

**WE STAND FOR PEACE IN BELARUS**

PREPARE - Partnership for Rural Europe expresses concerns with the situation in Belarus. We stand for peaceful dialogue and strong cooperation between governmental and civic representatives in all areas of public administration. Rural development civic organisations appeal for the start of a peaceful, respectful and open dialogue for prosperous Belarus.



## newsletter #WeArePrepare

### LATVIAN RURAL FORUM STARTS COOPERATION PROJECT WITH THE NATIONAL LEADER NETWORK OF MOLDOVA



On 31 July, an agreement was signed between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Latvia and the Latvian Rural Forum on the implementation of the project “Support to the growth of Moldova's regions by enhancing their resilience to conditions in emergency situation and mitigating the long-term consequences of COVID-19”.

The aim of the project is to support the Moldovan regions in overcoming the socio-economic challenges related to the Covid-19 crisis, including the development of public administration and capacity building, the development of entrepreneurship and the promotion of democratic participation, ensuring the activation and advancement of local economic resources, as well as a coordinated action of the parties involved in the development of the territory for effective crisis management.

The planned activities will ensure the exchange of experience, improvement of skills and knowledge, practical support in the implementation of solutions, as well as the establishment and development of partnerships, contacts, strengthening of existing cooperation initiatives and creating new ones.

The main target groups of the project are state and non-governmental organizations at national, regional and local level involved in the promotion of rural and regional development in Moldova, as well as entrepreneurs and people in the regions. The needs of the target groups have been determined on the basis of the conscious opinion of the co-operation state and non-governmental sector project partners from Moldova, taking into account also the results of the previous co-operation with Moldova by the LRF, MEPRD and Local Action Groups from Latvia.

### WEBINAR – SMART VILLAGE LEADER NETWORK



The webinar on Smart Villages was hosted by two Finnish LAGs on 3<sup>th</sup> of September.

Read more about the event here:

<https://www.facebook.com/events/763109497808812/>

If you want to know more about Smart LEADER network:

<https://www.smart-village-network.eu/>

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### JOIN THE 18<sup>TH</sup> EUROPEAN WEEK OF REGIONS AND CITIES

The European Week of Regions and Cities (#EURegionsWeek) is the biggest annual Brussels-based event dedicated to regional policy. The purpose of event is to discuss common challenges for European regions and cities and to exchange ideas on possible solutions by bringing together political representatives, decision-makers, experts and practitioners of regional policy, as well as stakeholders from business, banking, civil society organisations, academia, the EU institutions and the media. In 2020, the EWRC events are organised on-line.



A number of workshops and participatory labs are organised on the topic of CLLD. We particularly recommend the session co-organised by ELARD on 14 October: Co-creating the restart of Europe at the local level – how to use community-led local development in the recovery work and building resilience. More information here: [https://europa.eu/regions-and-cities/programme/sessions/1015\\_en](https://europa.eu/regions-and-cities/programme/sessions/1015_en)

### NORDK PRESENTS THEIR 2<sup>ND</sup> BULLETIN AUGUST 2020

Network of rural development organisations in Kosovo (NORDK) is publishing its Bulletin with summary information on their current activities and developments.

In this edition you can read about:  
Organisational development of NORDK  
Gender mainstreaming  
Lobbying and advocacy  
Women entrepreneurship  
and other stories.

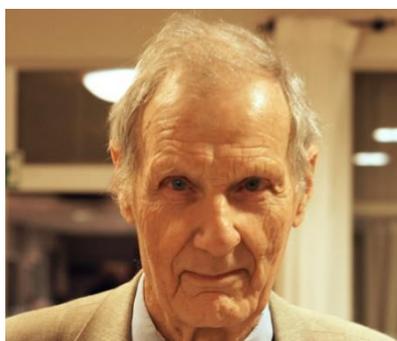
Read the full bulletin here:

<https://prepare-network.eu/index.php/2020/09/01/nordk-presents-their-2-bulletin-august-2020/>



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### EUROPEAN CLIMATE PACT- Message to PREPARE partners from Michael Dower



I was invited to take part in a web conference on the Climate Pact, held on 14 July. 464 people signed up to attend, and in fact 330 participated. A very high proportion were from Western European countries. There were some participants from PREPARE countries (though not from our partner networks) – 11 from Poland, 9 from Finland, 5 each from Czech Republic and Sweden, 3 each from Estonia and Hungary, 2 each from Lithuania, Serbia, Slovakia and Slovenia, 1 each from Croatia and Latvia. Candidly, I am very disappointed by

the low numbers from the PREPARE countries, because I believe that all countries will be adversely impacted by climate change, and that all peoples should be contributing to efforts to mitigate that change and to adapt to it. Moreover, it is clear that EU programmes and funds, including those that PREPARE partners and their members may wish to draw upon, will increasingly be focused upon actions which contribute to the Green Deal.

