EU Belong

An Intercultural Approach to Migrant Integration in Europe's Regions

STRUCTURE & METHODOLOGICAL SUPPORT FOR THE

3-DAYS REGIONAL MULTI-STAKEHOLDER LEARNING LAB

AUTHOR: JOHANNA PACEVICIUS

AER
Assembly of European Regions

EU Belong

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Adopted on 29th September 2022

Keywords:
Exchange, multi-stakeholder, in-presence, mutual-learning, engagement

1.   Description of the learning labs

The aim of this in-presence regional event is to strengthen the competences of key-players to plan and implement effective integration strategies. Participants will **exchange and facilitate mutual learning among the stakeholders directly involved in the co-design activities** (WP4)

The 3-day programme will be focused on 2 main aspects:
- Knowledge-sharing sessions presenting the existing European, national and regional integration policies and regulations, in order to provide a common understanding to the members of the Multi-stakeholder Platform that will be involved in the co-design of the regional intercultural integration strategies.
- Thematic focus on one or more integration challenges/sectors, with information on problems/needs in the specific sectors identified by each Region.

2.   Main target group/s identified

Approx 20 participants
The 3-day Learning Lab event organised by each region (11 labs in total) <u>will target the members of the Multi-stakeholder Platform</u> referred to in activity 4.1. These include:

-Regional & local authorities

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and relevant stakeholders from key sectors which have their focus on TCNs integration:
-Civil Society Organisations working on integration of migrants, including associations and service providers with the main focus on gender mainstreaming, youth, and people with disabilities
-Academia
-Media[1]
-Private Sector organisations, including employers organisations and businesses associations.

How to identify the members of the Multi-stakeholder Platform:

The project's associate organisations:
Among the 33 associate organisations formally involved in the Action, 31 are local and regional associates that have already adhered to the multi-stakeholder process promoted by the project. Among them there are:
- Cities and associations of local authorities (6 Cities, the Spanish red of Intercultural Cities, the Navarre Federation of Municipalities and Councils, the Timis County Prefecture, etc.)
- Academia (Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Universitatea "Aurel Vlaicu" - Arad, University Adam Mickiewicz, etc.)
- Civil Society Organisations (Migrant Info Point, ORCHidea Foundation, Association for People with Disabilities "Homini", etc.)
- Private Sector organisations (Association for Social Cooperatives, Cooperation Fund Foundation, etc.)

The other participating entities will be selected by the partner Regions according to their local contexts and existing expertise. The selection of the stakeholders will be based on their commitment in participating in the proposed process and in their capacity in contributing to the expected outputs and outcomes of the Action. It also takes into consideration additional criteria such as the homogeneous coverage of the targeted areas (including the balance between urban and rural areas).

Particular attention will be paid to the involvement of migrants' organisations and communities, including the so-called community leaders who are important bridge-builders, well rooted and active in the local communities.

Moreover, the direct participation of Cities will ensure a concrete application of the multi-level approach and ensure that the regional and the local levels effectively cooperate in the formulation (and future implementation) of the strategies.

3. Methodology: how to design this 3-day event

The Learning labs will lay the ground for the work of the Multi-stakeholder Platforms, for the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the integration strategies.

Because the stakeholders will be involved for more than one activity, it is crucial to design the learning labs in a way that:

- the topics are meaningful for stakeholders and addressed in a way that makes sense for them
- stakeholders feel their expertise is valued and they can contribute in a meaningful way
- stakeholders feel heard
- conversations bring together the voices of groups which are not always used to work together

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[1] When considering which media stakeholders to involve, the Advisory Committee recommended to look specifically at community media as they have very strong contacts with stakeholders and are quite engaged. This project provides insights on involving community media: https://newneighbours.eu/category/communitymedia/

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- the learning labs address visible needs (stakeholders are either already aware of this need, or the need is made visible at the beginning of the learning lab)
- the learning labs generate actionable learning, both for workpackage 4, and in the work of stakeholders

Additionally, the Advisory Board recommends including a block recalling the intercultural integration approach in the learning lab, in order to consolidate this knowledge and make it actionable (see *8. Additional Resources*)

