



Minutes of ELARD 13th General Assembly

Date: 23rd of November 2016

Venue: Tartu, Estonia

Attendance

Representatives of members:

1. Pedro Brosei – ELARD Vice-President/Minha Terra (Portugal)
2. Luís Chaves – Minha Terra (Portugal)
3. Kirsten Birke Lund – representative of Danish LAGs (Denmark)
4. Alena Jaborova – NN LAG (Czech Republic)
5. Lilian Saage – Estonian Leader Union (Estonia)
6. Jack Roche – Irish Local Development Network (Ireland)
7. Raisa Ranta – SYTY (Finland)
8. Petra Supakova - National network of Slovak LAGs (Slovakia)
9. Anita Seļicka - Latvian Rural Forum (Latvia)
10. María José Murciano – REDR (Spain)
11. Virginija Setkiene – Lithuanian Rural Communities Union (Lithuania)
12. Kate Lindley - PLANED (UK)
13. Panagiotis Patras - Greek LEADER Network (Greece)
14. Marion Eckardt – LUS, Swedish Association of LAGs (Sweden)
15. Krzysztof Kwaterna - Polish LEADER network (Poland)

Other participants:

1. Janusz Bartczak – Polish LEADER network (Poland)
2. Marie Fleming – Irish Local Development Network (Ireland)
3. Maria João Botelho - Minha Terra (Portugal)
4. Povilas Saulevičius - Lithuanian Rural Communities Union (Lithuania)
5. Argyro (Iro) Tsimpri - Greek LEADER Network (Greece)
6. Hartmut Berndt - Network of German LAGs (Germany)
7. Lars Wellin - Lokal utveckling Kalmar Öland (Sweden)
8. Peter Ross – Scottish LAG/FLAGs (Scotland)
9. Stefan Niedermoser - LEADER-forum Austria (Austria)
10. Alina Lukjanceva - Pierigas Partnership (Latvia)
11. Jeanette Uner – Folkungaland (Sweden)
12. Ulrika Rylin - Lokalt Ledd Utveckling Halland (Sweden)
13. Triin Lääne – ELARD assistant (Estonia)
14. Ave Bremse – Estonian Rural Network (Estonia)



Agenda

1. Welcome
 2. ELARD declaration for LEADER/CLLD post 2020
 - 2.1. Dissemination
 3. ELARD financial and activities report in 2016
 - 3.1. European Rural Parliament activities
 - 3.2. ENPARD project with Georgia
 4. ELARD Statutes and new model for membership fee
 - 4.1. ELARD Statutes
 - 4.2. New model for membership fee
 5. Confirmation of the rate of membership fee
 6. Membership issues and applications
 - 6.1. Poland
 - 6.2. Austria
 - 6.3. Germany
 - 6.4. FYROM- Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia
 7. Introduction of budget and action plan for 2017. Members input for ELARD budget and action plan in 2017.
 8. Information – next GA
- Closure of the GA

1. Welcome by Vice-President of ELARD, Pedro Brosei

Pedro Brosei opened the meeting and welcomed the participants. President Kristiina Tammets couldn't attend and conduct the General Assembly meeting due to unexpected health conditions. She is recovering and everything is fine.

Procedures for an approval of chairman and minutes secretary

Approval of chairman: Pedro Brosei

Approval of the minute's secretary: Triin Lääne

Quorum check

Quorum is calculated under the principle every member's country has one vote and only full members have right to vote. As there are 18 full members, the quorum is at least 9 votes.

General Assembly has a quorum - 13 full members are present.

Approval of the agenda

Adopted unanimously.

2. ELARD declaration for LEADER/CLLD post 2020

2.1. Dissemination

The participants as well as ELARD member organizations will be consulted on the draft as soon as possible. The declaration will be ready before Christmas and will be sent out to the Commission and made public in general in January 2017.



3. ELARD financial and activities report in 2016

Virginija Setkiene explained the implementation of the ELARD budget 2016.
Pedro Brosei gave an overview about the activities 2016.

Pedro Brosei talked also about the situation with the ELARD's employee in Brussels. Alena Jaborova has quit the job since summer/autumn and Triin Lääne took over the job temporarily. Remuneration of the employee is also an issue.

In addition to employee, we are also looking for the new office in Brussels.

Pedro Brosei is planning to meet the director of AEIDL in Brussels regarding the vacant job. AEIDL's (The European Association for Information on Local Development) activities and expertise cover the environment and sustainable development, territorial development (rural, urban, regional and local), employment and social affairs, and citizenship.

There was a discussion that if we would cooperate with AEIDL, we may not be so independent and transparent any more. On the other hand we could benefit from this cooperation, it is also depending much on a concrete person. It is important that we still consider this cooperation as one option; it could be also some other organization/service provider we could cooperate with.

It was also proposed to give a short notice to members list; maybe they have good ideas or some person in Brussels we could work with. It was already agreed previously that the new employee should be as an ambassador/representative of ELARD, as well as a technical worker.

This topic will be discussed in more detail at next GA when we have more information and better overview of the situation.

3.1. European Rural Parliament activities

Kirsten Birke Lund gave an overview about the ERP activities in 2016-2017.

