

### GORAN ŠOSTER INTRODUCING OUTCOMES FROM THE 4<sup>TH</sup> EUROPEAN RURAL PARLIAMENT IN RURAL NETWORKS ASSEMBLY

PREPARE aisbl was represented by Goran Šoster at the 6th meeting of the Rural Networks' Assembly held on 16 December 2019 in Brussels. Agenda of the meeting included overview of the CAP legislative framework, self-assessment of the rural networks, governance of EU networks and rural networks' activities and actions for 2020.



The most interesting information and debate concerned the future structure of the rural networks at the European and at the member states' level. Discussion on this topic will go on in 2020, parallel with preparation of the national strategies for the next programming period. The main change will be by inviting new set of stakeholders to the rural networks, representing "Pillar 1". Those stakeholders were not members of the networks in the current or past programming periods. Networks will continue to have an important role in the future. There will be much greater emphasis on innovation and knowledge transfer. Positive information was given about the transition period, with the possibility to overcome the danger of the gap between two periods.

Goran Šoster from PREPARE was invited to introduce the outcomes from the 4th European Rural Parliament, held in November 2019 in Asturias, Spain. Response from the European Commission was very positive, assuring that ERP will be one of the future tools for public consultation about rural policies.

### MARION ECKARDT TAKE OVER ELARD AISBL PRESIDENCY FROM MARIA JEAO BOTELHO

PREPARE AISBL has highly appreciated the successful cooperation with ELARD Portuguese Presidency 2018-2019 and it expresses positive expectations for a continued and even closer cooperation with the new Swedish presidency led by Marion Eckardt



PREPARE and ELARD have a long term positive cooperation experience, with many common points, including joint promotion of LEADER and Community Led Local Development, and the organisation of the European Rural Parliament. Marion Eckardt was elected in ELARD Aisbl general Assembly on the 26<sup>th</sup> of November in Portugal. Read more about ELARD <http://elard.eu/>

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#### BALKAN RURAL DEVELOPMENT NETWORK OFFICIALLY ESTABLISHED

The founding assembly of BRDN was held in Skopje on December 6th. During the event rural development networks of North Macedonia, Montenegro, Kosovo, Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina signed the registration documents as founders of the Network.



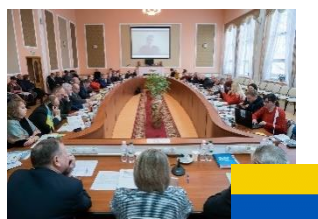
Since its informal establishment in March 2011, the Balkan Rural Development Network – BRDN, with the joint efforts of its members, has become recognizable among many relevant international organizations and public institutions at regional but also at EU level, as a potential leading actor in the rural development in the Western Balkan region. The BRDN members have worked hard during the past 8 years and dedicated a lot of their time and energy to lay a solid foundation, upon which they can build a strong position among all rural stakeholders in the region and beyond. With the formalisation of BRDN, they are now moving a step forward towards becoming a stronger social asset for the Balkan rural communities that will significantly contribute to development of sustainable rural areas in the region. The founding assembly of BRDN was held in Skopje, on December 6th, where rural development networks of North Macedonia, Montenegro, Kosovo, Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina signed the registration documents as founders of the Network. The other two BRDN partners, the rural development networks of Serbia and Albania are joining later as full-fledged members. This way BRDN will continue to represent more than 200 rural development associations from the region and will advocate for the interests of more than 9 million rural people from the Western Balkan countries: Albania, Bosnia, Croatia, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia.

“I expect that BRDN will prove to be a social asset for the Balkan rural communities, which will be able to utilise the opportunities and strengths of today, in order to address the challenges of tomorrow and contribute to innovative and sustainable solutions to the current and future social and rural development issues,” said Petar Gjorgievski, the newly elected President of the Balkan Rural Development Network - BRDN.

Thanks to the support of the Swedish Development Organization “We Effect” in the past 2 years, BRDN managed to lay down a firm basis of the organization and prepare all crucial documents that give directions and goals in the future work.

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#### **PUBLIC FORUM ORGANISED BY UKRAINIAN DEVELOPMENT NETWORK DECLARING THE SUPPORT OF LIFTING THE MORATORIUM ON AGRICULTURAL LAND SALE**



The Public Forum was held in Kyiv, Ukraine on the 26th of November 2019, with the participation of representatives of private farms, peasant farms, farming households, civil society organizations, academia and representatives of UN Human Rights Committee in Ukraine (UN HRC), Food, Agricultural Organisation of the United Nations (FAO), and the European Coordination of Via Campesina.

