

### ANNOUNCEMENT FOR PREPARE MEMBERS - SAVE THE DATE FOR PREPARE GA!

The General Assembly of PREPARE aisbl will be held on 9. October 2019 in Slovenia



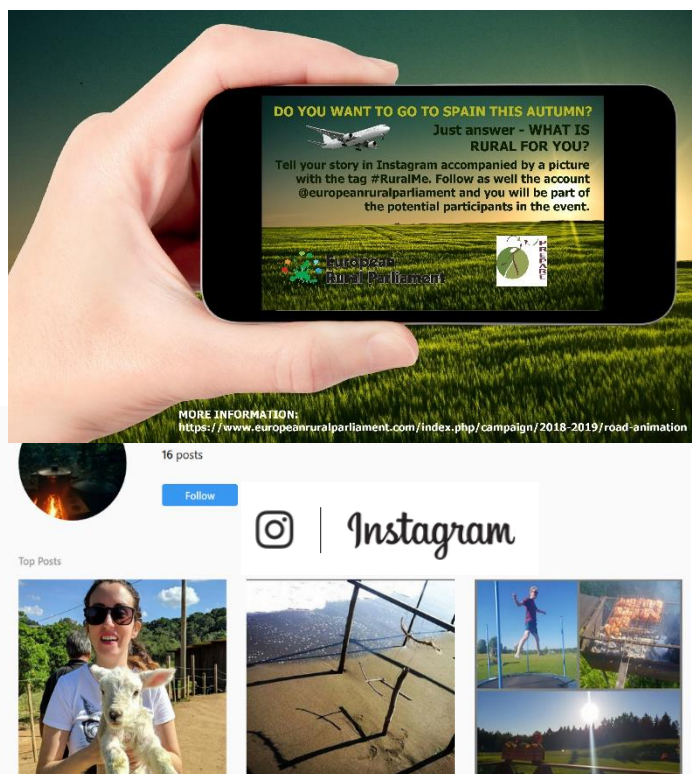
. Prior to the General Assembly, members of PREPARE will have possibility to attend the fifth Slovenian Rural Parliament, where 250 participants will contribute to the two days discussion about the challenges of rural development.

More information will come soon.

### YOUTH INSTAGRAM CHALLENGE FOR 18-29 YEARS

Participate and win a journey to the European Rural Parliament early November 2019. Here is

how to do it:



1) What is rural for you? Tell your story in Instagram accompanied by a picture with the tag #RuralMe. Follow @europeanruralparliament and you will be part of the potential participants in the event.

2) The sent text must be in English, dissemination can be done in your national language. At the end of your story write the name of the ERP-partner you got the challenge information from.

3) The challenge is open until 15 July and the winner will be announced by 20 July 2019.

4) If you respect the rules of the

challenge, you may win participation to the event.

5) The challenge is for individual accounts only, not for organisations accounts. See also detailed challenge rules: <https://www.europeanruralparliament.com/index.php/campaign/2018-2019/road-animation>

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### IMPORTANT INFORMATION FROM THE CROATIAN RURAL PARLAMENT

Croatian rural parliament (20-23 May, 2019) gathered speakers who presented information that could be interesting for all members and friends of PREPARE.



The presentations covers such themes as Common Agricultural Policy post-2020 and Smart Villages. Presentations of Michael Pielke, Stefan Jensen and Tom Jones are in English. We recommend you to visit link:

<http://ruralnparlament.com/2019/05/30/prezentacije-s-2-dana-3-hrp-a-plenarni-dio/>

### FROM 5<sup>TH</sup> TO 7<sup>TH</sup> OF JUNE THE VILLAGE OF ZALENIEKI (LATVIA) BECAME AN EPICENTRE OF DISCUSSIONS ABOUT NEW RURAL PARADIGMS

4th Latvian Rural Communities Parliament gather around 350 policy makers, opinion leaders, active rural citizens, new initiative implementers, NGO representatives and other persons interested in rural development who shared their experience, inspired each other, tackled important topics and envisioned a positive future for rural areas



On June 6 and 7, 2019, the Latvian Rural Forum together with its partners created an environment for relaunching new rural initiatives of Latvia and Europe, giving the opportunity for change implementers to find peers, get new ideas and inspiration, and encourage the rural inhabitants to dare new action for the local people. The main topics, included in the final resolution of the parliament, are smart communities, rebuilding the countryside, working and work in rural areas, doing business, financial redistribution, resource availability, and strengthening democracy and participation.

More information about the parliament and its results will be published in web page: <http://eng.laukuforums.lv/>

### LITHUANIAN RURAL COMMUNITIES MEETING

From 7<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> June in Klaipeda district the 17<sup>th</sup> Lithuanian Rural Communities Meeting was organised.



