

The project «ROAD» was funded with the support of the European Union under the Programme "Europe for Citizens"

Applicable to the Strand 2 – Measure 2.3 "Civil Society Projects"

63 events 10 webinars and 5 surveys involving 3903 citizens have been carried out within this project. Over 1800 indirect participants were reached through national Rural Parliaments and rural women´s days. More detailed info can be found at the following websites

Beneficiary <https://suomenkylat.fi/hankkeet/eurooppalainen-maaseutuparlamentti-erp/>
ERP Official www.europeanruralparliament.com under advocacy and themes
Gathering data www.erp2019.eu/news

The Gathering involved 335 citizens

Event 1 Gathering (7 in the application) – The 4th European Rural Parliament – ERP 2019

Participation: The project involved **335** citizens, representing 38 countries, 3 participants from **Albania**, 6 from **Armenia**, 6 from **Austria**, 3 from **Belarus**, 5 from **Belgium**, 3 from **Bosnia&Herzegovina**, 5 from **Croatia**, 2 from **Cyprus**, 8 from **Czech Republic**, 3 from **Denmark**, 6 from **Estonia**, 10 from **Finland**, 7 from **France**, 4 from **Georgia**, 9 from **Germany**, 3 from **Greece**, 4 from **Hungary**, 7 from **Iceland**, 13 from **Ireland**, 8 from **Italy**, 3 from **Kosovo**, 16 from **Latvia**, 4 from **Lithuania**, 4 from **Moldova**, 1 from **Montenegro**, 5 from the **Netherlands**, 7 from **N-Macedonia**, 6 from **Poland**, 6 from **Portugal**, 12 from **Romania**, 3 from **Serbia**, 7 from **Slovakia**, 6 from **Slovenia**, 106 from **Spain**, 8 from **Sweden**, 1 from **Turkey**, 2 from **Ukraine** and 23 from **UK**.

Location/ Dates: The event took place in **Candás** in the region of the Principality of Asturias, Spain, from 06/11/2019 to 09/11/2019.

Short description:

The day of **06/11/2019** was dedicated to welcome the Asturian culture and Official Registrations at the registration desk located at the Ortiz Old Factory, the ERP 2019 central hub for the whole week. There was a cultural evening with activities and music with some performance – regional music groups, typical dancing, popular chorus, etc. with an 'Amagüestu' and 'Espicha (Asturian traditional meals).

The day of **07/11/2019** was dedicated to learn and disseminate with Field Visits. The host organisation gave the official welcome to Candás and to the 4th European Rural Parliament. ERP 2019 Field Visits took place throughout the day from 9.45 to 18.000 and there were 6 in total around all regions of Asturias according to the zone and location. Each Field Visits had a leader who explained the content and two reporters who took notes from the visits and projects. After the 'Visit Day', there was a Gala Dinner in a big restaurant with all the ERP delegates and official speeches to liven up the super.

The day of **08/11/2019** was dedicated to working and networking with the 1st plenary 'Opening and introduction to the 4th European Rural Parliament' with the host intervention and ERP Co-Initiating Partners, followed by the Opening Speech from the Government of the Principality of Asturias, and the introduction of the ERP with the explanation of the work and conclusions since the last gathering. Then there was an intervention from the DG AGRI, and some inspirational speakers to set the context of the discussions. The plenary culminated with 5 inspirational speakers who talked about local examples of rural development, and the directions for the workshops. The networking lunch took place at the Ortiz Old Factory. This day also took place the Workshops and Market of Initiatives at the Multipurpose Center 'La Baragaña', and some of them run two sessions. There was also the official ERP Partners Meeting. At the beginning of the evening some intercultural activities took place in the central hub, i.e. National Exhibitions with big stands per country, group discussions, etc. It took place a big international networking dinner with a mixture between Asturian food and local produce from different countries, and some musical performances were organised to set the cultural exchange and tasting of international products.

The day of **09/11/2019** was dedicated to giving rural people a voice with the last two plenaries. The 2nd plenary 'The future of European Rural Policy' was dedicated to talk about the environment as the best guarantee for the future of rural territories with the first speech, and the second part consisted in a Panel Discussion 'The future of European Rural Policy' run by EU experts from some important entities and bodies, i.e. MEPs, Policy Officers from DG AGRI, CoR, and EESC. This panel was chaired by the president of ARC2020. The 3rd plenary 'Results, discussion and message' started with the main message from the ERP, followed by the speech from the ERP Co-Initiating Partners (ERCA, ELARD, PREPARE) about building the future of the ERP, and ended with the official signing of the Candás Declaration by ERCA, ELARD, PREPARE and the host organisation READER. There was a 'Thank you!' session after the plenaries and the official closing of The 4th ERP 2019 with a speech from the Government of the Principality of Asturias, followed by the Asturias and Europe anthems. The ERP concluded with an excellent and big networking lunch at the 'Ortiz Old Factory', the central hub of the week and gathering. Official ERP documents resulting from the process and event were finalised by the end of January 2020.

Connecting with research – 2 events involving 99 participants were organised under this theme

Event 2 – Target Rural (Main event)

Participation: The event involved 71 citizens, including 66 participants from (Finland), 2 participants from Denmark, 1 participant from Slovenia, 1 participant from Estonia and 1 participant from Japan

Location / Dates: The event took place in (**Ähtäri, Finland**) from 22/08/2019 to 23/08/2019

Short description: The aim of the event was to better connect research with rural communities and see how partnerships are used in rural development. Several cases were presented in the workshops. Partnerships in service providing, smart villages and issues related to smart decline were discussed. Also a network of researchers was initiated here and developed later in the project.

- "Added value is bad at capturing non-measurable quantities" and "we take the easy as measurable in development". "What alternative forms of organising/organisations can capture alternative valuation and different understanding of values"
- Contracts are something fixed for future and for specific issues whereas partnerships are promises on a more open and functional future
- Partnerships are prosessual arrangements, well suited on negotiations over values.
- Disadvantage: they produce a surplus of possibilities and are also subject of complexity.
- Political awareness and action is needed to tackle the different rural realities

Event 3 - subevent Circural Rural Hackathon

Participation: The event involved 28 citizens, including 15 participants from Sweden, 6 participants from Ukraine, 4 participants from Lithuania, 2 participants from Poland, 1 participant from Finland and 1 participant from Estonia

Location / Dates: The event took place in (Kalmar, Sweden), from 18/10/2019 to 19/10/2019

Short description: The aim of the event was to test with young researchers and rural developers the hackathon method in rural business development. Participants came out with solutions to local companies in presence of professionals, researchers, young researchers and rural developers.

Youth network in ERP 15 events and 8 webinars involving 553 participants have been carried out within this theme. Slovakia arranged a series of event on youth engagement and info about ERP.

Event 4 – 2nd European Rural Youth Parliament (Main event)

Participation: The event involved 78 citizens from 16 countries (Latvia 7, Spain 13, Finland 2, Germany 2, UK 1, Ireland 1, Slovakia 6, Austria 1, Italy 1, Belgium 4, Czechia 6, Bosnia and Herzegovina 10, North Macedonia 6, Kosovo 2, Croatia 12, Greece 1, Albania 3),

Location / Dates: The event took place in Candás, Asturias, Spain from 04/11/2019 to 06/11/2019

Short description: As a pre-event of European Rural Parliament, not less important, the second European Rural Youth Parliament took place. Participants gathered to state youths' perspective on European Rural manifesto and to create European Rural Youth Declaration. Later, constructive discussions with European Parliament representatives were held in Brussels. The European Rural Youth Parliament is a powerful platform of making youth opinions regarding rural development challenges heard in European level. The most urging issues were identified and brought to the table to find solutions tackling them. All outcomes have a strong foundation – diverse views from people representing different countries and fields.

Event 5 - Subevent - Village looking for young people to engage

Participation: The event involved 84 citizens, including 22 participants from Kleve (Germany), 62 participants from several villages in the Netherlands

Location / Dates: The event took place in Kleve (Germany), on 11/10/2019

Short description: The aim of the event was discussing with young people how they can be engaged in contributing to the quality of life of their village. Workshops and participative methods were used.

Event 6 – subevent - Youth council Hyvinkää

Participation: The event involved 20 citizens, including 19 participants from Finland and 1 participant from Kosovo.

Location / Dates: The event took place in Hyvinkää (Finland), on 29/5/2019

Short description: The aim of the event was discussing with young people about policy and what they would change in future youth policies in the municipality and in Europe. They wanted to be listened at and were concerned about climate issues

Event 7– Subevent - Rural Development policy forum SEE

Participation: The youth event involved 23 citizens, including 5 participants from Montenegro, 5 participants from Serbia, 3 participants from Latvia, 2 from Czech republic, 2 from N-Macedonia, 2 from Kosovo, 1 from Albania, 1 from Turkey, 1 from Poland, 1 from Slovakia.

Location / Dates: The event took place in Zlatibor Serbia on 10-12.9.2019

Short description: The Rural development policy forum of SEE countries 2019 addressed the topic of the position of youth in rural areas. The Forum was attended by relevant stakeholders in this field (representatives of regional and national youth networks, representatives of European, regional and national rural development networks, representatives of relevant ministries and institutions for youth, representatives of civil society organizations, journalists, as well as youth

from rural areas of the Balkan countries). The Forum was attended by over 50 participants from 12 countries.