3.1. Engagement of participants

The engagement of stakeholders starts before the event, via

- the invitation to the event: clear on the context, purpose, programme, expected contribution and benefits of participating in the learning lab and the multi-stakeholder platform
- potentially a survey with 3-4 questions on expectations and needs related to the programme and content (very short survey to avoid fatigue)

The engagement of participants is also highly depending on the value they see in their participation in the learning lab. For this it will be essential to

- include regular feedback loops,
- make the objectives clear before, and during the event
- assess progress in a collective way
- organise consolidation sessions, where participants realise what they've learnt and think about how they are going to use it,
- ensure there are problem-solving building blocks in your programme too, where participants see the value of collective intelligence (and will want more of it)

It is important to ensure to **specify the role of stakeholders invited to these learning labs: they are all contributors to and beneficiaries of the event.** This is instrumental both to ensure all participants feel safe and to ensure they are equally active: for instance, media organisations are there to contribute with their expertise and insights, not in a meta position to report on the event.

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3.2.   Rhythm of 3-day learning lab

In order for the learning to actually happen, it is important to organise days, which are not too long. The below table provides an example of such a 3-day event.

This programme is purely hypothetical, feel free to arrange hours as is useful for your stakeholders!

DAY 1	DAY 2	DAY 3
Icebreaker & introductions *setting the scene+ participants get to know each other* *1h*	Icebreaker & introduction *check with participants what remained from the day before. Set expectations for the day*	Icebreaker & introduction *check with participants what remained from the day before. Set expectations for the day*
Knowledge sharing session: Existing EU, National, Regional integration policies & regulations *30mn*	Thematic focus on one or more integration challenges/ sectors with information on needs in the sector as identified by each Region *2h*	Thematic focus on one or more integration challenges/ sectors with information on needs in the sector as identified by each Region *2h*
discussion, exchanges *30mn*		
LUNCH	LUNCH	LUNCH
Knowledge sharing session: Existing EU, National, Regional integration policies & regulations *1h*	Presentation of good practices & exchanges *2h*	Presentation of good practices & exchanges *2h*
discussion, exchanges *1h*		
COFFEE BREAK *30mn*	COFFEE BREAK *30mn*	COFFEE BREAK *30mn*
Mutual learning session with group work *1h30*	Presentation of good practices & exchanges *1h30*	Presentation of good practices & exchanges *1h30*
Wrap-up, conclusions of the day 15 mn	Wrap-up, conclusions of the day 15 mn	Wrap-up, conclusions of the day 15 mn

To be able to develop solutions together, stakeholders **need to take time to get to know each other and feel they are in a safe space, that is a place with clear rules**. We advise to be very intentional in the programme to set time aside to

● introduce participants to each other
● clarify the purpose of the learning lab, the rules

Planning of the 3-day learning lab

The 3-day learning lab is a preparatory step to the development of the co-design activities foreseen in WP4. With that in mind you can choose to either organise the lab in the span of one calendar week, or choose to separate the 3 days across several weeks if you consider this beneficial for:

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- the engagement of stakeholders
- the mutual-learning process
- the coherence with other project activities, in particular WP4

You may also choose to organise the 3-day learning lab in chunks of half days *when coherent, justified, and when this helps for the purpose of the lab and the preparation of the co-design process which comes afterwards.*

It is important to clarify and document the choices you make for the planning of the learning labs. **Contact the AER Secretariat, to help in this clarification and documentation process**. This will ease the writing of the report at the end of the process and help keep visible the general coherence and purpose during the action, which is both motivating for partners individually and for the consortium as a whole.

3.3.   Choice of format

The choice of a format depends on the learning objective. In the learning labs, stakeholders will start to get to know each other, so it's a good moment to focus on quality interactions and networking.

When you want to foster interaction, you need to implement the right combination of disruption and comfort: making participants feel curious, safe and willing to discover and exchange.

