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ASSIGNMENT

IMPORTANT NOTICE

This document presents a fictitious scenario. It has been produced solely for the purpose of this exercise. All references to existing countries, international organisations, private companies, departments and their representatives, etc. have been invented purely as examples. Any views expressed should not be taken to represent the opinions of those bodies or persons. When dealing with the assignment, participants should therefore rely solely on the information presented in the exercise and not on any prior expertise in the field.

For this exercise, you will be asked to take on the role of an assistant in the Committee for Regional Relations (CRR) who is involved in organising the annual REGION WEEK event. All the documentation that you need to prepare yourself for your interview is included in this information brochure. It comprises a number of documents, reports and other information that you need to analyse in order to be able to deal properly with the situations presented to you during the interview.

It is important that you accept the scenario as it is presented. You may print the documents, rearrange them in any order you wish and add comments or make notes as necessary. Neither your knowledge in the field nor your knowledge on the topic of this exercise will be assessed during the interview; therefore, conducting any additional research is unnecessary. This Situational Competency-Based Interview is designed to assess the following general competencies: Analysis & Problem Solving, Learning & Development and Prioritising & Organising.

You will have until the day of the interview to go through the information individually in order to prepare for the interview. The interview will last 25 minutes.

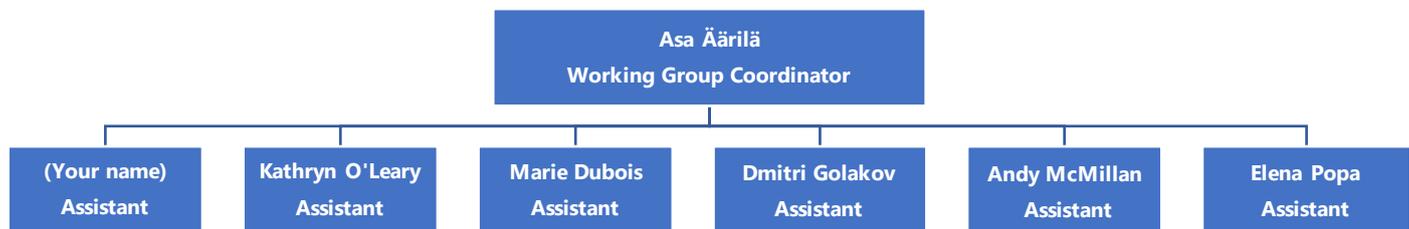
**Please note that for the purpose of this exercise:
the interview will take place on Thursday, 11 June 20XX
Last year was 20XX-1, next year will be 20XX+1**

COMMITTEE FOR REGIONAL RELATIONS (CRR)

The CRR is the assembly of regional and local representatives of the European Union (EU). Its aim is to reflect on and influence the development of EU laws that have an impact on regions and cities. To this end, it organises an annual networking event, REGION WEEK, at which representatives of the various European regions can share information on and learn more about local policies and governance best practices.

REGION WEEK Working Group

The CRR has appointed a Working Group (WG) to prepare and organise REGION WEEK efficiently every year.



REGION WEEK

REGION WEEK is an annual four-day event held every November. The event attracts some 6 000 participants (local, regional, national and European decision-makers and experts) and hosts more than 100 workshops, debates, exhibitions and networking opportunities. Every year, the WG decides on a central theme and gathers proposals from external partners to organise individual events, which must all correspond to the specified theme and meet the length and format requirements. With this year's deadline for submitting workshop proposals having recently passed, the WG now needs to finalise the REGION WEEK 20XX programme, which involves booking all necessary venues, arranging catering and communicating about the event to interested parties.

Venues for the event

REGION WEEK workshops are held at various locations throughout Brussels (Belgium), each carefully chosen to help participants get to know Brussels as the heart of the EU decision-making process. One popular location is the 'Forum', which is set up in the CRR's own building to provide a central venue for networking events during REGION WEEK. Participants can go there at lunchtime or the end of the day to meet informally, to network and to develop new or existing partnerships. The CRR provides free catering at these times in order to attract participants.

Participant registration

Workshop participant registrations are handled by the external workshop organisers themselves via a central registration system provided by the CRR. People hoping to participate in a workshop first need to fill out an online form to (a) indicate the workshops they would like to attend and (b) provide additional profile information (professional background, interests, etc.), which the workshop organiser then uses to select the most suitable participants. Workshop organisers are therefore responsible for selecting their participants. To help them in this task, the CRR provides some selection guidelines, based on the number of selected workshops and previous workshop attendance rates. However, workshop organisers can – in some cases – pass the responsibility for selecting participants on to the Central Secretariat of the CRR, which provides a number of other support services for REGION WEEK (including gathering participant feedback after the event).

LETTER



CRR

11 January 20XX

From: Head of Event Unit, CRR
Paul Alsink

To: All members of the REGION WEEK Working Group

Subject: Suggestions for REGION WEEK 20XX

Dear Members of the Working Group,

I have a number of concerns about REGION WEEK that I would like to share with you; perhaps these can be taken into account for this year's event?

Firstly, something needs to be done about the procedure for registering workshop participants, which last year was very haphazard. Quite a number of workshop organisers decided to leave the handling of registrations to the Central Secretariat, and there was often confusion about who was responsible for what.

Secondly, I heard that a number of interesting workshop ideas had to be omitted from last year's REGION WEEK programme, as some of our partners missed the strict deadline for submitting proposals. In order both to increase the impact of REGION WEEK and to prevent good ideas from going to waste, perhaps we could make full use of interesting late-submitted proposals by allowing our external partners to organise them as affiliated events (i.e. self-funded, separate events with no constraints in terms of format, but which are connected to the REGION WEEK brand through use of the logo on all content and material).