Event 8 – subevent Workshop at secondary school

Participation: The event involved 27 citizens, including 26 students and 1 teacher from the county Pruské of Slovakia.

Location / Dates: The event took place in Pruské, Slovakia on 7/11/2018.

Short description: The aim of the event was to discuss rural engagement with young people. Within this event there was a short presentation of ERP platform. Also information on the European Rural youth Parliament was presented.

Event 9 - Subevent - Workshop at secondary school

Participation: The event involved 47 citizens, including 44 students and 3 teachers from the county Prešov of Slovakia.

Location / Dates: The event took place in Prešov, Slovakia on 08/04/2019.

Short description: The aim of the event was to talk with young people about their engagement in politics. Within this event there was a short presentation of ERP platform. Also information on the European Rural youth Parliament was presented.

Event 10 – Subevent - Workshop at secondary school

Participation: The event involved 23 citizens, including 22 students and 1 teacher from the town Želovce of Slovakia.

Location / Dates: The event took place in Želovce, Slovakia on 29/04/2019.

Short description: The aim of the event was to talk with young people about their engagement in politics. Within this event there was a short presentation of ERP platform. Also information on the European Rural youth Parliament was presented.

Event 11 - Subevent - Workshop at secondary school

Participation: The event involved 32 citizens, including 32 students from the town Modrý Kameň of Slovakia.

Location / Dates: The event took place in Modrý Kameň, Slovakia on 29/04/2019.

Short description: The aim of the event was to talk with young people about their engagement in politics. Within this event there was a short presentation of ERP platform. Also information on the European Rural youth Parliament was presented.

Event 12 – subevent - Workshop at secondary school

Participation: The event involved 34 citizens, including 29 students and 5 teachers from the town Poltár of Slovakia.

Location / Dates: The event took place in Poltár, Slovakia on 30/04/2019.

Short description: The aim of the event was to talk with young people about their engagement in politics. Within this event there was a short presentation of ERP platform. Also information on the European Rural youth Parliament was presented.

Event 13 - Subevent - Workshop at secondary school

Participation: The event involved 63 citizens, including 61 students and 2 teachers from the town Kežmarok of Slovakia.

Location / Dates: The event took place in Kežmarok, Slovakia on 15/05/2019.

Short description: The aim of the event was to talk with young people about their engagement in politics. Within this event there was a short presentation of ERP platform. Also information on the European Rural youth Parliament was presented.

Event 14 – Subevent - Informational meeting within the project “Rural Youth in Slovakia”

Participation: The event involved 11 citizens from the county Martin of Slovakia.

Location / Dates: The event took place in Žabokreky, Slovakia on 13/07/2019.

Short description: The aim of the event was to gather young people living in rural areas of Slovakia and to discuss rural issues. Within this event there was a short presentation of ERP platform. Also information on the European Rural youth Parliament was presented.

Event 15 – Subevent - Seminar within the project “Rural Youth in Slovakia”

Participation: The event involved 26 citizens from the county Prešov of Slovakia.

Location / Dates: The event took place in Prešov, Slovakia on 03/10/2019.

Short description: The aim of the event was to gather young people living in rural areas of Slovakia and to discuss rural issues and present outputs of the project. Within this event there was a short presentation of ERP platform. Also information on the European Rural youth Parliament was presented.

Event 16 – subevent - 1st meeting of NGO Rural Youth Parliament in Slovakia

Participation: The event involved 8 citizens from rural areas of Slovakia.

Location / Dates: The event took place in Zvolen, Slovakia on 01/12/2019.

Short description: The aim of the event was to gather active young people living and working in rural areas of Slovakia and to present them the aim of RYPS. Within this event there was a short presentation of ERP platform.

Event 17 – Subevent - Meeting with EU stakeholders in Brussels “The Best is yet to Come!”

Participation: The event involved 14 citizens from 9 countries (Latvia, Belgium, Kosovo, Germany, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, North Macedonia, Czechia, Slovakia)

Location / Dates: Brussels, Belgium, on 30/01/2020.

Short description: The aim of the event was ERP Youth delegation of 14 young activists have taken part in important meetings with European stakeholders in Brussels on 30 January 2020 to disseminate the results of ERYP

Subevent webinars, applicable to theme “Youth” - 8 webinars have been carried out within this project: Each webinar had a specific topic, all contributing to the youth network development and the European Rural Youth Parliament in Candás.

Event – Webinar 1

Participation: The event involved 5 participants online.

Location / Dates: The event took place online, on 26/03/2019

Short description: Simone Matouch (Forum Synergies, Austria) and Anu Suotula (Keskipiste-Leader ry, Finland) about Forum Synergies scholarship programme and Europarc youth manifesto.

Event – Webinar 2

Participation: The event involved 5 participants online.

Location / Dates: The event took place online, on 30/04/2019

Short description: Brigita Medne (Association “Pierīgas partnerība”, Latvia) about methods of youth involvement and the youth work manual LOCAL ACTION YOUTH, 5 participants.

Event – Webinar 3

Participation: The event involved 4 participants online.

Location / Dates: The event took place online, on 28/05/2019

Short description: Henrik Løvschall (Idrætshøjskolen Aarhus, Denmark) about nonformal, alternative, after-high school education in Denmark.

Event – Webinar 4

Participation: The event involved 3 participants online.

Location / Dates: The event took place online, on 25/06/2019

Short description: Michal Beneš (Active youngster from Czech Republic) about convenient traveling opportunities and hitch-hiking.

Event – Webinar 5

Participation: The event involved 4 participants online.

Location / Dates: The event took place online, on 30/07/2019

Short description: Leotrim Germizaj (Network of Organizations for Rural Development of Kosovo) about EU opportunities for networking and inequality decreasing activities.

Event – Webinar 6

Participation: The event involved 10 participants online.

Location / Dates: The event took place online, on 27/08/2019

Short description: Atreyu Anahata (Sunseed, Spain) about sustainable lifestyle, environmental activism, remote community in Southern Spain.

Event – Webinar 7

Participation: The event involved 7 participants online.

Location / Dates: The event took place online, on 24/09/2019

Short description: Sara Neagu (MIJARC Europe, Romania) about digital tools for youth participation in decision-making process.

Event - Webinar 8

Participation: The event involved 35 participants online.

Location / Dates: The event took place online, on 29/10/2019

Short description: ERYP and other interested one's discussion on rural development challenges in Europe, work on European Rural Youth Declaration.

<p>Communities development and volunteering - 7 events with a total of 722 participants have been carried out within this theme</p>
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Event 18 – Estonian Rural Parliament (Main event)

Participation: The event involved 102 citizens, including 89 participants from Estonia, 6 participants from Finland, 2 participants from UK, 2 participants from Russia and 1 participant from Denmark, Greece and Sweden each

Location / Dates: The event took place in Rāpinā, **Estonia** from 26-28.7.2019.

Short description: The event was arranged in cooperation with the ROAD-project and the European Rural Parliament. The international part of the event had 102 participants from 7 countries. The Estonian Rural Parliament included plenaries and workshops among the latter the international workshop: "Volunteer work and village leadership in Nordic and Baltic countries" where participants from all countries represented were sharing experiences on how to define, value and appreciate volunteer work and its importance. Also various ways of structuring the volunteer work in different countries were discussed – all to share, and to bring back inspiration. Village elders, ombudsmen or regional village NGO's in partnerships with different decisionmakers were considered as good support systems.

Event 19 subevent Communities and volunteering workshop

Participation: The event involved 10 participants including 4 participants from Kosovo, 2 participants from Albania, Serbia, 1 from Croatia and 1 from Czech Republic.

Location / dates: The event was organised in Peja, Kosovo 30-31.10.2018.

Short description: The participants discussed NGO's roles and voluntary work cases in different countries. The appreciation, value and support systems to voluntary work are not similar in different countries. Solutions to better integrate voluntary work in the local development processes were discussed.

Event 20 – support event GA HSSL Sweden

Participation: The event involved 65 citizens, including 64 participants from Sweden and 1 from Norway.

Location / Dates: The event took place in Stockholm, Sweden 16.4.2019

Short description: Information on ERP and communities/volunteering was given to the participants by the Chair. Also the upcoming event in Estonia was discussed in the meeting

Event 21 - subevent - International WS on Smart villages Poland

Participation: The event involved 79 citizens, including 65 participants from Poland, 3 participants from Latvia, 2 participants from Ukraine, 1 participant from Lithuania, Montenegro, Romania, Finland, Estonia, Austria, Denmark and Hungary each.

Location / Dates: The event took place in Warzaw, Poland 21.22.10 2019

Short description: The Polish Rural Network held a workshop in Warsaw, Poland on Smart Villages - as an effective way to address key challenges in rural areas. Many rural communities are starting to look for innovative smart solutions to a variety of local challenges and many interesting cases were shown. The winner of a smart village competition was declared.

