



Intergroup Newsletter

July 2021

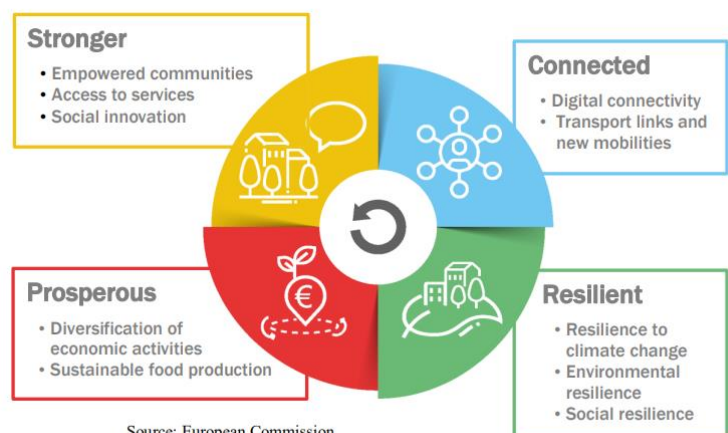
Overview

The Secretariat is happy to present you the activities carried out by our Intergroup and its members over the past month. In this third edition of the Newsletter you will find relevant information concerning:

- Publication of the **Long Term Vision for Rural Areas**
- Upcoming events – **SAVE THE DATE!**
- MEPs' Corner
- Member's Corner
- Calendar

Publication of the Long-Term Vision for Rural Areas

On June 30 2021, the European Commission published its long-awaited [Long-term Vision for Rural Areas](#). In shaping it, the Commission gathered the views of rural communities and businesses through consultations and stakeholders meetings. Through this collaborative process, the Commission identified four complementary areas of actions, embodying a long-term vision for stronger, connected, resilient and prosperous rural areas by 2040. The document also highlights the challenges faced by rural areas - including urbanisation, ageing, lack of connectivity, poor infrastructures and limited access to services, as well as the opportunities emerging from the EU's green & digital agenda and the lessons learnt from the COVID-19 pandemic. Most notably, the Commission announces the creation of a **Rural Pact** and a **Rural Action Plan**. The Rural Pact will seek to engage



actors at all levels to foster economic and social cohesion, with a focus on local stakeholders, while the Rural Action Plan will aim to achieve a sustainable, cohesive and integrated rural development.

Our members react!

- Euromoneta: “EU Long-Term Vision for Rural Areas: a welcomed political will but timid progress”. Read their [press release](#).
- CEJA: “Young farmers and rural youth welcome the long-term vision for rural areas”. Read their [press release](#).
- ELARD: “The Long-Term Vision for Rural Areas communicated – Time for Member States to get active!”. Read their [press release](#).

Events – SAVE THE DATE!

- 6 July 2021 - Long Term Vision: Building The Future for Remote Areas!

The banner features logos for REInA, eu40, STARTUP OLÉ, RUMRA & SMART VILLAGES, and the European Union flag. A calendar icon indicates the date: 6th July '21, 17:00 - 18:00 CEST.

**THE LONG TERM VISION:
BUILDING THE FUTURE FOR REMOTE AREAS!**

Moderator

 Emilio Corchado CEO & Founder Startup OLÉ Full Professor University of Salamanca	 MEP Franc Bogović Co-chair of the RUMRA & Smart Villages Intergroup.	 Dubravka Šuica Vice-President of Democracy and Demography European Commission	 Jože Podgoršek Slovenian Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Food	 Alessandro Da Rold Co-founder Cortina Digital Forum
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#StartupOLÉ #REInA #EU40 #RUMRA

Join the discussion with Dubravka Šuica, Vice President for Democracy & Demography, on how to make the most of the Long-Term Vision for remote areas. Registration and full details are [available here](#).

- 8 July 2021 - Connectivity to Spark Rural Innovation: Building the Future for Remote Areas!

