

IMPROVING PERSPECTIVES FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE LEADER APPROACH IN THE WESTERN BALKANS

On July 8, 2020, PREPARE organised a successful webinar on the implementation of the LEADER approach in Western Balkans.

You can find relevant information and presentations here: <https://prepare-network.eu/index.php/2020/07/01/webinar-improving-perspectives-for-the-implementation-of-leader-approach-in-the-western-balkan-countries/>



PREPARE is appreciating the contribution by Evelina Azizaj and Kim Smedslund for organising the webinar, and thanking all the speakers (Michael Dower, Iwona Lisztwan, Dragan Roganovic, Stole Georgiev, Marina Albu, Robert Lukesch, Grigor Gjerci) for great presentations.

In the PREPARE webpage you can find all the presentations, as well as discussion inputs. Here are some highlights:

- In the IPARD LEADER measure, LAGs are final beneficiaries. They manage all projects, as well as capacity building and animation. The grant per LAG is decided by the Managing Authority and set out in each IPARD programme. The financing can go up to EUR 5,000. The total costs can be higher. But LAGs can do a lot of animation/trainings – they are not limited to 5,000 EUR.
- A LAG can have different legal status, from NGO to companies or special legal form, respecting national regulations
- It is useful for LAGs to access different sources of funding
- LEADER works at many territorial levels. Involvement of actors in partnerships, in co-planning and co-action are important.

PREPARE- Partnership for Rural Europe AISBL

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A VISION FOR RURAL EUROPE

On 7th of July ARC2020 invited civil society to a high level interactive video conference with the Renew Europe group in the European Parliament.



ARC2020 mobilised the civil society component for the rural Europe web conference. This saw speakers representing social farming, intergenerational cooperation, sustainable communities, inclusive digitalisation, and aspirations of civil society in EU accession countries. PREPARE is appreciating the effort of ARC2020 and our members for working towards a vision for Rural Europe.

You can find more information here:

<https://www.arc2020.eu/a-vision-for-rural-europe-event-report/>

The next step will be to make proposals for a participative bottom-up consultation on the long term rural vision and strategy

SHERPA RESEARCH PROJECT IN HORIZON 2020

PREPARE Partnership for Rural Europe joined activities within the research project SHERPA, supported through Horizon 2020 programme



Goran Šoster, vice-president of PREPARE, took part at the kick-off meeting of the SHERPA Coordination Group. This four years project started in 2019 and will last until 2023. Twenty Multi Action Platforms around Europe started their work.

The aim of the SHERPA research project is to gather relevant knowledge and contribute to the positions and recommendations for future policies in European rural areas. Sign up for newsletter: <https://rural-interfaces.eu/newsletter/>; Find your local MAP: <https://rural-interfaces.eu/regional-maps/>

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REFIVAL SEEKS PARTNERS AND FUNDING TO REVITALIZE RURAL COMMUNITIES THROUGH REFUGEE INTEGRATION

A strong reduction of the share of agriculture in the economy and a lack of viable job alternatives for young people has left many smaller rural European communities depopulating and aging. To establish a new equilibrium, powerful diversification to non-agricultural activities is required. Meanwhile, Internet-based work options and tele-services offer such potential to stop and reverse rural decline, but without a next generation of people grabbing these opportunities, the current deterioration will continue.



Since 2015, Refival has therefore been exploring the synergy between rural revitalization and refugee integration. As a result, it advocates the interconnection of two groups of people: small rural communities of 500-5,000 inhabitants who are too far from urban areas to commute, and refugee families with education deficits who will need about 5 years to adapt and find jobs in Europe.

In order to optimize the refugees' economic mobility, Refival proposes to apply an EU citizen logic. It means that – after having been supported with education, upskilling and cultural integration – people can freely move upon finding employment anywhere in Europe. However, this also implies that investing in the refugees' adaptation should be collectively funded by all EU member states and not financed by those who supply the initial “incubation” services.

