[www.aer.eu](http://www.aer.eu)

enter the European labour market. This success story must be supported.

- **Help regions face European demographic change.** Europe is growing older which makes active and healthy ageing a priority. An inclusive and intergenerational approach is needed. The regions are pioneers in making and implementing user-based, efficient solutions. They should be supported in this. AER, as a forum for exchange of knowledge and best practices, is the right EU partner in this field.
- **Support an effective economic subsidiarity.** 99% of European Enterprises are SMEs, that is to say 23 million enterprises. At a time when globalisation of markets has changed the rules, the EU must focus on new opportunities and turn to its regions and SMEs to make the most of the benefits of this evolution. In the framework of the EU 'Business Agenda 2014-2019', decentralisation is a key factor when unlocking potential for competitiveness: the Europe 2020 goals can only be reached with the participation of regions.
- **Reinforce regions' role in innovation.** Our regions are host to some of the best universities and research centres in the world. Europe's role as a world economic power comes from high quality and high tech sustainable products and services. We therefore urge you to put regions at the centre of the Horizon 2020 programme. After the end of the "regions of knowledge" programme, research and innovation need to return concretely to the regional policy agenda.

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