



Intergroup Newsletter

February 2022

Overview

We hope you are well and that you have had a good start to the year. The Secretariat is happy to present you the activities carried out by our Intergroup and its members over the past two months. In this fourth edition of the Newsletter, you will find relevant information concerning:

- Intergroup news
- MEPs' Corner
- Member's Corner
- Events
- Twitter Updates

Share your latest updates with us! We would love to hear from you and include your events and news in our next newsletter, so don't forget that you can email us about anything you have been up to.

Happy reading!

Intergroup News

- **Welcome to our new Intergroup members!**

We are delighted to welcome as new members of our Intergroup:

- MEP [Brice Hortefeux](#) (FR, EPP)
- MEP [Christophe Grudler](#) (FR, RE)
- MEP [Elsi Katainen](#) (FI, RE)
- MEP [Irène Tolleret](#) (FR, RE)
- MEP [István Ujhelyi](#) (HU, S&D)
- MEP [Maria Walsh](#) (IR, EPP)
- MEP [Sarah Wiener](#) (DE, Greens)
- MEP [Seán Kelly](#) (IR, EPP)
- MEP [Susana Solís Pérez](#) (ES, RE)
- MEP [Stelios Kypouropoulos](#) (GR, EPP)

- **Looking forward!**

On Wednesday 30 March, the new Green German State Secretary for Agriculture, Manuela Rottmann, will be visiting us in person the European Parliament in Brussels under the invitation of MEP Niklas Nienauß.

We would like to introduce her to as many MEPs from the RUMRA & Smart Villages Intergroup as possible while she will be here. Please contact Adam, if interested. We will keep you posted on this important event.

MEPs' Corner

- **The "Land kann digital!" project in the Schwalm-Eder-West region in Hesse, Germany by MEP Engin Eroglu**

I have been a member of the RUMRA and Smart Villages intergroup since 2019. It was clear to me from the beginning that not only do I want to be a "passive" member of such an intergroup, but that I also want to support the integration of projects in the field of Smart Villages with all my possibilities on site.

I myself was born and raised in the Schwalm-Eder region, and therefore know all about the strengths and weaknesses of the region, especially with regard to digitalisation in this region. It was, therefore, a matter close to my heart that one of my first projects in the field of Smart Villages should also be promoted in my home region.

For the municipalities in Germany and also Hesse, there is an acute need for digitalisation, both in the area of administrations and in the area of Smart Region. Work processes must be digitalised, digital document repositories created, booking tools set up in the digital space and solutions for data storage and processing established. Rural areas must be taken along and supported in this development.

I am therefore very happy to accompany the digitalisation project "Land kann digital!" (German for: Rural areas can be digital!) together with the municipalities of the Schwalm-Eder-West region as part of the state programme "Strong Homeland Hesse".

Intelligent applications and data platforms are used to provide citizens with better services and transparent information. In the next two years, smart solutions will be implemented in the following areas:

1. Administrative Digitalisation (e.g. nationwide implementation of an e-file and thus the starting signal for the paperless office).

2. Smart Environment (e.g. noise sensors and environmental sensors (air quality) for towns along busy motorways and federal roads)
3. Smart Energy (e.g. analysis and upgrading of municipal properties with smart metering/building hardware to reliably track energy consumption),
4. Smart Tourism (e.g. digital equipment of municipal tourism properties (municipal swimming pools, open-air swimming pools, bathing lakes, camping sites, etc.), e.g. acquisition of a uniform online booking system, digital site organisation, website renewal, digital steels to promote the overall project in each municipality)
5. Smart Traffic (e.g. use of floating car data & development of visualisation of the corresponding data analyses).

A focus lies especially on the topic of sustainability (Smart Environment, Smart Energy and Smart Traffic).

An open urban data platform, on which all data is brought together, forms the digital infrastructural basis of the entire project. The platform enables the realisation of the application examples described above and helps the municipalities to store, analyse, evaluate and visualise their municipal data in a DSGVO-compliant manner. The platform can be used internally for administrative purposes and externally as a source of information for citizens and is the tool on which the application examples are largely based.

What is new in this project?

The novelty lies in the Smart Region concept: The approach of dynamically visualising real-time data and demonstrating the effectiveness of such an approach in different areas, as well as linking social, economic and ecological topics, is innovative.

The project in the Schwalm-Eder-West region is intended to demonstrate how municipalities can not only maintain their ability to act in the 21st century, but also expand it in a targeted manner. In addition to the use cases described above, other applications can build on the open urban data platform in the future and use the (data) infrastructure created.

I am very happy to continue to accompany this project in the future and to keep you up to date with the progress. I also hope that this project can serve as a cornerstone for many more projects of this kind, so that more and more of our regions can become Smart Villages.

