

This year's ELARD annual meeting held in the North of Portugal, in the beautiful historic town of Amarante, began November 25 with an introductory members workshop on the state of the art of LEADER/CLLD implementation and the preparation of the next programming period in the Member States, and continued the next day with the [LEADER/CLLD 2019 Conference](#) in an ancient prison transformed into a Music school and cultural centre, Amarante's Cultural Center Maria Amélia Laranjeiro.

Apart from the organisation, Minha Terra Network/ELARD, and host LAG DOLMEN, and local authorities – Municipalities of Amarante and Baião –, the newly appointed Minister of Agriculture, Maria do Céu Albuquerque, opened the conference, that also counted with presentations from representatives of the DG AGRI, DG REGIO, CoR and EESC – Christine Falter, Eleftherios Stavropoulos, Radim Srsen and Roman Haken, respectively.

The keynote presentation “Implementing CLLD in EU: Experiences so far – stocktaking, analysis and recommendations”, elaborated by Loris Servillo, Researcher and Associate Professor at Politecnico of Torino, and Stefan Kah, Researcher at University of Strathclyde/European Policies Research Centre, launched the event, that was joined by more than 120 participants, from 17 different countries.

The panel entitled "Looking forward with the feet on the ground – proposals and expectations from local level" introduced good examples of the use of ERDF and ESF, advantages of the development of the use of simplified cost options, and insights from the ELARD Members workshop introduced by Marion Eckardt, Kristiina Tammets and Robert Lukesch, respectively.

The afternoon was dedicated to the ELARD General Assembly Meeting.

Visit the website of Conference [HERE](#) and find:

- [presentations](#),
- [photo and video \(coming soon\) gallery](#),
- and the publication "[A LEADER Journey through Rural Europe](#)".

24.11.2019

[About the need of a real Rural Agenda for Europe](#)

The 4th European Rural Parliament, hosted by Red Asturiana de Desarrollo Rural (READER), was held in Candás, Asturias, Spain, from November 6 to 9. All in all, 38 European countries from inside and outside the UE (*) were represented by 335 delegates - rural people, representatives of civil society organisations, researchers, national governments and European Union institutions.

[Read more](#)

24.11.2019

About the need of a real Rural Agenda for Europe

The 4th European Rural Parliament, hosted by Red Asturiana de Desarrollo Rural (READER), was held in Candás, Asturias, Spain, from November 6 to 9. All in all, 38 European countries from inside and outside the UE (*) were represented by 335 delegates - rural people, representatives of civil society organisations, researchers, national governments and European Union institutions.

A few days before, on November 4-6 the 2nd European Rural Youth Parliament ERYP gathered 70 young delegates from 14 countries who shared their perspective on rural life. The 2nd European Rural Youth Parliament issued a Declaration with 10 calls for action regarding the most urgent challenges faced by young Europeans.

The European Rural Parliament is a unique and dynamic partnership between 41 national civil society organisations and 6 pan-European rural networks, all working for rural people. The partnership spans most of wider Europe, from Iceland to Turkey and Portugal to Ukraine with an extensive grass-roots membership working with village and community issues.

The participants of the 4th European Rural Parliament agreed upon the Rural People's Declaration of Candás Asturias on 9th November, after discussions on actual megatrends. What is the political and economic price to pay for exits, exodus and rising populism? Are national governments and EU too attached in growth thinking combined with a dominating urban Agenda? Is sectoral thinking, programming, management and financing the best solution for rural communities and economy?

The Declaration suggests working together in partnership for a “real” Rural Agenda for 2021-2027 recognising the critical importance of rural areas whilst opening the path for flexible, decentralised, territorial and place-based solutions where all stakeholders cooperate for the common good. Strategic, economic, environmental and social plans would take into account the variety of rural realities, even declining ones. Existing and upcoming challenges like ageing, social exclusion, immigration, exodus, food security, environment and climate change must be better tackled. As for new technologies and faster connections, although they bring opportunities, they are and will stay unequal in Europe.

The fact that the ERP is bringing together so many countries and people across Europe with a common passion for the maintenance of our rural territories is without a doubt valued, namely by Mihail Dumitru, Deputy Director General of DG Agriculture and Rural Development of the European Commission speaking to the 4th ERP.

The next step of the ERP partners will be to ensure that the voices and messages of the 4th ERP Gathering will be heard in the corridors of power in Brussels and also in the national governments across Europe.

The European Rural Parliament is jointly initiated by the [European Rural Community Alliance](#), [PREPARE Partnership for Rural Europe](#) and ELARD. The European Rural Parliament is part-funded from the Europe for Citizens programme of the European Commission.

Please read [The Rural People's Declaration of Candás](#) and visit the [European Rural Parliament](#) and the [4th European Rural Parliament](#).

(*)Austria, Belgium, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, The Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden and United Kingdom – with participants from England, North Ireland, Scotland, Wales; and Albania, Armenia, Belarus, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Georgia, Iceland, Kosovo, North Macedonia, Republic of Moldova, Serbia, Turkey, Ukraine, respectively.

28.10.2019

[Rural development at the heart of EU territorial cohesion](#)

During the EWRC2019, LEADER France held the workshop-debate “Rural development at the heart of EU territorial cohesion” on October 10 in the presence of Irene Tolleret, Member of European Parliament, Kristiina Tammets, Vice-President of ELARD, François Galabrun, Director of LAG Est-Audois and Administrator at Leader France, and Michael Schmitz, Advisor at Deutscher Landkreistag.

[Read more](#)

28.10.2019