Event 22 – support event Lokaali Finland

Participation: The event involved 128 citizens, including 125 participants from Finland and 1 participant from Slovenia, Denmark and Canada each.

Location / Dates: The event took place in Kauhava, Finland 23-25.5.2019

Short description: People from villages came together for 2 days to discuss about village development and solutions for future. In the workshops were discussed local solutions as to services. The main themes were digitisation, traffic and transports, village schools and the future of youth in rural areas. A 18-page report on solutions was provided. Below some solutions:

- everyone does not have access to internet and thereby to digital services. capacities of elderly should be enhanced. Why not activate youth?
- Mobility to be made easier - cars in common use, mobility apps, service car for the village, on-line cooperatives
- Public support for village schools, teleteaching, multiservice points in village schools
- Capacities for youth in cooperative and social entrepreneurship

Event 23 - subevent – Scottish Rural Parliament

Participation: The event involved 334 citizens, including 329 participants from UK, 3 from Ireland,

Location / Dates: The event took place in Stranraer, Dumfries & Galloway, Scotland 14-16.11.2018

Short description: The national Rural Parliament addressed several issues like climate, entrepreneurship, refugees, services, land regulations with a certain emphasis on Brexit. One main result was the 10-point policy statement “Engaging Scotland’s rural communities on Brexit”.

<https://scottishruralparliament.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/SRP-POLICY-STATEMENT-FINAL.pdf>

Event 24 – Sub-event Road partners and non Road partners. Meeting to ensure/improve future cooperation and setting procedures for same

Participation: The meeting had 4 participants (Was meant to include more participants, but last minutes changes made this impossible), including 1 participant from the city of Brønderslev, 1 participant from Horsens, 1 participant from Aarhus and 1 participant from Copenhagen (all from Denmark)

Location / Dates: The meeting took place in Odder, Denmark on the 13th January 2020

Short description: The aim of the meeting was ensure good future cooperation with the members of LDF especially the new members: the Danish LAGs and how to ensure the best possible use of our active and shared participation in ELARD, European LEADER Association for Rural Development and ERP, European Rural Parliament. Our common goal is to support participation

and good communication supporting stakeholder involvement in decision-making at national level as well as at EU-level.

Main suggestions or policies: ELARD and ERP representative will report to LDF who will make use of their in-house channels of communication (mail, Website and FB) to ensure the information is shared with stakeholders / members. LDF will ensure information also from members to the European representatives. All this to ensure the best possible benefits for stakeholders and with special focus on active involvement.

LEADER/CLLD for citizens and for the European Union – 6 events and 2 online-surveys involving 409 participants have been carried out within this theme

Short description of the theme - aims and activities

Europe is losing the connection with its citizens. The project aims to find answers for a more participative, inclusive citizens role in local rural matters in a partnership context.

Case studies, impact assessment and obstacle-analysis are done and supported by discussions at different levels.

Event 25 Main event - LEADER/CLLD seminar in Estonia at LINC Conference

Participation: The event involved 99 citizens from 12 countries (Estonia, Lithuania, Finland, Austria, Latvia, Romania, Germany, Czech Republic, Georgia, Poland, Hungary, Italy), including 40 participants from Estonia, 5 from Lithuania, 8 from Finland, 7 from Austria, 8 from Latvia, 6 from Romania, 8 from Germany, 5 from Czech Republic, 7 from Georgia, 2 from Poland, 2 from Hungary, 1 from Italy.

Location / Dates: The event took place in Pärnu, Estonia on 12th of September 2019.

Short description:

On 12 September, ELARD held a LEADER/CLLD seminar in Pärnu, Estonia, within the framework of European Rural Parliament ROAD project theme work and as part of the international LINC conference. The primary goal of the seminar was to introduce the application of the LEADER method in the utilisation of various European Union structural funds, particularly the European Regional Development Fund and the European Social Fund. There were more than 100 participants at the seminar. The seminar began with an introduction to the research conducted by ELARD on the application of multi-funds (ERDF, ESF), which more specifically focused on the application of these funds in other EU countries, the success stories and the main added value.

Karolina Jasinska, European Commission, DG Agriculture and Rural Development gave her reassurance that the Commission's position facilitates and encourages Member States to use different European funds for rural development, but multi-fund approach implementation needs a strong commitment and the coordination of involved ministries on a national level.

Radim Sršeň, a LEADER practitioner from Czech Republic and a member of the European Committee of Regions presented his recent opinion document entitled "CoR's contribution to the renewed Territorial Agenda and pointed out that his opinion includes several supportive statements and arguments for the implementation of multi-funds and rural-urban linkages.

The final presentation of the seminar was delivered by **Michael Hohenwarter** from Regional Management East Tyrol stating that multi-funding from the LAG's perspective provides an opportunity for a more holistic development approach and allows the LAG to function as a one-stop shop for applicants in rural areas.

The panel discussed about the budget reduction, the increased role given to the member states and the implications.

Event 26 – subevent ELARD members meeting on LEADER/CLLD advocacy

Participation: The event involved **23 citizens from 16 countries**, including 1 participant from Denmark, 1 participant from Spain, 3 participants from Portugal, 1 from the Netherlands, 2 from



Greece, 3 from Slovenia, 1 from Finland, 1 from Latvia, 2 from Czech Republic, 1 from Austria, 2 from Sweden, 1 from France, 1 from Hungary, 1 from Germany, 1 from Lithuania, 1 from Estonia.
Location / Dates: The event took place in Brussels, Belgium on 30.01.2019.

Short description: On the 30th of January an ELARD Members meeting with representatives of Local Action Groups Networks was held in Brussels and part of the agenda was the ROAD thematic project “LEADER/CLLD for citizens and for the European Union”. The main aim of the meeting was to clarify the needs and priority actions for LEADER/CLLD thematic work in the frame of ROAD project. 23 participants representing LAGs from 16 Member States had a long discussion on the future of LEADER and CLLD, in the framework post 2020 legislative proposals, both for the Common Agriculture Policy and for the Cohesion Policy. The participants were of the opinion that the legislative proposals (for the Common Provisions, the Cohesion Policy and the CAP) should ensure that, in each Member State, a real multi-funded CLLD is possible, which has to include reinforced funding from Rural Development Fund and ring-fencing of funding in the other Funds (Regional, Social and Fisheries), they also stressed the importance of Rural Development to be part of the Common Provisions Regulation and multi-funded CLLD to be part of the Partnership Agreement of each Member State. The achievements of LEADER/CLLD have shown that Local Action Groups (LAGs) are able to defend the European values, if recognised as local drivers for change and development and enabled to innovate in their areas, materializing the “Europe closer to citizens” objective, proposed by European Commission.

Event 27 – subevent - LEADER/CLLD seminar in Portugal

Participation: The event involved 64 citizens from Portugal from different regions.

Location / Dates: The event took place in Torre de Moncorvo, North of Portugal on 20th March 2019.

Short description:

Minha Terra Network, the Portuguese partner of the European Rural Parliament, that brings together all the 60 Rural Local Action Groups in Portugal, organized a meeting under the ROAD (Rural Opinions, Advocacy and Development) project, supported by the Europe for Citizens Programme, in Torre de Moncorvo, North of Portugal, at the 20th March. In this meeting the 64 participants, representing 40 Local Development Associations and LAGs, were informed on the European Rural Parliament activities and the final gathering in Asturias, in November. Minha Terra also informed on Conference “How to make rural areas the engines of a sustainable Europe” held by European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) and the European Rural Parliament (ERP) on March 14. The implementation of LEADER and multi-funded CLLD in Portugal and all the constraints felt by project promoters and LAGs, were deeply analysed amongst participants at the meeting. Local Development Associations and Minha Terra Network decided to prepare in the coming months “Pact for Local Development 2021-2027 to be discussed and endorsed by a large group of national, regional and local stakeholders.

Event 28 - LEADER/CLLD seminar and study visit in Sweden

Participation: The event involved 41 citizens from 2 countries, including 1 participant from Sweden and 40 participants from Czech Republic.

Location / Dates: The event took place in Tiraholm, Halland, Sweden on 16th of October 2019.

Short description: The seminar took place in the frame of study visit of Czech delegation. The survey on best practice in CLLD using ERDF and ESF conducted as part of ROAD-project within the European Rural Parliament (ERP) was introduced. Practices from Austria, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Poland, Sweden, Croatia were introduced as well as results of analysis of these practices. Participants had possibility also to visit Swedish examples of multifunded local development strategy implementation during the study visit that followed to the seminar.

Survey 1 – subevent - Survey on ESF and ERDF usage via LEADER approach

Participation: The event involved directly 6 citizens as responders of the survey from 6 countries (Austria, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Poland, Sweden, Croatia). There were about 30 LAGs that contributed to the survey in these 6 countries sending their examples.

Location / Dates: The event was Europe wide and took place May-October 2019.