GET YOUR TICKET NOW!
<https://bit.ly/2U1Sukh>

8th July '21
10:00 – 11:00 CEST



CONNECTIVITY TO SPARK RURAL INNOVATION: BUILDING THE FUTURE FOR REMOTE AREAS!



Benoît Lutgen
Member of the
European Parliament



Isidro Laso
Member of Mariya
Gabriel's Cabinet
European Commission



Sandra Isabel Novo
Founder & CEO
Market Sostenibles



Joakim Reiter
Former Ambassador at the WTO,
Trustee of the Vodafone Institute,
former UN-CTAD
deputy Secretary General



Méabh McMahon
Reporter and news anchor,
Euronews.

Moderator

#StartupOLÉ #REInA #EU40 #RUMRA

The panel will examine how connectivity of remote areas, turning villages using innovation into startup villages, is crucial to the development and well-being of the citizens of Europe. Registration and full details are [available here](#).

Intergroup News

- MEPs Sylwia Spurek & Ivan Vilibor Sinčić join the Intergroup
We are delighted to welcome MEPs [Sylwia Spurek](#) (Greens/EFA, PL) and [Ivan Vilibor Sinčić](#) (NI, HR) as a new members of the Intergroup.



MEPs' Corner

- Read the [article](#) by MEP Franc Bogovič on “Rural Areas: Smart Villages are the future”

Rural regions cover 44.6 percent of the EU's total area and are home to more than 93 million people, almost 21 percent of the total EU population. These regions face a range of challenges, including demographic change, leading to a decline in the number of people of working age, a weak labour market and even depopulation of certain rural and remote areas. Find the [full article here](#).



OPINION | MEP AWARDS | INTERVIEWS | PM+ | POLICY | MAGAZINE | EVENTS

Rural Areas: Smart Villages are the future

Following the pandemic, we have the opportunity to make the most of rural life, if we choose to do so; let's make this a privilege says Franc Bogovič.

□ **MEP Hannes Heide: Tourism in Rural Areas**

Tourism has collapsed everywhere during the lockdown. Numerous companies are still threatened with bankruptcy. On the other hand, outdoor tourism in rural areas is experiencing an economic boom due to the pandemic. „Many small businesses benefit from this and most of the added value remains in the region“, reports RUMRA Vice President Hannes Heide. Read the [full article on our website](#).



□ **MEP Engin Eroglu: Benefits of the Conference on the Future of Europe for Smart Villages**

A number of persistent prejudices against rural and remote regions still persist today. Behind these stereotypes and tribalism, the fact that more than half of Europe's population comes from rural and remote regions is all too often hidden. Rural regions are therefore not strange exotics, but on the contrary, a core component of the European population. The links between more urban and rural regions are also much more deeply rooted than they might first appear. Through energy and agribusiness, there are very close economic ties between urban and rural areas. Read the [full article on our website](#).



Members' Corner

□ **SSPA – New study on “Positive environmental externalities that rural areas contribute and the impact that depopulation may have on them”**

The report shows the value of sparsely populated areas as donor territories, whose benefits transcend the entire society from an environmental and social point of view. The aforementioned report has objectified specific data, showing that these territories ensure the conservation of biodiversity, decisively contribute to curbing the global effects of climate change, as well as providing the opportunity to integrate the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in terms of sustainability, of well-being, quality of life and health of people, both of those who live in rural areas and of those who live in cities. Read [more here](#) and watch the [campaign video](#)!



□ **ELARD – ‘Territoriall’ magazine on rural development**

Find [here](#) the last edition of Territoriall, the [ESPON](#) magazine on rural areas. It features an interview with Commissioner Suica on the Long Term Vision for Rural Areas.



□ **ELARD – The Committee of the Regions adopts Opinion on Experiences and lessons learned by regions and cities during the COVID-19 crisis**

On May 7th, a large majority in the Plenary session of the European Committee of the Regions adopted the Opinion on Experiences and lessons learned by regions and cities during the COVID-19 crisis. Its article 36 directly refers to Leader. The full text of the document is available [here](#).