Taking part in the web conference, I was impressed by the clear indication from EU officials that actions related to climate will increasingly figure in the criteria for support from major programmes such as the Rural and Regional Development Funds, and in smaller programmes of the type that PREPARE partners have drawn upon, for example the Civil Society Facility, Europe for Citizens and Erasmus. That points to the benefit that may come to our network if we become familiar with the Green Deal and the sub-programmes linked to it, including the Climate Pact.

The Climate Pact will in itself be a minor programme, offering small grants, information and networking. At the web conference, the EU officials explained the ways in which individuals or organisations may engage with the Climate Pact. These include offering to be an EU Climate Pact Ambassador; spreading the word about climate-related action; starting to work with other organisations on climate-related projects; organising events or initiatives, to be included in the European Climate Pact Calendar; or signing a pledge to contribute to the climate-related targets in the Green Deal.

I asked the EU officials whether people in the accession countries could take part in the Climate Pact. They replied that non-EU citizens and organisations are welcomed to join, pledge and follow the activities to be organised. “We will not exclude any interested follower of the Pact. However, the ‘physical’ events, mapping of the existing initiatives or knowledge gathering will start within the EU, because of the sheer size of the task.”

The proceedings of the Web conference, plus a description of the ways to engage with the Climate Pact, can be found at:

[https://ec.europa.eu/clima/events/second-european-climate-pact-webinar\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/clima/events/second-european-climate-pact-webinar_en).

The Commission intends to launch the active programme of the Climate Pact in mid-November, having taken account of the consultation and the results of the Web Conference.

Through this message, I suggest to the PREPARE partners that they may wish to take interest in the Green Deal; and to the PREPARE Executive Board that it should consider engaging with the kind of deal, perhaps by signing a pledge.

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#### SHOULD THE EU LAUNCH A COMMON FORESTRY POLICY?



Forestry is of rising importance in the light of four great current issues in Europe - climate change; biodiversity; world competition for natural resources; and rural development. The salience of these issues is shown in the recent announcement on the European Green Deal, which is a remarkable and brave initiative by the European Commission.

Forests can contribute greatly, and in all countries, to the European Green Deal and the Biodiversity Strategy.

Why do we need a Common Forestry Policy? Till now, the European Union has had no formal multinational policy for forestry, in the way that it has for agriculture or regional development. It is clear from the extracts above that the Commission now plans to take very serious interest in the role that forests can play in contributing to the attack on climate change and the strengthening of biodiversity. Moreover, forestry as an economic sector is likely, for the first time, to become a serious beneficiary of EU funds, in order to create further employment in rural areas and to make Europe more self-sufficient in the supply of timber and other forest products.

That is why I believe it is now time to have a Common Forestry Policy, alongside the CAP, ERDF, and EAFRD. Forests already cover 40% of Europe's land area, about the same as the area in farming. They can reduce atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> by capturing and sequestering carbon; slow down the runoff of precious soil and water; reduce flooding; protect wildlife and diversify wildlife habitats; provide renewable energy and renewable building materials for the embedded energy; enhance landscapes; and be a key element in programmes of social and economic regeneration in regions despoiled by mining and other dereliction or pollution. International cooperation is needed in sustainable forest management, in the control of forest fires and forest diseases, and in sustaining international standards of forest products.

I salute Forum Synergies (PREPARE partner) for its work in recent years in organising three successive international workshops on Sustainable Forestry Management in England, Serbia and Estonia. The workshop in Serbia was hosted by Dragan Roganovic. Reports on these workshops can be found at <http://www.forum-synergies.eu/rubrique18.html>.

Michael Dower

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### IN 2020 THE PREPARE NETWORK CONTINUES TO CELEBRATE ITS 20<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY.

In connection with the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our network, we publish here short articles about the history of PREPARE. Here is our story no. 12 (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, August 2020).



**PREPARE Gathering** in 2016 was held in Albania on the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> of September, 2016.

More than 80 participants from 20 countries took part in different workshops and a plenary conference, discussing the issues of partnership building and networking.

Besides thematic travelling workshops, the plenary session was dedicated to the strengthening of the capacity of CSOs and CSO Networks to participate actively in policy planning and implementation, to build a strong civil society in rural areas, and to enhance regional development through networking and cooperation.

PREPARE Gathering 2016 was supported by **Charles Stewart Mott Foundation** and by the European Commission through the **project ALTER**.

### INTRODUCING OUR MEMBERS - NATIONAL RURAL NETWORK OF MOLDOVA



#### National Rural Network of Moldova

The National Rural Network of Moldova is a civil society union established in 2018, aiming to support and enhance rural development by promoting fair and inclusive policies, facilitating the exchange of knowledge and information and ensuring constructive dialogue between all partners involved in the implementation of rural development policy. A wide range of stakeholders with a stake in agriculture and rural development are members of the Network. Presently, the network unites 103 organizations and individual members from national and regional level, including national-wide umbrella organisations representing: women, youth, local public authorities, farmers, local action groups, SMEs, rural tourism, etc.

The network is already recognized as a committed partner in rural policy dialogue, with effective collaborative relationships with local public administrations and targeted ministries. The Ministry of Agriculture, Regional Development and Environment is an active partner of the network, with which a cooperation agreement has been signed.

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