The below table was adapted from the AER Knowledge Transfer Toolkit[2]

KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER ACTIVITIES	PURPOSE (WHEN TO USE?)													TYPE OF APPROACH		
EXAMPLES	Raise Awareness	Increase visibility, legitimacy, recognition	Build momentum	Engage stakeholders	Connect stakeholders	Bring new knowledge	Create collective intelligence	Identify set of actions for implementation	Accelerate development & implementation of actions (system level)	Learn how to implement actions in context	soft / indirect capacity building (system level)	Capacity building (system level)	Develop skills (individual level)	Top Down	Participative	Co-creative
High level meetings with politicians or civil servants	X	X	X	X	X	X		X			X			X		
World Cafe and variants	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			X					X
OST, unconferences	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			X					X
AER mutual learning event on current and transversal topic	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			X				X	
Action Learning Set & co-development				X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X			X

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The below table enables you to define in a precise way for each part what is the learning objective, the format to be used and the material needed. In the "learning objective", please use verbs that show what the participants will have achieved at the end of the session.

NB: The below content are hypothetical examples, each region chooses their learning objectives, content, resources etc based on the data it has concerning the needs of its stakeholders

When?	How long?	Learning Objective	Content	Methodological & learning resources
Day 1	30mn	-get to know other participants -clarify expectations	-list of expectations, classified in themes	-roundtable where everyone introduces themselves & shares expectations -Flipchart to capture and cluster expectations
Day 1	30mn	-be aware of existing EU, National, Regional integration policies & regulations -understand who does what -know where to find resources	-Information on EU Action plan on Integration and Inclusion 2021 -	

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4. Examples of formats to support exchange and mutual learning

Below are a few examples of formats which generate collective intelligence, engagement and trust.

World Café and variants

World Café discussions are based on the principles and format developed by the World café global movement[3]. They are a structured conversational process for knowledge sharing among people who are divided in groups of 4 to 5 participants. Groups discuss a topic at several tables, with individuals switching tables periodically.

The World café methodology is detailed in the World café Hosting Tool Kit[4] It is a method for creating a constructive dialogue around questions that matter for real work. Cafés in different contexts have been adapted and named in many ways to meet specific goals, for example Creative Cafés, Strategy Cafés, Leadership Cafés, Smart Cafés[5], Knowledge Cafés20, or Community Cafés. They are a bottom-up approach and as such the outcomes can be surprising.

They are particularly powerful to:

– Bring stakeholders from an ecosystem together;

– Bring new knowledge to a place and facilitate cross pollination;

– Identify patterns;

– Grow collective knowledge.

The methodology can be reinterpreted and associated with presentations: when a speaker is finished, participants can discuss what resonated with them, what surprised them etc , participants can develop a few questions together

Open Space Technology, unconferences

Open Space Technology (OST)[6] is a method for organising and running a meeting or multi-day conference, where participants have been invited in order to focus on a specific, important task or purpose. It was developed by Harrison Owen, an Episcopal priest and Civil Rights activist, in the 1980s, based on his experience of how coffee breaks and other unorganised encounters were the most productive parts of formal meetings.

In contrast with pre-planned conferences where who speaks at which time is scheduled often months in advance, and therefore subject to many changes, OST sources participants once they are physically

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[3] http://www.theworldcafe.com/

[4] http://www.theworldcafe.com/tools-store/hosting-tool-kit/

[5] https://smart-europe.eu/sites/default/files/2.1.%20SMART%20EUROPE%20 Cafe%CC%81.pdf

[6] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Open_Space_Technology

present at the live event venue. In this sense OST is participant-driven and less organiser-convener-driven. Pre-planning remains essential however.

In Open Space meetings, events and organisations, participants create and manage their own agenda of parallel working sessions around a central theme of strategic importance, such as: What is the strategy, group, organisation or community that all stakeholders can support and work together to create[7]?

<u>OST operates on four principles and one law:</u>

1. Whoever comes are the right people. This reinforces that the wisdom to achieve solutions is present in the room and the group is not to worry about who is not present or to panic about who is.

2. Whatever happens is the only thing that could have. This keeps the attention on the best possible effort in the present, not worrying about "what we should have done".