Short description: This Survey was conducted by ELARD, within the theme “LEADER/CLLD for citizens and for the European Union” as part of the ROAD project within the European Rural Parliament (ERP). Marion Eckardt worked out the format of the survey and collected information from LEADER and rural development networks across Europe. The purpose of the work was:

- To identify case studies in the Member States in order to demonstrate the added value of the use of ESF and ERDF via the LEADER approach;
- To identify case studies and implementation models in the Member States to show the contribution of LEADER/CLLD to good governance, social innovation, smart villages, capacity building, innovation practice, etc. on a local level;
- To conclude and declare suggestions on how LEADER/CLLD can strengthen the connection between the European Union and its citizens at local level via integrated local development and the well managed use of different ESI Funds. 52-page survey with good practice and conclusions is available on ELARD website www.elard.eu

Survey 2 Subevent - Survey on Simplified Cost Options and simplified procedures

Participation: The event involved directly 25 citizens as responders of the survey from 20 countries (Austria, Bulgaria, Estonia, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Greece, Poland, Sweden, Slovenia, Slovakia, Bulgaria, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Portugal, Romania), including 3 participants from Finland, 2 participants from the Netherlands, 2 participants from Romania. The rest of countries had 1 participant per country submitting responses, but the number of LAGs that were involved into the process in all countries was about 2000.

Location / Dates: The event was Europe wide and took place September-December 2019.

Short description: The survey was conducted in the frame of the European Rural Parliament ROAD project LEADER/CLLD theme work in order to explore good simplification practices that were used by LAGs and managing authorities across Europe. The main aim of the survey was to contribute to the LEADER/CLLD legislative proposals to be used in Member States and also outside of the EU to design balanced legislation for the implementation of a LEADER bottom-up approach for the next programming period.

All the submitted cases were analysed and 10 good practices were selected in total under the categories: administration, animation, transnational cooperation, project beneficiaries

The outcome of the survey is available at www.elard.eu

Event 29 – subevent - LEADER/CLLD Conference in Portugal, Amarante

Participation: The event involved 126 citizens from 20 countries (Denmark, Estonia, Latvia, Italy, Spain, Sweden, Bulgaria, Belgium, Slovenia, Germany, Greece, Portugal, Poland, Czech Republic, the Netherlands, Austria, Georgia, Ireland, Romania, Lithuania), including 85 participants from Portugal, 2 from Latvia, 1 from Greece, 2 from Romania, 5 Italy, 2 from Belgium European Commission, 9 from Georgia, 1 from Slovenia, 2 from Germany, 3 from Czech Republic, 3 from the Netherlands, 2 from Denmark, 1 from Estonia, 1 from Spain, 1 from Sweden, 1 from Bulgaria, from Poland, 2 from Austria, 1 from Ireland, 1 from Lithuania. LEADER/CLLD seminar involved 34 citizens from 8 countries (Ireland, Portugal Czech Republic, Georgia, Slovenia, Denmark, Germany, Latvia), including 20 participants from Portugal, 1 from Ireland, 1 from Czech Republic, 7 from Georgia, 1 from Slovenia, 2 from Denmark, 1 from Germany, 1 from Latvia.

Location / Dates: The event took place in Portugal, Amarante on 26th of November 2019.

Short description: The conference gave an overview of the extent to which the CLLD instrument has been adopted across the EU. It shows the variety of models in different EU Member States and regions, ranging from a simple continuation of the 2007-13 mono-Fund approach to a country-wide use of multiple Funds in all LAGs in 2014-2020. LEADER/CLLD conference included the introduction of surveys conducted in the frame of ROAD project. Marion Eckardt, Vice-President of ELARD and Manager of LAG Halland, Sweden introduced the added value of ERDF and ESF



projects under CLLD. Kristiina Tammets, Vice-President of ELARD and Manager of LAG Tartu, Estonia delivered presentation about inputs from ELARD survey on simplification.

Event 30 – subevent – Croatia X-factor

Participation The event involved 25 citizens from Croatia

Location / Dates The event took place **Tisno, Croatia, on 22.5.2019**

Short description: Research, analysis and reports highlight the importance of improvement local community management system, that is the goal involve stakeholders from the local area in the adoption processes a decision emphasizing the importance of a bottom-up approach because each rural area has its own characteristics, potentials, peculiarities and distinctiveness and should be built upon planning for the future. Also, by establishing local partnerships, and an integral and multi-sectoral approach, contributes and the importance of achieving sustainable rural development the younger generations of mayors and mayors also play a role young people in the local community who innovate approach and innovative solutions indicate the importance of facing different challenges and ways management - digitalization, information and communication technologies, multiple sources of financing (the public budget plays a very important role in supporting rural communities, but it is facing increasing requirements, and the reason is a general increase in the cost of living and an increase in the cost of providing services), public involvement in decision-making processes, transparent governance, networking and collaboration. The goal is to make the specific rural area comfortable and acceptable for the life and work of its population.

Maintaining rural UK links with Europe 14 events, one online-survey and one webinar with a total of 384 participants have been carried out within this theme.

Purpose of Project

To bring together ERP partners in England, Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland in order to demonstrate commitment to European relations and to enable a voice in Europe. The partners were to consider the situation of rural development post-Brexit and future working relations with other EU Countries. It was intended that a fringe event at the Scottish Rural Parliament in November 2018 would bring together ERP partners to discuss possible policies and solutions which would be shared during workshops across the UK and discussed with partner ERP Countries.

Rural Opinion Advocacy and Development (ROAD) 2018/19

Maintaining UK Rural Links with Europe

This Report sets out the work that was carried out and achievements of the UK ROAD Project.

Results of our ROAD Project

1. The UK ERP partners have joined with Republic of Ireland and set up the UK & Ireland Rural Network. This Network will allow each of our Countries to better understand how we can share information between our organisations and ultimately with our European partners.
2. The project has confirmed that all sectors agree on the importance and necessity of maintaining links between the UK and Europe post Brexit.
3. We reached over 385 rural people during our project.
4. Contributions were made by ERP Partner Countries: Latvia, Estonia, Denmark, Finland, Republic of Ireland, and Netherlands. Kosovo and Iceland expressed interest but were unable to join the Zoom meeting.
5. We have ideas and suggestions for how links can be maintained which we will take to the ERP Gathering and use to discuss and create an implementation plan.

England, Ireland, Northern Ireland, Wales

Event 31 – Main event - Maintaining UK links Workshop at the Scottish Rural Parliament

Participation: The event involved 25 citizens, including 22 participants from UK, 1 participant from Finland, Ireland and the Netherlands each.

Location / Dates: The event took place in Stranraer, Dumfries & Galloway, **Scotland 15.11.2018.**

Short description: The event was arranged in cooperation with the ROAD-project and the European Rural Parliament. Questions were answered to the following questions Why is it important to maintain links with Europe? What kind of links do we need to maintain? How can we do that? Who needs to do it? All the events and the survey below answered to the the same set of questions and reported back at the main event. Answers were quite close to each other so main elements are reported here. Longer reports are available on the events.

Survey 3 - subevent - Scottish Rural Action's survey was adjusted with input from all partners and, using Survey Monkey, created for use by all participating countries. **It received 171 responses** from across England, Wales, Ireland and Northern Ireland. It was used to find out how people felt about Brexit and its perceived impacts, their understanding of the funding their communities had received from the EU and opinions on the future of funding.

2 subevents were organised by England
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Event 32 – subevent Brexit discussions

Location The event took place in Kent/Stalisfield Village hall England on 21st March 2019

Participation: The event involved 8 citizens from England UK

Short description

Links between the UK and Europe are essential as some of the constraints on our rural economies are similar / the same, due to local geographies, climate, long-standing trade routes and technology-transfer mechanisms etc. We thus have much to share that is useful across borders and seas. A question remains as to how “early stage” knowledge transfer between rural areas might happen - especially if associated with activity that is not profit-generating – should the UK not participate in future EU programmes.

Subevent webinar 10 (ACRE)

Participation: 8 people from 7 countries UK, Latvia, Estonia, Denmark, Finland, Republic of Ireland, and Netherlands participated in a zoom webinar to debate on what after Brexit.

Location / Date Zoom 24.4.2019.

Short description International co-operation is key to everything but as Europeans and members of the European Rural Parliament (ERP) we need to adapt and seek new ways of working together post the availability of EU funding. The second key element is flexibility. We must share our knowledge and skills and not be protective as knowledge is power and should be shared in the interests of everyone. “Co-operation can happen without funding but that would be local UK County/region/area based action”. The important role for all of us in the ERP is sharing more widely across and outside the UK” Concerns about the disconnection of young people were raised at the workshops held in Stalisfield Village Hall, Kent and how this should be addressed. The discussion concluded that there would be challenges in working together on EU funded projects, but that networking needs to be self-run. We need to grow and develop existing mechanisms for future knowledge transfer and co-operation.

5 subevents were organised by Wales
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Event 33 – subevent - LEADER project events

Participation: The event involved 25 citizens, including 24 participants from UK and 1 from the Netherlands.



Location / Dates: The event took place in Pembrokeshire, Wales 10.12.2018

Event 34 – subevent - Regional LAG event

Participation: The event involved 22 citizens from UK

Location / Dates: The event took place in Pembrokeshire, Wales 24.1.2019

Event 35 – subevent - Pembrokeshire Enterprise Network

Participation: The event involved 34 citizens from UK

Location / Dates: The event took place in Pembrokeshire, Wales 29.1.2019

Event 36 – subevent - Community forum network

Participation: The event involved 18 citizens from UK.