The main ERP activities initiated already are the ERP Gathering 2017 which will be in Venhorst in the Netherlands and the following themes, for which ERP via HSSL has successfully applied for € 150,000 from Europe for Citizens:

- Provision for Youth and the ERP for Youth;
- Refugees and Rural areas;
- Integrated Rural Development and LEADER/CLLD;
- Poverty and Exclusion;
- Rural Service and Infrastructure;
- Local and Sub-regional Economies.

ELARD will be leading the theme: The Integrated Rural Development and LEADER/CLLD and like the rest of the themes the work will be based on the ERP Manifesto and eventually including the Cork Declaration 2.0. For ELARD's theme the Tartu declaration will be used as well. The theme work will typically consist of:

- Initial phase defining the challenges – a survey perhaps;
- Virtual phase – National and pan-European – 250 participants;
- Face-to-face meeting – 50 participants;
- Reporting and presentation at the ERP 2017 gathering.



There was a discussion about the ERP benefits and possible competition to ELARD but in Kirsten's opinion ERP is rather a network and process not a competitor to ELARD.

3.2. ENPARD project with Georgia

Postponed to the next GA.

4. ELARD Statutes and new model for membership fee

4.1. ELARD Statutes

Discussion postponed to the next GA.

The Statutes main changes base on the following:

- Members input at workshop in February, working group in June;
- More power to full members;
- Simplicity and clarity of the text;
- Clear responsibilities of different structural bodies of ELARD;
- Sustainability of ELARD as an organization;
- Reducing bureaucracy;
- Reducing the duplication of the text;
- Updating the Statutes according to the Belgian Law.

We need to describe all articles in our Statutes according to the requirements in Belgian Act on non-profit-making associations, non-profit-making international associations and foundations (§48, 27th June 1921). Therefore we can't exclude much information and the content should be more less in the same amount.

Document will be opened to members for proposals of amendments until 20.01.2017. Approval of the Statutes will be at the next GA meeting in February 2017.

4.2. New model for membership fee

Pedro Brosei explained the new model for membership fee. Luís Chaves and Kirsten Birke Lund gave more details about which variables are used in the calculations. They also showed the difference between the current and future membership fee for each member country.

The main goal is that the new calculation basis is simpler and more fair. At the moment the current amount of membership fees is ca 41 000 euro per year but our goal is also to increase this amount and reach to 60 000 euro to guarantee sustainable organization. Additionally we are looking for funding from different projects.

There were some new ideas proposed by members, and the Membership Fee working group will continue their work. All ideas from members are welcome. Adjusted models will be opened to members for comments, proposals until 20.01.2017.

5. Confirmation of the rate of membership fee

Confirmation of the model and rate of membership fee will take place at next GA meeting in February 2017 by voting, and due to this invoices of membership fee for 2017 will not be sent until after next GA.



6. Membership issues and applications

6.1. Poland

Decision (all agree): it was confirmed that Polish LEADER Network is a full member of ELARD since 23.11.2016.

6.2. Austria

Decision (all agree): it was confirmed that Austrian LEADER Forum is an associated member of ELARD since 23.11.2016.

6.3. Germany

Decision (all agree): it was confirmed that Network of German LAGs (Bundesarbeitsgemeinschaft der LEADER – Aktionsgruppen in Deutschland) is an associated member of ELARD since 23.11.2016.

6.4. FYROM- Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

Decision (all agree): it was confirmed that associated membership of Rural Development Network of the Republic of Macedonia was prolonged until 31.12.2017.

There was an introduction of the new potential members.

Peter Ross from Scotland introduced himself and the situation in their country and showed the interest to ELARD membership.

National network of Northern Ireland has also shown interest to join ELARD.

Panos Patras reported that Bulgaria was also interested some time ago but then their network was divided into two and they haven't been active since.

7. Introduction of budget and action plan for 2017. Members input for ELARD budget and action plan in 2017.

Main priorities and activities in 2017 will include:

Policy work:

1. Dissemination of LEADER/CLLD declaration and its main messages;
2. Participation in European Commission working groups, European Rural Parliament Steering Group, European Countryside Movement, ENRD;
3. ELARD CLLD seminar in Brussels in Spring;
4. European Rural Parliament in the Netherlands in October;
5. Meetings and seminars with MEPs, Commission, EESC members, officials;
6. Common statements with ERP and ECM partners.

Animation and dissemination activities:

1. ELARD projects implementation: approved projects – ENPARD (160 000€), Europe for Citizens (10 000€);
2. New ELARD Website;
3. Finding possibilities to start Staff Exchange program for ELARD members networks and their LAGs.



Strengthening and expansion of ELARD members network:

1. Confirmation of ELARD Statutes and new model of membership fee;
2. Country visits – founding members and members’ invitations (6 countries per year);
3. Membership issues and new members (Scotland, Netherlands, Italy);
4. Finalizing the reorganization of Brussels office, employment of new co-ordination officer.

Detailed action plan and budget for 2017 will be proposed at next GA in February.

8. Information

Next ELARD General Assembly is planned for February in Brussels, linking it to the scheduled ENRD LEADER Subgroup, which is foreseen for 21st February (+ a ENRD seminar on “Smart LEADER” on 22nd February – both dates are still to be confirmed by the Commission/ENRD).

Closure

Signatures

Chairman of the General Assembly
Pedro Brosei
/digitally signed/

Minute’s Secretary
Triin Lääne
/digitally signed/