3. Whenever it starts is the right time. This reminds people that creativity cannot be controlled.

4. When it's over, it's over. This encourages people to continue their discussion as long as there is energy for it. Some sessions will finish well within the anticipated time. Others will run longer than the allotted time.

– *The Law of Mobility*, also known as The Law of Two Feet, indicates that people can enter or leave an open space session as they choose. If the session you are in is not meeting your needs for either contributing or learning, go to another one.

Unconferences often use variations on OST. The term "unconference" has been applied, or self-applied, to a wide range of gatherings which try to avoid hierarchical aspects of a conventional conference, such as sponsored presentations and top-down organisation. An "unconference" is particularly useful when participants have a high level of expertise or knowledge in the field the conference convenes to discuss.

As with classical conferences, the event itself can include a variety of components, such as world cafés, PechaKucha presentations, workshops etc

The unconference/ OST methodology can also be used for parts of a classical conference, a workshop for instance.

AER mutual learning event on current & transversal topic

The format of the AER mutual learning events is at the crossroads of several of the above described formats.

Diverse stakeholders share their experience around an integration challenge, how it impacts their work, what they are doing, the changes they expect to see in their work. The event enables to transfer knowledge, engage stakeholders, identify fields for action and generate collective intelligence.

The event generally starts with a few presentations on the state of play and trends in the EU framework. Then participants are split in groups around a specific topic, which in the framework of the EU-Belong could be different integration challenges for instance.

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[7] https://openspaceworld.org/wp2/what-is/

Each participant is a contributor. These discussion groups bring together 3-5 experts from academia, business, policymaking and civil society, a moderator and the people who have registered to the event, who are experts in their own fields too. As is the case in Open Space Technology events, the outcomes are not predefined and do not lead to the drafting of political positions: whatever happens is what should have happened.

The script of these discussions is very specific, and details questions to address minute by minute. Similarly, roles are predefined for the moderator, the pitchers, the contributors and rapporteurs.

One such mutual learning event gathers 4 to 5 discussion groups, each addressing different perspectives.

Roles

The AER mutual learning events create a framework where everybody is a contributor. Categories of participants are listed below:

– Identified contributor: for each discussion group, 3-5 experts from academia, business, policymaking and civil society are invited. They are recognised in their field and have a significant role (this included for instance CEOs, politicians, a University Vice rector, journalists...)

– Pitcher: One of the 3-5 contributors will pitch the topic of the group so participants can decide which group they would like to join. The idea is to say in 3-4mn without slides why, based on the contributor's experience, the topic addressed in their group is the most important topic of the day

– Moderator: Each group has a moderator who is also an expert in the field. The moderator is the warrant of the flow and rhythm of the discussion. They have a set of questions to be asked within a certain time and are there to frame the discussion. They ensure the process is being followed, the rapporteur is designated, and all contributors are involved and interact. Moderators keep time.

– Rapporteur: A rapporteur is designated, this rapporteur will collect the following points during the discussion, which will be shared in the plenary session after the coffee break:

- some examples of changes brought about by the societal challenge
- proposals of the group
- questions which may not have answers yet but need to be taken into account (to share with the whole audience)

– Contributor: Every participant is a contributor. The discussion groups are designed in a way which allows all participants to contribute in a meaningful way to the conversation and think together with experts about these societal challenges which can only be addressed via collective intelligence.
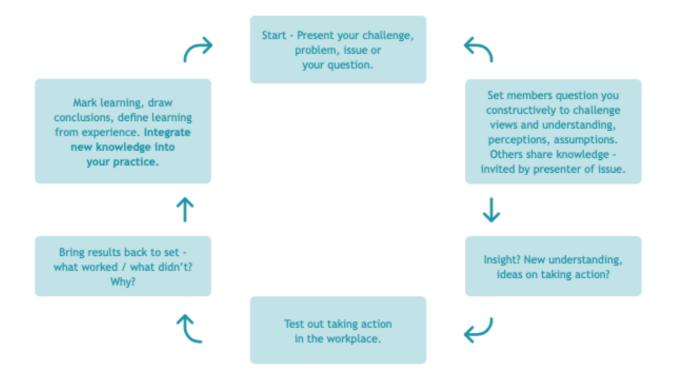
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Action Learning Sets or Co-development groups

Action learning is a structured mechanism[8] for working in small groups to address complicated issues. Action Learning Sets are made up of between six and eight people who meet together regularly over a reasonable time period. A "presenter" presents the issue at stake and the group collectively works on problems faced in ongoing practice. The group will then help the 'presenter' work on that problem through supportive but challenging questioning: encouraging a deeper understanding of the issues involved, a reflective reassessment of the 'problem', and an exploration of ways forward.