With small rural communities possessing ample cultural interaction capacity and low integration cost, there is a strong mutually beneficial situation to be achieved by receiving funding to welcome refugees and offering them the chance to participate in society. This will not only revitalize the local rural infrastructure for all its inhabitants – re-establishing economic and social sustainability – but also give refugees a new start in life. If you want to become part of this initiative, please contact Johannes Cornelis (Hans) van Nieuwkerk <http://refival.org/>

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PREPARE NETWORK IS PROMOTING NEW ACTIVISTS FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT

We continue the PREPARE Aisbl initiative - Presenting young rural development enthusiasts. In this edition, meet **Vane Naunov** from North Macedonia

Vane Naunov is a 25 years old lawyer, currently following post graduate studies on intellectual property law. He comes from Skopje, Republic of North Macedonia and considers himself a youth activist, member of rural development network in North Macedonia for more than one year as a member of Aero club Skopje.

Since he is a young lawyer and aeronautical enthusiast, his field of work is mostly law regarding the young people's rights and needs, initiatives for supporting young people's inclusion in everyday life and mapping the problems and needs of rural youth; he is also searching for solutions to overcome these problems as much as possible. As part of the Macedonian rural network, he has visited several international events and attended training related to the rural development in this part of Europe. This has motivated him to work harder and to continue to aim even higher for much greater youth inclusion in social and political life. So far, Vane thinks that the key to improvement is precise mapping of youth needs, what he is trying to do.

Vane is a student of the Master's Program of Intellectual property law at the University of Cyril and Methodius in Skopje, currently working on his master thesis. Beside being member of Aero club, where he is doing an internship for a ground operation management, Vane also is a sport climbing instructor and for the last three years he has been the general secretary of the Macedonian sport climbing federation. As a part of his job, Vane is in direct contact with rural areas and people who live there, working on improving outdoor tourism possibilities in Macedonia through sports and adventure. Through his participation in the youth team of the Balkan rural development network, he has attended several international meetings and trainings in the field of rural development, youth inclusion and advocacy and lobbying.

Currently Vane is working on personal project, aiming to promote rural areas in Macedonia through sport, tourism and adventure. With the support of the Macedonian sport climbing federation, he is opening some new outdoor climbing areas, and taking a lot of people to visit them. During the work, they are taking care to clean the environment, collect garbage etc. The final goal is to support the local economy, to take care of environmental issues and to show the inhabitants a way to spend more quality time in their country. Also, as a part of Rural Development Network of North Macedonia, he contributes to the working group that that prepare BRDN's advocacy and lobbying strategy.

"I will always try to give my best and make rural areas good place to live and work" says Vane. He is familiar with the importance of rural areas and agriculture, so in the near future, he is planning to be more dedicated to that particular field, having in mind that Macedonia has enormous agricultural potential.

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IN 2020 THE PREPARE NETWORK CONTINUES TO CELEBRATE ITS 20TH ANNIVERSARY.

In connection with the 20th anniversary of our network, we publish here short articles about the history of PREPARE. Here is our story no. 11 (you can read the previous stories in newsletters from January, February, March, April, May, July, August, September 2019 and January, February, March, April, May, June 2020).



PREPARE Gathering in 2014 was held in Finland and Estonia, 5-9 September 2014.

30 participants from 23 countries participated in a series of events within the PREPARE Gathering 2014, held in Finland and in Estonia. Travelling workshops around Helsinki and Tallinn offered inspiration for participants and the good practices visited during the travel seem to be relevant for implementation in other parts of the Europe. The central event of the Gathering was a conference focusing on the process of preparation for the next European Rural Parliament. Creative participants contributed significantly to that process and most of them expressed their enthusiasm about the raising the rural voice through national and European rural parliaments.

INTRODUCING OUR MEMBERS - KOSOVO RURAL DEVELOPMENT NETWORK

	http://www.nordks.org/		https://www.facebook.com/nordkosovo/
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The mission of the Network of Organisations for Rural Development of Kosovo is promoting and developing relationships and partnerships between different sectors of the rural community in Kosovo through advocacy activities aimed at sustainable rural development. Since 2013, NORDK successfully is advancing its mission in national and international level based on its statutes and strategy.

NORDK's governing structures includes an assembly of the members of the Network, the Network's Board and the Executive Team. The Network of Organisations for Rural Development of Kosovo is a founding member of the Balkan Rural Development Network (BRDN), and a member of PREPARE (Partnership for Rural Europe) and a partner of the European Rural Parliament.

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