Thirdly, a key priority of REGION WEEK is to foster learning on local policies and governance best practices. Participant feedback from last year suggests that this aspect should be further strengthened. As a way to do this, I think that networking should be given much higher priority, for example, by having longer opening hours for the Forum.

Finally, as you know, the CRR is undergoing a general rebranding, with a new CRR logo and new font and document styles due to be rolled out in September 20XX+1. However, the branding and communication budget will be reduced by 15% in 20XX+1, which will affect all REGION WEEK activities under the "Visual Identity", "Promotion", "Website", and "Miscellaneous" categories (please see attached). Therefore, I hope you can devise a suitable advertising strategy for the coming years.

Yours faithfully,
Paul Alsink

**Budget for REGION WEEK**

Below is a summary of the estimated and actual costs of last year's REGION WEEK. Note that the events and the branding/communication budgets will remain the same for 20XX, but the branding/communication budget will be cut by 15% in 20XX+1.

Item	Estimated 20XX-1	Invoiced 20XX-1	Comments
Branding and communication			
Visual identity	€15 000	€16 325	There are still lots of pens left over from REGION WEEK 20XX-1. These can be re-used for as long as our logo remains unchanged.
Promotion	€28 000	€29 872.18	The 20XX-1 estimate was quite accurate as regards publications (no posters and only around 20 programme brochures were left over). Transitioning towards more online advertising would require a big investment.
Website	€5 000	€4 831	Updating the website contents on an annual basis is unavoidable. This is usually done by the Central Secretariat.
Miscellaneous (live music)	€4 000	€4 250	Hiring local bands to play live music could prove cheaper than paying royalties for recorded music.
...			
Events			
Networking events (i.e. catering, venues, etc.)	€90 000	€93 000	The free catering provided at the Forum consumed a large part of this budget in 20XX-1.
Workshops (i.e. guest speakers, venue, etc.)	€35 000	€34 870	There is no margin for the CRR to pay for extra affiliated events.
...			



CRR

MEETING MINUTES

Date and time:	04/06/20XX - 13.00–14.00
Attendees:	All WG members and Asa Äärilä (WG coordinator)
Topics:	Preparations for REGION WEEK 20XX

AGENDA TOPICS

WORKSHOP REGISTRATION	
◆	There was a discussion on how to simplify the workshop participant registration process. Some members suggested that workshop organisers should receive and handle participant registrations on their own, without help from the Central Secretariat. However, Asa Äärilä argued that this would reduce transparency and decrease the CRR's control over who the target audience should be. Instead she suggested transferring the responsibility for selecting workshop participants entirely to the Central Secretariat.
NETWORKING	
◆	Marie Dubois pointed out that, based on last year's daily attendance rates, the 'Forum' was a huge success. Still, everyone agreed that more networking opportunities should be organised.
LEARNING ABOUT POLICY THEORY AND IMPLEMENTATION	
◆	Workshop organisers could be asked to present a real-life case at the end of their workshops to illustrate how a given policy was being implemented in their region or city. This should help participants gain a better understanding of the issues at stake.
BRANDING AND COMMUNICATION	
◆	Dmitri Golakov presented the branding and communication measures that the WG needs to take before REGION WEEK 20XX: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Prepare goody bags for attendees of the opening session: these will contain the same items as last year, i.e. a lapel pin, notebook, and pen (all branded with the CRR logo), the REGION WEEK 20XX programme, and flyers and brochures provided by other EU institutions. - Communicate about the event: an IT expert should carry out a thorough review of the website: quite a few errors crept into the content last year and must be corrected. - Arrange music for the event: a licence for playing recorded music in public places still needs to be purchased and artists' royalties will have to be paid.
PRACTICALITIES	
◆	Andy McMillan confirmed that venues had been tentatively booked for this year's REGION WEEK and that a draft schedule incorporating all submitted workshop ideas had been drawn up and was already quite tight
◆	As was the case last year, some good workshop ideas were submitted after the 20XX deadline. Andy confirmed that a number of venues could still be booked if extra events need to be organised.



CRR
Central Secretariat

CONSOLIDATED
FEEDBACK PAGE

> Subject: REGION WEEK advertising

Teresa Ann | 04/12/20XX-1

All necessary updates to the website need to be finished as soon as possible, as it is the primary channel of communication and, for many people, the first exposure they have to the event.

Ryan Svensson | 19/12/20XX-1

A thorough redesign of the website (e.g. migrating to a new host to handle more traffic, or making the website more user friendly) is needed but would require a major effort. This is a project for the coming years.

> Subject: networking events

Luigi Mazzi | 15/12/20XX-1

The 'Forum' should be run as a real café. Charging low prices at the café would encourage more participants to go there.

> Subject: workshops

Leon Meyer | 05/12/20XX-1

Currently, workshops focus too much on top-down learning. Surveys have shown that REGION WEEK participants would prefer to have a more open exchange with their EU officials.

Tia Fitzgerald | 10/12/20XX-1

Workshops during REGION WEEK are too focused on policy theory and should include more practical cases so that participants can learn about policy implementation as well. However, surely no single work case can be relevant to all participants.

> Subject: affiliated events

Miodrag Nikolić | 27/01/20XX

If authorised, affiliated events could compete with the main programme: a cap should therefore be imposed on the number of affiliated events.