MEP Engin Eroglu

- **MEP Bogovič and MEP Tolleret on visit at the European Summit of Regions and Cities**

Franc Bogovič and Irène Tolleret will be visiting the European Summit of Regions and Cities together with local representatives. It is organised every half mandate by the European Committee of the Regions to discuss the EU's future challenges. This time, the Summit aims at increasing the impact and outreach of the **Conference on the Future of Europe**. The voices of regions and cities must be heard and listened to, as they are key contributors to the European project and play an essential role in placing citizens at the heart of Europe. The 9th European Summit of Regions and Cities is organised within the framework of the **French Presidency of the Council of the European Union**. With the support of the French hosts and co-organisers, youth representatives, and a wide participation enabled by the hybrid format, the summit

participants will be invited to showcase their contribution to the recovery efforts and discuss new ways of cooperation in view of a more sustainable future.

All information about the summit can be found [here](#).

Members' Corner

- **Being young in a mountain area: Euromontana's report is out!**

Euromontana, the European Association of Mountain areas, releases a new European wide report on mountain youth, 10 years after its first survey. Carried out with the support of Euromontana members and in collaboration with Educ'Alpes and the UNITA alliance, this study aims at grasping the needs and aspirations of mountain youth. At the start of the European Year of Youth, this report brings the voice of 1134 mountain young people and helps to understand if mountain areas are still attractive for young people and why. Euromontana has also compiled 6 country factsheets, available, for France, Italy, Norway, Poland, Romania and Spain.

Read the full report [here](#).

- **The #RuralBarometer is in the news!**

The FREE Initiative is delighted to announce that the [2021 Rural Barometer survey](#) has been published in The Brussels Times!

The article presents an overview of the results obtained from the survey. This will help give a voice to people living in rural areas, highlighting their needs and ensuring that these needs are better met in the future.

"People in rural areas feel underrepresented and overlooked", these are the words that Silvia Estivill pronounced during the interview, giving voice to more than 130 million people living in rural areas in Europe.

"Rural residents have fewer energy choices" "they feel they should have the same opportunities as people in the cities" continued Silvia, highlighting the results of the Rural Barometer survey 2021, a first-of-its-kind study from the FREE Initiative.

Do you want to read the full article and discover more about the Rural Barometer Survey 2021? Click [here](#).

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- **Euromontana publishes a booklet of good practices for the sustainable development of mountain areas**

As 2022 starts as the International Year of Sustainable Mountain Development, Euromontana opens the year with the publication of its annual collection of good practices. This booklet showcases 17 inspiring initiatives from all over Europe (UE and non-UE). From agriculture and rural development to daily mobility, sustainable mountain tourism, energy transition and innovative education in mountain villages, this booklet presents interesting initiatives to be transferred to drive change in mountain areas. Find the Booklet here.

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- **#RuralYouth4EU campaign**

CEJA and Rural Youth Europe are launching a social media campaign on the 14th February, “#RuralYouth4EU: Rural youth and young farmers share their vision on the future of the EU!” in the context of the Conference on the Future of Europe.

The campaign will last for one month, and twice a week both organisations will share across their social media platforms audio snippets recorded by young people from rural areas replying to the question: “As a young rural citizen, what are your dreams for the future of the EU?”. The Conference represents a special opportunity for rural youth and young farmers to share their views and to make their voices heard, so don't hesitate to follow us and to share their messages.

Follow CEJA on [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#) | Follow Rural Youth Europe on [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#)

Events



24-27 February 2020

Upcoming Event!

- **28 February – 3 March - MWC Barcelona Returns**

The executive board members Franc Bogovič and Atidzhe Alieva-Veli will be representing the RUMRA & Smart Villages Intergroup at the MWC in Barcelona.

The MWC is the world's largest and most influential connectivity event. This international exhibition attracts decision-makers in the mobile ecosystem.

Currently, registered attendees come from 2,000 different companies, 155 countries, and 50% are Director level or above.

Atidzhe and Franc are there, in order to exchange ideas on how to fulfil the ambitious plans of the EC to connect 100% of our rural areas with broad-band internet until 2025.

- **07 March – 08 March – European LEADER Seminary**

Leader France is organising on March 07 and March 08, 2022 in Plœuc- L'Hermitage (Côtes d'Armor) a European Seminar on LEADER, the only event organized within the framework of the French Presidency of the Council of the European Union specific to the LEADER program. MEP Irène Tolleret and French secretary of State for Development, Joel Giraud, will be visiting the event.

This meeting will be an opportunity to highlight the contribution of the LEADER program for rural territories and to discuss more broadly on the place of rural development within community policies.

This meeting will be organized in the form of conferences with participatory workshops. It will involve all Leader stakeholders in France: ministries, managing authorities, LAGs, etc. The European Commission, Members of the European Parliament, members of the European Committee of the Regions will participate.

Discover the website dedicated to this event here.

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 tweets of the past months.**

Secretariat

RUMRA & Smart Villages

The European Parliament Intergroup on Rural, Mountainous and Remote Areas



RUMRA Rural, Mountainous
and Remote Areas
& **SMART VILLAGES**

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