The meeting brought together over 1000 local community representatives from 25 Lithuanian municipalities.

The meeting involved discussions, a fair (trade, tasting, education), ethno games - competitions "Strong, fast and beautiful", performances by youth groups and by Lithuanian small capitals of culture.

The event "LKBS meeting 2019" was funded by the Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Lithuania under the 2019 National Support for Rural Communities Activities.

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### FIRST NATIONAL RURAL PARLIAMENT IN THE REPUBLIC OF NORTH MACEDONIA

The First National Rural Parliament was organized in the Republic of North Macedonia in the period between 12 and 14 June 2019, following the positive example of the European countries, which have been organizing rural parliaments for many years as an efficient process to foster an inclusive discussion among the rural population and the policy makers for the purpose of improving rural policies and to address certain challenges related to rural development.



More than 90 representatives of local civil organizations, international organizations, the business sector, the local self-government, the National Extension Agency, and the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Economy met in Krushevo for the First National Rural Parliament in North Macedonia, having an opportunity to share knowledge and experience in various topics related to rural development through panel discussion and working groups. The goal of the Rural Parliament was to offer rural civil organizations a national platform to be actively involved in the creation of rural development strategies and policies at national and local level.

The First National Rural Parliament was the final event to complete the three year project “National Rural Parliament as a Voice of Rural Citizens”, supported by the EU and implemented by three organizations: CNVP – Connecting Natural Values and People, RDM of RM – Rural Development Network of the Republic of Macedonia and ARD – Action for Rural Development. In addition to the addresses of the President of the Rural Development Network – Petar Gjorgievski and the Project Manager and CNVP Director – Anela Stavrevska Panajotova, presentations and addresses were also given by the Chief of Cabinet of the Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Economy – Trajan Dimkovski, the Krushevo Mayor – Tome Hristoski, a Rural Development Expert – Sofija Davidova, the PREPARE President – Aris Adlers, the General Secretary of the Standing Work Group for Rural Development of Southeast Europe SWG – Boban Illic, as well as by Stole Georgiev from the Local Action Group Plachkovica and professor Jorde Jakimovski, PhD from the Institute for Sociological, Political and Juridical Research.

‘The goal is to include all these organizations that could help in policy creation, since the state cannot establish priorities in each and every municipality. Each planning region has a different priority, so civil organizations could be a good partner of the state in designing the policies’, stressed Anela Stavrevska Panajotova, CNVP Director.

Conclusions and recommendations adopted as a result of the group work were further included in the final product – the Manifesto of the National Rural Parliament. This Manifesto, to be officially submitted to the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management, as well as to other relevant institutions, provides the major directions and priorities to guide rural policy.

The First National Rural Parliament ended by field visits, in the course of which participants had the opportunity to see positive examples for rural entrepreneurship, rural and alternative tourism, natural potential and resources in the regions of Prespa and Mavrovo-Rostushe, as well as to taste specialties of the traditional Macedonian cuisine. These meetings provided opportunity for sharing experience with the rural population and for exchanging views and opinions regarding sustainability and welfare in rural areas.

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### INTRODUCING OUR MEMBERS

The civil society network for rural areas in Hungary



One of the founding organizations of PREPARE, the Hungarian Rural Parliament (HRP) was established by two-hundred rural grassroots and 5-6 national NGO-s in 1997. The model came from the Swedish Rural Parliament. It was the second rural parliament initiative in Europe.

HRP was registered as a public association in 1998, and it existed until 2013, the year when its registration number was canceled by the state. HRP had been relatively silent since 2008. The reason of the less active years was that the association was not able to avoid influences of the divided Hungarian society, while bottom up citizen initiatives lost their self-organization opportunities in the whole country, especially in rural areas.

In 2013 a smaller, active group of the former HRP members decided not to stop working together. 16 rural citizen initiatives have been permanently involved, but the network decided to do not register the organization as a legal body. It works with an accountable body, which provide the needed legal background to the common activities, when necessary.

Thanks to the understanding of PREPARE, the Hungarian rural civil society network is still member of PREPARE, as successor of the HRP.

Activities of the new network show the diversity of its members' aims, targeting significant problems of the Hungarian rural areas: empowering sustainable rural initiatives, socio-economic development, decreasing environmental footprint in rural areas and small-towns, eradication of rural poverty, inclusive rural development, especially targeting Roma.

Financial resources come from partnership-based projects of the member organizations. Member organizations meet 3-4 times a year in the frame of different events, including two voluntarily self-organized cultural events. The network has nominated its representative to PREPARE and delegates an active group of participants to each European Rural Parliament events. (Photo: one of the voluntarily organized events: exhibition of two Hungarian rural painters and music and dance performance in 2017).