Location / Dates: The event took place in Pembrokeshire, Wales 13.2.2019

Event 37 – subevent - West Wales Third Sector Conference

Participation: The event involved 6 citizens from UK.

Location / Dates: The event took place in West Wales, Wales 13.2.2019

3 subevents were organised by Northern Ireland

Event 38 – subevent - Cullyhanna ROAD workshop

Participation: The event involved 16 citizens from UK.

Location / Dates: The event took place in Cullyhanna, Northern Ireland 6.2.2019

Event 39 – subevent - Ballymoney ROAD workshop

Participation: The event involved 14 citizens from UK.

Location / Dates: The event took place in Ballymoney, Northern Ireland 14.2.2019

Event 40 - subevent Cookstown ROAD workshop

Participation: The event involved 22 citizens from UK.

Location / Dates: The event took place in Cookstown, Northern Ireland 12-13.3.2019

4 Subevents were organised by Ireland

Event 41 – subevent - Maintaining links Ireland

Participation: The event involved 3 citizens from Ireland.

Location / Dates: The event took place in Leitrim Ireland 7.2.2019

Event 42 – subevent - Maintaining links Ireland

Participation: The event involved 16 citizens from Ireland.

Location / Dates: The event took place in Limerick Ireland 13.2.2019

Event 43 subevent - Maintaining links Ireland

Participation: The event involved 3 citizens from Ireland.

Location / Dates: The event took place Monaghan in Ireland 21.2.2019

Event 44 – Maintaining links Ireland

Participation: The event involved 8 citizens from Ireland.

Location / Dates: The event took place in Ireland 23.2.2019

Below short descriptions and answers from the subevents 34 to 44

Wales/Planed

Why is it important to maintain links with Europe?	What kind of links do we need to maintain?	How can we do that?	Who needs to do it?
Because we are part of Europe!	Communication	Keep talking	Politicians
	Education		All of Us
It is imperative for trade, for good relationships for sustainability we need to reduce travel and cost for all trade 'buy locally'. This needs to be highest on any agenda.	Links across all sectors as well as relationships people paid with their lives when Europe was not united, we should not turn our back on our neighbours. We cannot compete alone with China / USA / Russia	We must talk about staying united and working together and playing together. EU is a structure we must work to replace with others. Enjoy our culture and celebrate others.	Everyone – government national and regional business networks and organisations supporting business. Education – positive messages about links with Europe.
Tourism, imports and exports. Welcoming the young	Travel and communication Better travel – trains, times and improved carriages as they have in Europe.	Keep advertising and welcoming travel and education	PLANED / LAGs – listening to our needs, worries – more importantly our future generations
It's important to maintain links with as many people as we can. To help to be helped, knowledge / skill sharing. Links with the EU will result in opportunity.	That is really difficult to answer. Links at all levels government, industry and education	Meet with and develop relationships individually and as organisations / groups.	Everyone
Historical, geographic	Rural development	As part of a government initiative	Welsh government
Collaboration is vital Sharing knowledge / skills / experience Avoiding island nation mentality	Skills Resources Trade People movement	Networks Political influence	Trade bodies / organisations Networks Politicians universities
To continue learning from one another and to share ideas	With community and business organisations	Networking and hosting organisations	Organisations AMs, MPs
We are part of Europe! Cultural, historical, demographically, economically. Most UK citizens ancestors came from the mainland of Europe.	Every kind – transport, energy, education, cultural, exchange visits more interreg type opportunities.	Regular international exchanges and information sharing. Hear from non UK residents to help everyone appreciate we are all humans, sharing this space.	Journalists, broadcasters, influences of public awareness

Joined up thinking – policy, law etc Improved business opportunities Improved travel opportunities Supporting our neighbours	Business links Travel links Financial links Links in law and policy	Remain in the EU Play an active role in national planning Meet regularly and maintain an open and honest dialogue. Consult at local level and feedback to international.	Local – regional – national – international. All levels
Networking, skill set. Exchanging views Free flow of transport links	Networking, skill set. Exchanging views Free flow of transport links	Dialogue and communication – and get on with it!	MPs
Networks and sharing ideas	Buses and cultural links	Existing mechanisms	Whoever is doing it already
Networking	Channels through which resources can flow	Regional expertise	Same people as now
Business / social / cultural links Financial – knowledge transfer	Exchange	Not leaving the EU	Filter down to local communities
To work together on projects to achieve mutual goals	Action Learning	Maintain the LAG type approach through UK funding	

Ireland

Essential that we retain links to Europe post Brexit. EU has brought investment in communities and in infrastructure. It has given communities and citizens a more global outlook and we are more outward looking as a region. We don't want to go back to a more inward looking region we have better quality of life now. Lots of us have family connections and some their childcare and health service providers on the other side of the Border. We want to ensure our children and grandchildren can continue to learn across Europe but particularly across the Border. We need to retain free movement of labour across the border. Research – lots of valuable research being done across a whole range of areas – especially in relation to mental health and well-being – we need to learn from that – our universities also benefitting from EU research funding and that creates new knowledge and in some cases new products/services/jobs.

Serious concerns expressed over what will replace single farm payment and importance of subsidy to support small farmers. Import and export charges on food and produce could have devastating effects – need to ensure any agreement supports jobs in the food industry on both sides of the Border and those jobs need to be protected.

General concern expressed about potential consequences on businesses of a no deal Brexit and a hard Border – businesses already under pressure and banks and other retail businesses closing in villages and smaller towns.

Will collaboration between NGOs become more difficult post Brexit? – North South co-operation between government departments may become more difficult to do – departments tend to operate in silos.

One concern is that we won't be able to grow the crop our buyers want without Dutch seed potato which has been developed to grow at this latitude and for relatively cold/wet soils.

Dairy farming is a cross border trade with milk moving both ways over the border from farms to processors and then back to shops/supermarkets for purchase by consumers.

Lamb production in NI will be wiped out if no deal due to the high tariffs imposed on exports into the EU.



EU environmental designations have been important in protecting the environment. We need to retain some link to these designations post Brexit to cover environmental sites/assets in rural areas that straddle the Border.

Need to retain links or at least a watching brief on what's happening with EU institutions; the European Parliament, the Commission and the Committees to be aware of evolving EU Rural development and farming/food/environmental policies. Especially important for NI who will share the only land border between the UK and the EU post Brexit. We need to try and align any future UK rural development policy with EU Rural development policy or at least ensure there are co-operation strands in both to enable rural networks to continue to work together after Brexit.

How to maintain links?

European Rural Parliament (ERP) is probably more important after Brexit for NGOs to maintain links with peers in Europe. Positive that ERP is broader than EU membership and includes European countries in the Balkans – we will have the same status vis-a-vis the EU post Brexit. ERP needs to consider how it can use its influence more with the EU institutions to shape policy for benefit of rural Europe.

Some participants argued that a case for Special Status for NI post Brexit be made to the EU and Westminster

Suggested that we consider lobbying EU to allow NGOs and academic institutions to participate in some EU programmes. Example given of the EU Northern Peripheries Programme which includes non-EU member states.

NGOs here need to identify and evidence the difficulties/challenges for rural citizens post Brexit and lobby for programmes/funding to address these challenges in a positive way.

Northern Ireland.

Economic Reasons

For Agriculture and other businesses, especially SME's and Micro businesses, it is important that links are maintained. The UK and Northern Ireland is the biggest market for Irish exports of agricultural produce but also for other Irish businesses. Also, in border counties, farmers land can cross the border and how this will be dealt with after Brexit was raised. The UK is used as a land bridge to the rest of the EU as it reduces the time of getting goods...

Social Reasons

There is a long history between UK and Ireland and good relationships have developed and grown over many years. The Good Friday Agreement was mentioned in all workshops and the benefits this has brought to communities on both sides of the border but also with the wider UK. PEACE funding altogether and Interreg projects in educational relations have been helpful...

People living on the border can access health care, dental care etc on both sides of the border.

Third level students have accessed education in the UK and Northern Ireland for many years and the freedom of students to study and through the Erasmus programme has been beneficial for both students and educational institutes....

Political Reasons

It is paramount that The Good Friday Agreement be protected and remain in place and take precedent over whatever Brexit deal/withdrawal agreement is done. Relationships have strengthened since the Good Friday Agreement and these must continue.

Culture and Heritage Reasons

The PEACE funding programme enabled a lot of cross border cultural projects develop since its inception. Bringing communities together through such projects has allowed communities to become more integrated. Also new communities and citizens that have moved to areas become involved in such projects.

What kind of links need to be maintained?

The networks that have been built over the years especially since the Good Friday Agreement must be maintained. This is at business, social and political level. It was common among the workshops that open borders are needed to ensure that links are kept.

How can these links be maintained?