**European Committee
of the Regions**

□ ELARD welcomes new members!

On 20 May, ELARD included new members from Kosovo and



Luxembourg. The network amounts now to 28 members with more than 2 200 Local Action Groups from rural, coastal, urban and peri-urban Europe. ELARD's vision is "A viable Europe through participatory democracy in all rural areas and beyond!" Discover the ELARD [membership](#).

□ Euromontana launches a European-wide survey on mountain youth

10 years after its first study, Euromontana in collaboration with the UNITA project launches a [wide European survey](#) to better understand youth aspirations and see what has changed. The survey aims at grasping the aspirations of the youth and understanding the challenges they face in European mountains. It is open until mid-August and is available in 12 languages. Euromontana invites you to take or share the survey!



□ Euromontana and the European Committee of the Regions call for an EU Action Plan on Pastoralism

On 14 June 2021, the European Committee of the Regions, with the support of Euromontana, the Yolda Initiative and the International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists (IYRP) Regional Support Group for Europe, held the conference "[Pastoralism: a crucial way to tackle sustainability challenges in EU and beyond](#)". Juanan Gutiérrez, President of Euromontana, invited all stakeholders to continue mobilising to get 2026 designated as the International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists and called upon the European Commission to adopt a European Action Plan for Pastoralism to support the continuation of the sustainable and extensive practices which are intrinsic to pastoralism.



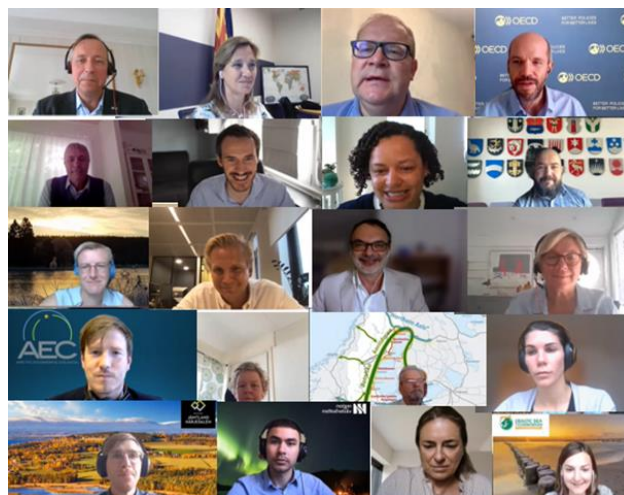
□ CEJA elects a new Board for 2021-2023

CEJA delegates gathered on 28 June during CEJA's online General Assembly to approve CEJA's budget for 2021-2022 and elect a new Board for the 2021-2023 Presidential mandate. The organisation's new President is Diana Lenzi from Italy. The four Vice-Presidents are Thomas Duffy from Ireland, Anne-Catherine Dalcq from Belgium, Adam Nowak from Poland and Doris Letina from Slovenia. Read more [here](#).



□ CPMR - An ambitious EU Arctic policy for territorial development

On 28 June, the [CPMR Baltic Sea Commission](#) Arctic Task Force, together with, MEP Urmas Paet, Chair of the Arctic Friendship Group of the European Parliament organised its second online meeting to discuss the innovation potential in the Arctic, to lead the green transition. During the meeting, Mr Enrique Garcilazo from the OECD stressed the diversity of "rural", and the importance to develop good indicators to understand what works better for each rural territory, keeping in mind the territorial specificities. The OECD representative stressed the importance to enable local and regional actors to set their shared vision for the future, and the need for public authorities



to support their vision by building capacity and providing resources. There was a strong consensus among speakers that the focus should be on promoting the well-being of local communities in the Arctic. Read the [complete event report here](#).