The figure below, from the ODI think tank toolkit, explains the process:

Start - Present your challenge, problem, issue or your question.

Set members question you constructively to challenge views and understanding, perceptions, assumptions. Others share knowledge - invited by presenter of issue.

Mark learning, draw conclusions, define learning from experience. Integrate new knowledge into your practice.

Insight? New understanding, ideas on taking action?

Bring results back to set - what worked / what didn't? Why?

Test out taking action in the workplace.

Co-development is a professional development approach that focuses on the group & the interactions between participants to promote understanding + better practices. It is large.

It is a form of community of practice, open, collaborative and appreciative group approach. It is a shared space of reflection and learning based on the experiences of members. Confidentiality is central.

Two general objectives:

1. improving a professional practice
2. learn how to solve complex problems.

The dimensions of co-construction, collaboration, sharing, individual and collective reflection of co-development are at the center of this approach, based on the idea that it is possible to "learn on your

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[8] https://www.odi.org/publications/5230-colloboration-mechanisms-action-learning-sets
Also: http://www.fao.org/elearning/course/FK/en/pdf/trainerresources/ PG_ALSets.pdf

practice, by listening and helping colleagues to progress in understanding and improving their own practice"[9]

It is always based on real-life situations.

The aim of this method is to take a step back and reconsider your professional practice, and way of solving problems and leading projects.

BENEFITS

- Allow the emergence/development of collective intelligence;
- Experience the benefits of collective intelligence;
- Broaden the capacity for reflection and action;
- Allow the self-questioning of analysis grids and strategies of action;
- Allow the resolution of particular and complex problems;
- Improve professional skills;
- Discover new professional skills;
- Learn or improve several basic skills: think, feel, act and help;
- Accelerate and sustain individual professional development;
- Develop empathic, sincere and active listening, centered on the person;
- Create help relationships in a work context;
- Generates shared cultural development: a more collaborative way of working, across workstreams

METHODOLOGY

Each session is composed of six specific steps. To these we add a preliminary step (step 0 - preparation of the consultation topic/choice of the topic) as well as a final step (step 7 - progress of the action plan and transfer of learning).

The group's interaction is structured as follows:

step 0 - preparation of the consultation topic/choice of the topic

1. Presentation of a problem, a worry, a project

2. Clarification of the issue : questioning to obtain factual information

3. Consultation contract

4. Exploration : comments, reactions and suggestions from the consultants

5. Summing up and action plan

6. Conclusion : evaluation and integration of learning by all parties

step 7 - progress of the action plan and transfer of learning

This work should be understood as a continuing, progressive process.

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[9] Payette & Champagne, 1997, p. 8

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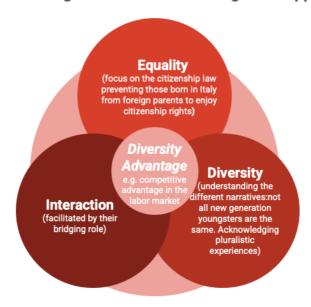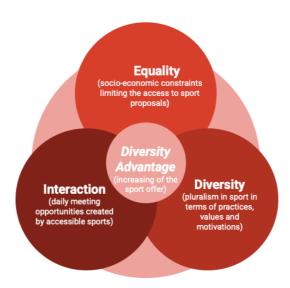Fund of the European Union

5. Additional Resources

Examples of thematic use of the intercultural approach

The below examples show how, in the beginning of each thematic session of the learning lab, Emilia Romagna will have an exercise on how to apply the intercultural approach to the topic.