The following are the main ideas that were discussed as how links can be maintained:

- Change nothing was identified as one way of maintaining links - continue as things are in terms of the community groups and exchanges that have developed regardless of Brexit outcome.
- Encouraging communities and networks, whether social, economic, cultural or political to maintain the links, networks and relationships that have already been formed over the past number of years is needed. Brexit should not dissolve the work already done in forming and growing these links and relationships.
- The Backstop Agreement was mentioned in one workshop as a way of maintaining links between Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland and having this honoured would ensure that links can be maintained.
- Northern Ireland must continue to benefit from EU initiatives as the south – PEACE projects can continue to build communities.
- Communities must be encouraged to continue to carry on integrating with one another both sides of the border. This could be done through regular cross border meetings/conferences/dialogues among community groups and regular cross border activity. It was raised among the people in one workshop of the fear of the 'us and them' coming back after Brexit and this needs to be avoided.
- Town twinning that already exists between towns in the UK and Northern Ireland and EU towns must be maintained and encouraging this into the future.
- Maintaining school exchanges between UK and EU second level education can also be a way of maintaining links and continuing the programme beyond Brexit.
- The Erasmus programme for third level students, allowing them to study in a college/university for part of their course, is another means of maintaining the links between the UK and EU. The Erasmus Plus fund for projects addressing adult learners and continuing to be able to access this by organisations from the UK and Northern Ireland was also identified as a way of maintaining links but also developing new links.
- The churches can play a role in maintaining links and building on the work already done, especially in border counties.
- It was noted in one of the workshops that maybe following Brexit new solutions instead of maintaining what is there will have to be explored – recognising that not all links and relations will be able to be maintained.

Who needs to maintain these links?

The three workshops gave the same feedback on this question that links must be maintained at all levels

Communities, NGO's, small enterprises and farms as partners in local economy 7 events and 1 survey involving with a total of 562 participants have been carried out within this theme.

Event 45 Main theme event: Communities, NGO's, small enterprises and farms as partners in Local economies

Participation: The event involved **45** citizens, including **34** participants from **Slovenia**, **3** participants from **Hungary**, **2** participants from **Slovakia**, **1** participant from **Finland**, **1** participant

from **Czech Republic**, 1 participant from **Montenegro**, 1 participant from **Latvia**, 1 participant from **Poland**, 1 participant from **Croatia**.

Location / Dates: The event took place in **Janževina, Janški vrh, Slovenia**, on **08/10/2019**.

Short description: The aim of the event was International conference on LOCAL ECONOMIES.

We started with the three presentations, including Rural stakeholders and their needs, Local partnerships responding to the needs, Manifestations of the local economies, Survey (ROAD – Civitas Romania). In the second part of the conference the participants formed smaller groups and worked in different topics. Conclusion debate was held in plenary session.

Main suggestions or policies:

General conclusions:

- Rural stakeholders are responsible to find the consensus/equilibrium while sharing the rural space with different groups of interest
- State supported programmes and alternative movements should build more intensive (Top-down : Bottom-up) exchange and cooperation
- Areas where different stakeholders, state, local communities and civil society co-operate, are in prosperity trends, rising the life-quality of majority

For CLLD - to be implemented well in the next programming period, we have to simplify the program. The following objectives must be achieved:

- Participation of all four EU funds
- Combine CLLD management into one governing body
- Establish one joint paying authority
- Uniform rules for all funds included in the CLLD
- Simplify the implementation of the CLLD program

Survey 4 Sub-event. CIVITAS Romania. Research on Cooperation in Local Economies

Participation: The event involved 66 citizens, including 62% from Romania, 8% from Latvia, 6% from Armenia, Belarus (5%) and Bulgaria (3%). The remaining 17% of the people questioned were in equal share from Finland, Sweden, Denmark, Belgium, Italy, Lithuania, Serbia, Albania and Greece.

Location / Dates: The survey took place via internet from 01/06/2019 to 07/10/2019.

Short description: The aim of the event was Research/survey on Cooperation in Local Economies.

Main suggestions or policies:

Based on the analysis of the questionnaire answered by 66 respondents, the following main conclusions can be determined:

- the level of local economic cooperation is influenced by economic, social and organizational factors that foster or discourage socioeconomic cooperation in rural areas;
- according to the analysis the most popular entities or possibilities that enable cooperative actions are partnerships projects and the Local Action Groups;
- from an economic perspective the most significant factors that motivate various actors to join common initiatives are the easier access to financial resources (when making part of a partnership) and the extended possibilities to distribute the created products or services, consequently to create a larger customer base;
- from an infrastructural perspective the access to public services such as electricity, water, internet was pointed as being imperative necessity to successful operation of joint ventures;
- next to this, from a human resource perspective the access to local knowledge was also considered important motivational aspect. The conducive factors that drive various stakeholders to get involved in collaborative action are the creation of diverse employment possibilities and the creation/use of local products/services;

- regarding the attitude towards competitors, there was a large compliance with the benefit of sustaining collaborative relationship with these, as there was a common agreement on the statement that competition instigates earlier achievement. Nevertheless, there was a mutual and wide uncertainty regarding the threatening nature of competitors;
- when considering to take up innovative approaches the greatest partners to appeal to were considered to be the Local Action Groups, universities and NGOs. The latter ones were also seen as helpful sources of information together with the local public institutions yet, the internet was pointed to be the main source of information for everyday professional decisions;
- the main sources of funding for common initiatives are the non-refundable funds from EU, own funds and non-refundable funds from other sources such as private foundations for example;
- the greatest economic contribution of joint initiatives on an entity was the possibility to get better access to projects/investments and the support in diversifying the business activities on the local market;
- the greatest economic contribution of a partnership to the rural areas is through offering increased access to education and training possibilities, increasing the quality of local products and services, offering wider employment opportunities and also bringing more financial resources;
- in general, as social and organizational drivers to collaborative action are considered to be: the possibility for more frequent communication with the partner organizations and the chance to strengthen personal and professional connections not only at local but also regional level;
- by joining a partnership, there is greater opportunity to learn about the partner's behavior in certain situations, trustworthiness and also to gain more information about the local environment through the joint actions. On the other hand, the reduction of stress and workload does not seem to be a strong motivational factor to join a partnership;
- when creating a partnership in rural areas the greatest demographic challenges are the lack of skilled human workforce and the ageing population;
- from an operational perspective, the level of management capabilities, of interaction, communication but also the level of trust and consideration of ideas are seen to be good or very good. Greater improvements are required in terms of ownership and the involvement of the community in the decision-making process. Further on, relationships are also believed to have a prevalent influence when it comes to decisions;
- Local Action Groups and NGOs are considered to be the most significant actors in the creation of partnerships;
- from a social and operational perspective, joining common initiatives increases the level of mutual respect between partners, improves communication between the associates and strengthens connections and relationships. Partnerships also support a better image creation and in most cases are seen to contribute to a better promotion of the local culture, yet not sufficiently;
- most effective elements that facilitate a better functioning of partnerships are the organization of events and availability of information on legal framework;
- in general, the available ventures for conferences/meetings are considered to be of high quality nevertheless, business centres are believed to demand more improvements;
- in general, the main barriers in the creation of healthy and effective cooperation are considered to be the following: lack of financial resources, lack of strategic planning, lack of communication and lack of cooperative mindset; the greatest distribution of opinions was related to the level of nepotism and corruption and the influence of political orientation;
- the survey offers evidence on the fact that cooperation works quite well within NGOs and LAGs and there are good opportunities in the local economies of rural areas for interaction and for joint initiatives;

Event 46 - subevent. 5th Slovenian Rural Parliament, organized by the Slovenian Rural Development Network (Društvo za razvoj slovenskega podeželja).

Participation: The event involved **359** citizens, including **342** participants from **Slovenia**, **3** participants from **Hungary**, **2** participants from **Slovakia**, **1** participant from **Finland**, **1** participant from **Czech Republic**, **1** participant from **Montenegro**, **1** participant from **Latvia**, **1** participant from **Poland**, **1** participant from **Croatia**, **2** participants from **France**, **1** participant from **Germany**, **1** participant from **Denmark**, **1** participant from **Belgium**, **1** participant from **United Kingdom**.

Location / Dates: The event took place in **Moškanjci, Slovenia**, on **09/10/2019**.

Short description: The aim of the event was 5th Slovenian Rural Parliament – to raise the voice of rural people.

Main suggestions or policies:

5th Slovenian Rural Parliament gathered more than 350 participants from 18 countries. In the first part general introductions were made by the European Commission, by the Slovenian Government (Minister of Agriculture) and Slovenian Parliament (Chairman of National Parliament). Hosts and representative from the European Rural Parliament also gave few ideas about the future of the rural areas. Organizer of the 5th SRP Slovenian Rural Development Network introduced the contents. Reports from 9 working groups followed with elaborated conclusions in the following topics:

- 1.Support to the sustainable farm incomes
- 2.Strengthening of marketing and increasing the competitiveness
- 3.Value chains
- 4.Climate change and efficient resource management
- 5.Biodiversity
- 6.Young and new farmers
- 7.Social inclusion, local development of rural areas (LEADER/CLLD) and local economies
- 8.Food quality, health and animal welfare
- 9.Knowledge transfer, innovations and digitisation in agriculture

More at the www.drustvo-podezelje.si.

All suggestions from the reports and from the final plenary debate were taken by the Ministry of Agriculture and noted from the representative from the European Commission. Slovenian Government promised to incorporate the suggestions into the future policy measures.