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### PREPARE NETWORK IS PROMOTING NEW ACTIVISTS FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT

We continue a new PREPARE Aisbl initiative - Presenting young rural development enthusiasts. In this edition, meet Albana Hasmeta from Albania

Albana is a youth activist, primary dedicating her time to work for the Albanian Network for Rural Development. She joined ANRD in its first months of operation. Apart from involvement in the Network, Albana has been actively engaged with youth, mainly in training and peer education, and coordinating small scale projects and initiatives. Existing knowledge and experience, as well as professional motivation toward a more solid role of rural youth in the country's development, support activism and professional growth in rural development.

Albana graduated from the Master's Program in Criminal Justice and Social Work Services at the University of Tirana. Being keenly interested in personal and professional growth, she has continuously been looking for relevant opportunities.

Before joining the ANRD, Albana was volunteering in one of the ANRD founding member organizations in research related projects. At the time, the joint efforts came to be fruitful with ANRD legal formalization and she was requested to work for the Network, an invitation that she accepted immediately and gladly.

Currently, Albana is working as Project Coordinator at the Albanian Network for Rural Development. ANRD is a genuine civil society initiative that strives to contribute to sustainable development of rural communities by taking up an active role in the reform process of the sector. As a policy network in the domain of rural development, ANRD has a clear vision that most of its efforts should focus on the evident need for advocacy for more support for the population of rural areas. In this context, Albana's role is to animate the Network through maintaining a dynamic communication and interaction, and to contribute to youth empowerment and mobilisation. She has gained further experience as a US State Department Professional Fellow during October-November 2018. In the framework of this opportunity, she was engaged for nearly 6 months in an extensive community mobilization process focusing on rural youth issues, leadership and community outreach.

An initiative currently under implementation by ANRD and supported by UNDP is called "Boosting rural youth ICT and soft skills to increase integration and employability in the labour market". This is a small initiative that aims to strengthen the role of young men and women in a remote municipality through enhanced access to the labour market and other development opportunities.

Albana is proud that this initiative has come to life as a result of her efforts, as she wrote the project proposal. She is part of the project team, highly involved in all project phases. As the project progresses and the planned outputs are being delivered, she meets regularly with the youth (project beneficiaries) and can feel the impact of her efforts. It is very similar to the feeling of a seed planting, and seeing its growth.

Complementary to the work with the Network, during June-September 2018 Albana was involved in a community mobilisation process with rural youth in the Cerrik municipality, Albania, to engage and mobilise them in order to be active members in the community. During this period, together with a core youth group in the community, she organised community outreach, various groups' meetings and awareness campaigns to increase community's participation in improving their livelihood.

Albana's family has always supported personal and professional growth. They offer a great emotional support, genuine communication, continuously motivating and inspiring to ask for more and better. As they are aware of Albanian rural communities' needs and challenges, they continuously encourage Albana to give a positive contribution through her work, believing in what she does and ANRD stands for. They are the biggest fans and supporters of ANRD initiatives.

Rural development has become an important aspect of work, but not only. Being involved in interactions with people living in rural communities, seeing on the one hand their way of living and difficulties they face, and on the other hand their fight for better living conditions and how they stand firm to continue life in rural areas, gives Albana the strength to be an advocate of these communities. Her commitment to development of rural areas goes beyond her specific work, as rural development itself comprises more than just a physical work process.

Albana sees rural development as a way toward food security, resilient communities and Albanian identity – it is worth contributing!!!

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#### UPCOMING EVENT- ESTONIAN RURAL PARLIAMENT

The 13th Estonian Rural Parliament takes place July 26-28 2019 in Rāpina, Põlva County (Southern Estonia). There will be around 350 participants – 15 delegations from Estonian counties, guests, partners, politicians, President of the Estonian Republic.



The Estonian Village Movement Kodukant has sponsored Rural Parliaments of Estonian Villages since 1996 to bring together village members, organizations, local and national representatives with the aim to discuss the issues and look for solutions to the problems facing rural development. Kodukant's Rural Parliament participants come together every two years to discuss the problems of the countryside and to bring them to governmental decisions. The Estonian Rural Parliament will also provide a good platform for discussion and exchange of ideas and best practice between international organizations connected with rural development in different European countries.

More information <https://kodukant.ee/en/rural-parliament/?fbclid=IwAR1BLm-LwkZRo1mLyycoxLabraxENecMDO8jPk2UWWbTd0rxqNOibPZhJ2I>

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**The newsletter was prepared by the board and members of PREPARE AISBL**