The Forum was attended by 62 participants who:

- declared support for lifting the moratorium on agricultural land sale with the only acceptable option – legalizing land transactions on the basis of a separate law rather than the modifications to the current legislation;
- highlighted insufficiently balanced decisions towards public interests and inadequately prepared in terms of procedural and institutional performance approaches to the introduction of agricultural land market in Ukraine, particularly in the absence of a specialized state organisation – a land market regulator with broad power and rich resources;
- outlined an incompleteness of the decentralisation processes and important reforms, such as a judicial, pension, agrarian, and social that will not guarantee real property rights for all market participants and distribution of economic benefits from its implementation on an equitable basis.

A resolution and an open letter to the President of Ukraine, Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine and National Security and Defence Council of Ukraine were adopted in the course of Public Forum “Towards Peasants’ Rights to Land in Ukraine Through Responsible Management of Land Tenure and Land Use System”. By the adoption of the resolution and open letter, the participants of the Forum look forward to being heard by the policy-makers and expect the public opinion to be considered in the adoption of the final documents of the processes of lifting the moratorium on agricultural land sale and implementation of the regulated land market in Ukraine. See the FB page of the Ukrainian Rural Development Network: <https://www.facebook.com/urdn.org/>

#### **10<sup>th</sup> THEMATIC GROUP MEETING ON “SMART VILLAGES”**

The next meeting of the Thematic Group will take place on 22 January 2020 in Brussels, with a focus on Smart Villages and Renewable Energy Communities. The organiser is ENRD Contact Point



Aims of the meeting: (1) To obtain an understanding of the opportunities in the new policy landscape for supporting creation and development of renewable energy communities in EU rural areas. (2) To learn from existing grass roots initiatives and explore how to create the local conditions for these initiatives to emerge and grow. (3) To discuss how Renewable Energy Communities and Smart Villages could benefit from each other and imagine how the future CAP Strategic Plans and Cohesion Policy could effectively support an energy transition in rural areas.

Read more: [https://enrd.ec.europa.eu/news-events/events/10th-thematic-group-meeting-smart-villages\\_en](https://enrd.ec.europa.eu/news-events/events/10th-thematic-group-meeting-smart-villages_en)

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### WINTER IS TIME TO READ BOOKS - INSPIRATIONAL BOOKS ABOUT RURAL DEVELOPMENT



2019 was the Year of the 4th European Rural Parliament which took place in November in Asturias <https://erp2019.eu/>. In parallel with this, PREPARE as well as its members and partners publish books related to a historical overview of how the civic spirit moved processes for rural development. PREPARE AISBL published the book “RURAL PARLIAMENTS: Emerging participative democracy”, Forum Synergies published “Rural Europe on the move” and ELARD published the book “A Leader journey through rural Europe”. We also recommend to read FARNET latest magazine where tremendous and inspirational stories about local action are published. We recommend to read them all; most of them are available in electronic version.

#### **RURAL PARLIAMENTS Emerging participative democracy**

25 authors

Editing: Goran Šoster  
(PREPARE Vice-  
President)

1000 copies available. If you want to get a copy, contact PREPARE



#### **RURAL EUROPE ON THE MOVE A travel guide to transitions**

Author: Forum Synergies  
team

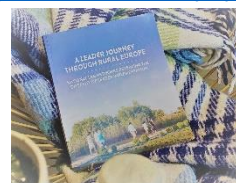
Read online: <http://forum-synergies.eu/rubrique134.html>



#### **A LEADER JOURNEY THROUGH RURAL EUROPE**

Author: Minha Terra

Read online:  
<https://leaderconference2019.minhaterra.pt/publication.T118.php>



#### **Post 2020: Local Action in a Changing World**

Author: FARNET

Read online:  
[https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/cms/farnet2/library/farnet-magazine/farnet-magazine-ndeg17\\_en](https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/cms/farnet2/library/farnet-magazine/farnet-magazine-ndeg17_en)





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#### INTRODUCING OUR MEMBERS

Slovenian Rural Development Network

	<a href="http://www.drustvo-podezelje.si">www.drustvo-podezelje.si</a>		<a href="https://www.facebook.com/networkSLOLAG/">https://www.facebook.com/networkSLOLAG/</a>
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Slovenian Rural Development Network operates as an NGO network for the development of Slovenian rural areas, with the status of an association operating in the public interest in the field of agriculture.

The mission of the Slovenian Rural Development Network is to bring together all individuals and organizations involved in the development of Slovenian rural areas at different levels. The main concern of the Slovenian Rural Development Network is informing and educating members and the interested public, thus pursuing the improvement of the life quality for the inhabitants of Slovenian rural areas. The Slovenian Rural Development Network acts as a focal point for coordinating and supporting integrated rural development, and for provision of hands-on project guidance.

The main field of operation are:

- Information, training and promotion
- National CLLD contact point
- Cooperation, representation and nationwide networking
- International cooperation

Contacts: Aleš Zidar, president [ales.zidar@drustvo-podezelje.si](mailto:ales.zidar@drustvo-podezelje.si)

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