Event 47 - Event supporting ROAD Slovenian LAG Fest

Participation: The event involved 20 citizens, including 18 from Slovenia, 1 from Denmark and 1 from Latvia.

Location / Dates: The survey took place in Kamnik, Slovenia 6-8th of September 2018.

Short description: The aim was to look with LAGs and the Newbie Horizon project about availability of farmland

Event 48 - Subevent: Communities, NGO's, small enterprises and farms as partners in Local economies

Participation: The event involved NGOs, Rural municipalities, Cooperatives, Foundations, public institutions, **a total of 21 participants**

Location / Dates: The event took place in Cluj-Napoca, **Cluj County, Romania, 14.11.2019**

Short description: The event involved presentation from the local municipalities regarding their activity in promoting collaboration among tourism entities and their perspective on how to improve the external communication towards tourists and travel agencies.

Following the municipalities (representing rural communes) presentation, the Cluj Cultural Centre presented their initiative (The Remarkable Romania) and guests were invited to present their themes. The Remarkable Romania program lays the foundation of a local care network utilizing the heritage and culture between the actors to develop regional areas and is organized in partnership with Remarkable Sites and Quotes of France. The beneficiaries also of the patronage of the Ministry of Culture and National Identity in Romania. In 2019, it is planning a film in 11 common

pilots, outside Cluj County (Beliş, Bonţida, Moldoveneşti, Poieni, Ciurila, Vad) and five from other counties (Bârsana - Maramureş, Bucium - Alba, Fundata - Braşov, Plopiş - Sălaj and Valea Viilor - Sibiu).

Civitas had a 30 minutes presentation on the factors that fosters collaboration among rural actors (based on the study), and on the European Rural Parliament event – short description on the format and on the goal of the initiative.

Main suggestions or policies:

- 1) The need for better representation at the national and European level for local municipalities and tourism private enterprises.
- 2) The opportunity of developing international cooperation projects that include commercial trade not only exchanges (eg: integrated touristic services for foreigners, selling local products on EU markets.
- 3) The need for the National Rural Development Network to engage in a more qualitative manner in the local rural challenges.
- 4) The opportunity to create Pan-European touristic networks.

Event 49 - Subevent: Communities, NGO´s, small enterprises and farms as partners in *Local economies*

Participation: The event involved **12** citizens, from NGOs and private food companies.

Location / Dates: The event took place in Savadisla, Cluj County, Romania

Short description: The aim of the event was to update the network members on the progress of the Food Hub Program.

The Food Hub Program is an initiative coordinated by Civitas Foundation and financed by Romanian American Foundation. Its goal is to support Food Hubs in Romania to become self-sustainable and to have a positive influence in the public debate on short supply chains and supporting small farmers to reach the market and prosper.

Civitas had a presentation and a short debate at the end of the event on the Study regarding the Economic cooperation in rural areas and on the European Rural Parliament.

Main suggestions or policies:

- Economic cooperation must be closely connected to economic benefits not only informational transfer and capacity building.
- There is a growing interest displayed by the consumers regarding local products, however there is a need in strengthening the logistical capacity of packaging, delivery and managing the administrative side of the activity.
- International cooperation can help local food hubs to adapt innovative and avant-gardist measures in order to become competitive in relation with large commercial corporations (large retailers)
- European Rural Parliament can act as a sector specific connector – supporting local actors with the same activity to engage in economic cooperation

Event 50 - subevent : Communities, NGO´s, small enterprises and farms as partners in *Local economies*

Participation: The event involved **21** citizens (only 9 on the list)

Location / Dates: The event took place **Iasi, Romania, on 03.12.2019**

Short description: The event was organized by the National Rural Development Network under the coordination of Civitas Foundation for Civil Society. The Working Group was focused on the topic of agricultural cooperatives. The debates were organized around the idea of developing a dedicated call for Cooperatives development, on the LEADER program.

The agenda included: presentation of good practices among cooperatives in North-Eastern Region, presentation of cooperation projects from the Regional Agency For Development, interventions from Local Actions Groups regarding their possible contribution to the development of local cooperatives. Debates on the form of the call on cooperatives.

Civitas had a presentation on the Study regarding Economic Cooperation in rural areas and started a debate on the possible advantages regarding cooperation in agriculture but also cooperation among cooperatives from different areas and different economic sectors.

Main suggestions or policies:

General conclusions:

- Romania must invest at the grass roots level in order to engage small farmers in working in cooperatives, having a stronger voice on the supply chain.
- The economic local cooperation must be accompanied by an openness for cooperation among cooperatives at the national level and afterwards at the international level.
- COPA – COGECA is working to represent farmers at the EU level, but small farmers are not included and represented.
- The next National Rural Development Program (or National Strategic Program) must include a stronger emphasis on cooperation among small farmers.
- The European Rural Parliament must represent the small farmers and small entrepreneurs that are not able to support expensive and bureaucratic representation structures.

Event 51 - subevent: Rural Business – from farmer to entrepreneur

Participation: The event involved 30 citizens, 21 participants from Croatia, 9 from Romania

Location / Dates: The event took place **Tisno, Croatia, on 22.5.2019**

Short description: The event was organized during the 3rd Croatian Rural Parliament by HMRR. Local communities can be drivers of change, but they are also characterized by individual interests, a shortcoming real motivation for change and lack of willingness to cooperate. It is necessary to develop awareness of the importance of greater participation of the wider community in decision-making, among decision-makers and among citizens which need to be animated and encouraged to participate. In impoverished rural areas new creative ideas and approaches and innovative entrepreneurial initiatives deserve special attention. Insufficiently regulated market economy conditions deviations in relation to work, environment and principles of corporate social responsibility have led to a general distrust of entrepreneurial initiatives, but also a general distrust of institutions. That trust needs to be rebuilt, but also incorporate control mechanisms into legislative frameworks. Taking into account political recommendations, opinions and documents announcing a range of initiatives and measures (Supporting Start - up Investment non-agricultural activities in rural areas; Investments in the development of non - agricultural activities in rural areas; Basic rural services and rural renewal) in rural development, emphasizes the need to encourage those forms of business that are based on the principles of social, environmental and economic sustainability and creating new added value for the community, opening up new ones jobs that are environmentally friendly.

Preparatory activities 1 event, 1 survey and 12 steering group meetings involving 43 citizens were carried out.

12 steering group meetings 14 participants including 2 participants from Finland, Sweden and Spain, 1 from Slovenia, Denmark, UK, Estonia, Kosovo, Netherlands, Austria, Latvia discussed and decided on ROAD project obligations, the thematic events and the organisatory aspects of the Gathering in Spain. Face-to-face meetings were organised in Evora LEADER-event 26-28.9.2018 (2 meetings), 15.3.2019 in Brussels EESC-meeting (1 meeting) In Candás 6-9.11 (2 meetings) 23.1.2020 in Brussels (1 meeting). & meetings were held on-line through zoom on 24.1.2019, 26.4.2019, 4.6.2019, 19.6.2019, 16.7.2019, 24.9.2019.

Event 52 - Meeting with Gathering host and ERP team

Participation: The event involved 16 citizens, 14 participants from Spain, 1 from UK and Finland each.

Location / Date The event took place in Candás 31st of January 2019

Short description: participants met during 3 days to go through the details of the main event as to premisses, visits, reception, translations, technical facilities, accommodation, catering and logistics during the Gathering

Survey 5 – Future steps and action within the European Rural Parliament.

Participation The survey got 35 answers from 25 countries involving 28 citizens and including 2 participants from Latvia, Lithuania and UK and 1 participant from Denmark, Kosovo, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Romania, Georgia, Slovakia, Italy, Finland, Estonia, N-Macedonia, Bulgaria, Armenia, Ireland, Albania, Portugal, Hungary, Serbia, Slovenia, Cyprus, Moldova, Sweden and Spain.

Location / date: on-line google survey summer 2019.

Short description: Below some of the results. A full report is available.

30 partners have participated, results based on 1/3 from partners, 2/3 after consulting persons having major role in the organisations

The main results are:

According to you, what should be the main priority for the ERP

50 % for Advocacy

41 % for Networking

How do you mainly see ERP?

68 % an ongoing and growing process with advocacy and policy work (including thematic work) for its partners

How would you want ERP to be organised in the future?

71 % ERP continues as an informal Network. Trainings, partnerships, networking, projects. Go towards a hub. More presence and theme discussions.

In what direction would you want ERP to develop?

80 % Advocacy in combination with some theme work

Events and ERP

Half were ready to organise or co-organise events with ERP, 3 were interested in organising the 5th ERP.

Have you used the ERP materials in your association?

65 % Yes. The Manifesto and Declarations were the most commonly used. Manuals, toolkits, advocacy material, case studies, flyers.

To what extent have you been satisfied with the communication from ERP to the partners?

76 % Satisfied. Website, newsletter and mail were the most wanted communication channels.

Would you be willing to assist with ERP communication in the future?

62 % Yes. As intermediate passing and forwarding information mostly.