Members' Events

We are always keen to share your news and actions, so feel free to reach out should you have anything to share! **Please let us know your events related to the Intergroup topics for the next newsletter!**

Past Events

- 27 May – Euromontana showcases mountain businesses' opportunities towards climate adaptation

On 27 May 2021, Euromontana held its third Smart Mountains webinar "[Climate Adaptation – What opportunities for mountain businesses?](#)". This webinar



gave the floor to speakers from the European Commission's Directorate-General on Climate Action, the EIT Climate and Knowledge and Innovation Community, and three concrete cases showcasing how mountain businesses can adapt to climate change in Europe. The event was an opportunity for mountain stakeholders to reflect on the impacts of climate change on the local economy and on ways to adapt in the coming years for smarter mountain communities.

- 2 June – Event with EU40 on Promoting Regional Funding

MEP Nienass hosted a Roundtable event, together with EU40, on how to maximise the potential of the Community-led local development (CLLD) system developed by the European Commission. ENRD, ELARD, DG AGRI and DG REGIO participated to the panel discussion. Watch the full recording [here](#).



- 3 June – FREE Webinar: Rural Energy in Europe – What does the future hold?

On 3 June 2021 the RUMRA & Smart Villages Intergroup & the FREE Initiative launched the webinar series [Get out of Town – Fill the Rural Energy Gap](#). You can watch the full recording of the event [here](#). The summary can be found [here](#). During this first session



entitled, **Rural Energy in Europe – What does the future hold?**, Robert Honeyman, Head of Analysis, Low Carbon Business Unit at Genserv presented the findings of his study entitled *Rural Energy Challenges: Lessons from 10 Members States*. You can find all the data-driven work conducted by the FREE initiative [here](#), as well as specific country data [here](#).

- 16 June – **Wine tasting with CARPE DIGEM**

One of the key objectives of the [Interreg projects](#) is to encourage harmonious regional development and creating environments in which different knowledge and skills are shared, appropriate action plans are developed and different stakeholders are brought together. In this view, the event took place on 16th June in several selected locations in Slovenia, France and Spain, where smaller, independent winemakers presented their regions in relation to the current COVID-19 context, as well as the wider economic challenges they face. Read the event recap [here](#).



- 18 June – **EESC – Towards a holistic strategy on sustainable and equitable rural and urban development**

On the 18th of June, Marion Eckardt, President of ELARD took part in the [online hearing](#) organised by the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) and the European Rural Parliament (ERP). The exchanges will contribute to the redaction of the EESC own-initiative opinion [NAT/820 'Towards a holistic strategy on sustainable rural/urban development'](#). The streaming of the event is available [here](#). More info can be found on the [ELARD website](#).



Upcoming Events – SAVE THE DATE!

- 30 November to 3 December 2021 – LEADER 30 Years celebration & conference

NOVEMBER 30 - DECEMBER 3

SAVE THE DATE

LEADER 30 Years celebration & conference |
Halmstad, Sweden

After thirty years of working with LEADER, it is time to celebrate our successes, but also to look forward!

We will take a look on successful LEADER-implementation during 30 years, but also investigate how we can work for local democracy and participatory approaches all over rural Europe in order to build a viable Europe.

We look forward to a programme full of LEADER-friends and to your participation!

Enjoy the summer!

Best of greetings,
Marion Eckardt



Preliminary programme

30.11 – Arrival Day
Arrival to Halmstad, Sweden
Common dinner

1.12 – Conference Day
30 years of LEADER-Fame and success-stories
Long term Vision of Rural Areas – Stock-taking: How is the implementation running?
Workinggroups on future steps
Common Dinner

2.12 – Excursion and celebration
Workinggroup continues
Excursions to different rural development and LEADER-venues
Common Dinner and PARTY!

3.12 – Going home


Twitter

- We kindly invite you to follow our [Twitter handle](#) and to interact with our publications.



- We are proud to share with you the **most successful tweet of the month**. The tweet, on the occasion of the FREE's Get Out Of Town Webinar, generated 998 impressions and 30 total engagements.