Integration challenge 1. "The new generations"
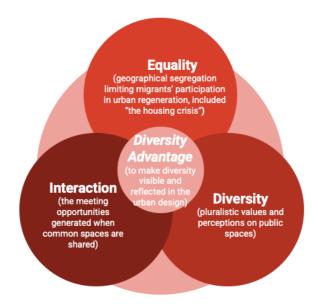seen through the intercultural integration approach

Equality
(focus on the citizenship law preventing those born in Italy from foreign parents to enjoy citizenship rights)

Diversity Advantage
e.g. competitive advantage in the labor market

Interaction
(facilitated by their bridging role)

Diversity
(understanding the different narratives:not all new generation youngsters are the same. Acknowledging pluralistic experiences)

Integration challenge 2. "Inclusive sport"
seen through the intercultural integration approach

Equality
(socio-economic constraints limiting the access to sport proposals)

Diversity Advantage
(increasing of the sport offer)

Interaction
(daily meeting opportunities created by accessible sports)

Diversity
(pluralism in sport in terms of practices, values and motivations)

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Integration challenge 3. "Urban regeneration and Diversity" seen through the intercultural integration approach

Specific challenges can be analysed through the three pillars of interculturalism. The identification of the elements related to each pillar can also be the result of an individual/group exercise, so to allow to check effective understanding by participants.

Training material and resources on interculturalism:

The intercultural city step-by-step – Online training on intercultural strategy design
https://www.coe.int/en/web/interculturalcities/icc-step-by-step-course

The experience of the local authorities participating in the Intercultural Cities (ICC) programme shows that diversity can be managed as a resource. Despite its complexity and the potential conflicts that may arise in diverse communities, a positive and skilful approach to diversity management can lead cities to hugely benefit from what migrants, minorities and people with diverse background can offer to the community. In that sense, the intercultural integration model is applicable to all dimensions of diversity (cultural, gender, sexual identity, age, socioeconomic status, etc.). To do this, local authorities need to review a range of institutional settings, services and policies, and create the appropriate governance structures, mechanisms and policies to remove obstacles as well as enhance the integration of migrants and diversity inclusion.
This course is based on the guide The intercultural city step by step as well as a set of instruction videos.

Online course on the antirumours methodology
https://www.coe.int/en/web/interculturalcities/online-course-on-the-antirumours-methodology

The antirumours strategy is a long-term process of social change. It seeks to prevent discrimination, improve coexistence, and harness the potential of diversity by triggering a change in perceptions, attitudes, and behaviours among the general population and specific target groups. This course and the Antirumours handbook provide more information on the theoretical approach and reformulates the objectives of the antirumours strategy and aspects of its methodology. Each implementation of the strategy opens new opportunities for collaboration with diverse actors, that in turn, adapt the antirumours approach to different areas and sectors.

Good practices collected in the context of the ICC network
https://www.coe.int/en/web/interculturalcities/good-pratice

The Intercultural integration policy model is based on extensive research evidence, on a range of international legal instruments, and on the collective input of the cities member of the Intercultural Cities programme that share their good practice examples on how to better manage diversity, address possible conflicts, and benefit from the diversity advantage. This section offers examples of intercultural approaches that facilitate the development and implementation of intercultural strategies.

Thematic papers on the implementation of the intercultural approach
https://www.coe.int/en/web/interculturalcities/thematic-papers#{%2297133329%22:[]}

Thematic papers, policy briefs and guides on a wide range of topics, including Business & Employment; Housing, Public spaces and Urban Planning; Education; Culture Leisure & Heritage...

Contact details

For more information on the organisation of knowledge transfer activities, such as the learning labs, please contact **AER Coordinator for Policy & Knowledge Transfer** Johanna Pacevicius j.pacevicius@aer.eu

For more information on the EU-Belong project, please contact **AER Project Manager** Birgit Sandu b.sandu@aer.eu or visit the website: https://eu-belong.aer.eu/.

For more information on the **Assembly of European Regions**, please contact info@aer.eu

Visit our website: https://www.aer.eu/

EU-Belong is a 3-year project led by the Assembly of European Regions in partnership with 13 partners.