SPECIFIED ANSWERS (selected)**Main priority for ERP**



"We have EU, as administrative body, with its strategic plans, programs and funds. To have influence on their decisions, we have to address them some requests/questions/ recommendations from the same level - civil society sector from whole Europe"

"For us it is important to build an international partnership network in order to implement current and future projects."

"Ensuring rural community voice in Europe to be heard and appreciated as an important stakeholder is crucial. Still in Europe both national and EU policies are not always holistic, inclusive etc. It should be clear message to MEPs, EC and other stakeholders, including data and facts, and should be used through three pan-European organization work in European level.

How do you mainly see ERP

"Primary, we have to work on advocacy and policy adoptions. ERP have to represent the whole rural community from Europe and to communicate with EU administration on important rural development questions"

"ERP (as national RPs) is a process, not event"

"Conduct specific research that will result with preparation of evidence-based policy briefs, which will be used for advocacy activities"

"Partnership for different project implementations and advocacy activities"

"A biennial event and a partnership"

ERP Future directions

"I see advocacy being the most important - but to make it sustainable it is important that we are not sector-specific - but see it holistic - cross sectorial"

"Our experience shows that the best results are achieved when different stakeholders and stakeholders groups are grouped around specific theme - environment, food safety, short supply chains, etc. We also think that networking is very important for gaining the thrust of the different stakeholders"

"The strenght of ERP is the informal network, if it is a formal organisation (like there are many others) you can not be that efficient and situation orientated"

Name some things to strengthen ERP

"Implementation of more inclusive projects and programs; Organizing events and training's dedicated to the national partners"

"Organizing trainings on lobby and advocacy for members - Organizing trainings on EU relevant regulation and EU relevant institutional rural development framework"

"More efforts in work with youth"

"Discussion about depopulation in rural areas"

"Focus more on specific topics (youth, elderly, environment, mobility, sustainability,...) ERP need Focus - Core theme and then relevant topics"

"Case studies to be co-produced with members and shared across network"

Greatest achievements

"The Manifesto, the 3 gatherings and the Bruxelles meetings with Cabinets"

"Organisation of ERP Gatherings"

"Developing and implementing the concept of rural parliament"

"Creating meeting place and synergy between so many countries and diverse partners"

- "Support local communities (they will develop more sustainable)"
- "Putting rural at the center of policies"
- "gaining visibility and understanding from EU and the biennial events. Still need work to reach representativeness"
- "To articulate and disseminate the common voice of rural actors across Europe. Bring together major actors/stakeholders"
- "To bring people and organizations close to each other on the events"
- "bringing so many people together and developing policy statements"
- "Unifying the rural voice across the 40 countries, which appeared through 3-4 events (ERPs), through ERP declarations and Manifesto. Result of that is high respectation of the ERP in the eyes of decision makers at the European level."

What ERP-materials have you used?

- "Knowledges, experiences, manifesto"
- "Manifestos were translated and used in members meetings at national level (giving feed-back on what happened in European gatherings) and disseminated to authorities"
- "Manifesto, declarations. We translated them and disseminated in our network. Parts of that were used during the programming activities"
- "Worked on the materials, and used ERP guiding documents in activities"
- "Declaration"

What materials should ERP provide?

- "Brochures/Infographics/flyers/fact sheets"
- "Position papers supported by a wide range of stakeholders; Results of wide independent surveys on rural issues"
- "Policy analysis and effects of the policy in rural development. Data base of good practice. Guidelines to stakeholders about solutions in key themes"
- "Policy and informative material"

Direct participants related to the implementation of the ROAD project advocacy work, policy documents or general information on ERP. Altogether 11 events involving 796 citizens were carried out under support- and subevents

Event 53 Subevent – Celebration of international day of Rural Women

Participation: The event involved 113 citizens from rural areas of Slovakia.

Location / Dates: The event took place in Liptovské Revúce, Slovakia on 11/10/2019.

Short description: The aim of the event was to gather women living and working in rural areas of Slovakia and to present their initiatives. Within this event there was a short presentation of ERP platform

Event 54 Subevent General assembly of Slovak Union in Hungary

Participation: The event involved 37 citizens from rural areas of Hungary.

Location / Dates: The event took place in Dudince, Slovakia on 06/12/2019.

Short description: The aim of the event was to gather Slovaks living and working in rural areas of Hungary. Within this event there was a short presentation of ERP platform.

Event 55 Subevent Slovak Rural parliament forum

Participation: The event involved 92 citizens, including 25 participants from the city Nitra of Slovakia 67 participants from other towns in Slovakia.

Location / Dates: The event took place in Nitra Slovakia, from 26/10/2018 to 27/10/2018

Short description: The aim of the event was to gather people active in different rural organisation and to discuss rural issues. Within this event there was a short presentation of ERP platform.

Event 56 Subevent Rural woman leader competition

Participation: The event involved 72 citizens, including 41 participants from the city Košúty of Slovakia, including 31 participants from other towns in Slovakia.

Location / Dates: The event took place in Košúty in Slovakia on 12/10/2018.

Short description: The aim of the event was to promote rural women activists, within this event there was a short presentation of ERP platform.

Event 57 Subevent Workshop at secondary school

Participation: The event involved 74 citizens, including 73 students and 1 teacher from the county Topoľčany of Slovakia.

Location / Dates: The event took place in Topoľčany, Slovakia on 18/02/2019.

Short description: The aim of the event was to talk with young people about their engagement in politics. Within this event there was a short presentation of ERP platform.

Event 58 Subevent – Stand interviews in the ENRD event networkx

Participation: The event involved 49 citizens including 6 participants from Finland, 5 from Estonia and Hungary, 2 participants from Latvia, Turkey, Denmark, UK, Italy, Slovenia, Netherlands, Albania, N-Macedonia and Montenegro, 1 participant from Serbia, Cyprus, Kosovo, Czech Republic, France, Greece, Romania, Bulgaria, Croatia, Ireland, Bosnia & Herzegovina and Lithuania.

Location / Dates: The event took place in Brussels, Belgium 11-12.4.2019

Short Description: On the stand two main questions were raised: what are the biggest concerns in rural development in your country and what would be the best solution. Details put aside, answers were quite unanimous. Leaving rural areas outside in discourse, policy and actions leads to unbalanced development, stagnation, decline and exodus of people, knowledge and knowhow. A real rural policy at national and EU-levels were called for. The Commissioner Hogan visited the stand and pointed out the importance of the smart village process.

Event 59 Subevent – ERP – EESC joint conference – Making rural areas the engines of a sustainable Europe

Participation: The event involved 86 citizens including participants from about 20 countries. List provided by EESC and forms.

Location / Dates: The event took place in Brussels, Belgium 14.3.2019

Short Description: PREPARE had a presentation national rural parliaments, ELARD on LEADER/CLLD policy suggestions and development and ERCA introduced the days discussions on rural development issues. ERP documents were distributed on the spot, including policy suggestions. Please find opinions and presentations from the link below.

<https://www.eesc.europa.eu/en/agenda/our-events/events/making-rural-areas-engines-sustainable-europe>

Event 60 Subevent Meeting with ENRD

Participation: The event involved 15 citizens including 3 participants from UK, 2 participants from Italy and Sweden and 1 participant from Slovenia, Finland, Belgium, Denmark, Latvia, Kosovo, Hungary and Spain.

Location / dates The event took place in Brussels, Belgium 24.1.2020

Short description: ENRD and ERP representants discussed on actual developments on rural policy in EU and possible cooperation in some events.

Event 61 Subevent ERP partners meeting on future of ERP

Participation: The event involved 48 citizens including 3 participants from Sweden, Czech Republic, UK and Ireland, 2 participants from Albania, Slovenia, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Estonia, Portugal and Poland, 1 participant from Serbia, N-Macedonia, Moldova, Lithuania, Italy, Greece, Kosovo, Belarus, Slovakia, Ukraine, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Netherlands, Iceland, France, Romania, Georgia, Spain, Turkey, Cyprus and Belgium

Location / Dates The event took place in Candás, Spain 8.11.2019.

Short Description: The results of the survey (survey 5 above) were discussed. ERP should remain an informal network working with advocacy for rural people, villages and communities. Thematic work could be strengthened within available resources and connections with other european NGO's and EU institutions strengthened.

Event 62 Subevent – Lokaali Finland

Participation: The event involved 228 citizens from Finland

Location / Dates The event took place in Savonlinna, Finland 31.8-2.9.2018

Short description: Plenaries, workshops markets and discussions were arranged during these days. The well-being of rural areas should be developed through increased capacity-building, multiservice activities, support to local entrepreneurship, well functioning social services.

Event 63 Subevent Board meeting All Sweden Shall Live / Rural Sweden

Participation: The event involved 45 citizens from Sweden

Location / Dates The event took place in Stockholm Sweden, 27.11.2019

Short description: information about the ROAD project and ERP-events, processes was given at the event

Indirect participation 1800 citizens were involved.
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Indirect participants Over 1800 participants through **national rural parliaments** – (France 300, Estonia 248, N-Macedonia 90, Netherlands 180, Latvia 218, Lithuania 150, Croatia 300) **and rural women's days** (Albania 150, N-Macedonia 200). All provided data to advocacy and policy work to raise rural citizens voice in Europe and nationally.