ELARD Members meeting
13:00-16:00
3.3.2021

Minutes

Attendance

Marion Eckardt President	LUS, Local Development Sweden	Sweden
Hartmut Berndt Vice President	BAG-LAG, German LEADER Association	Germany
Stefan Niedermoser	Leader forum Österreich	Austria
Katarina Miličević	Croatia Rural Development Network	Croatia
Igor Kustreba	Leader Network Croatia	Croatia
Jan Florian	National Network of LAGs	Czech Rep.
Radim Sršeň	National Network of LAGs	Czech Rep.
Kirsten Birke Lund	Council of Rural Districts (Danish LAGs)	Denmark
Kristiina Tammets	Estonian Leader Network	Estonia
Pedro Brosei	BAG-LAG, German Leader Association	Germany
Anastasios M. Perimenis	Greek Leader Network	Greece
Iro Tsimpri	Greek Leader Network	Greece
Zsofia Szőnyi	Hungarian Rural Network	Hungary
Dorina Gulyás	Hungarian Rural Network	Hungary
Pál Hajas	Hungarian Leader Alliance	Hungary
Terry Keenan	I.L.D.N Ireland	Ireland
Edisona Franca	Network of organizations for rural development Kosovo	Kosovo
Anita Seļicka	Latvian Rural Forum	Latvia
Santa Harjo-Ozoliņa	Latvian Rural Forum	Latvia
Virginija Šetkienė	Lithuanian rural communities union	Lithuania
Jacques Fons	LAG Atert-Wark	Luxembourg
Jarne Heuff	Leader Network Netherlands	Netherlands
Piotr Sadlocha	Polish LAG Network	Poland
Luís Chaves	Minha Terra Network	Portugal
Jela Tvrdonova	National Network of LAG	Slovakia
Roman Medved	SNRD - Slovenian network for rural development	Slovenia
Maria José Murciano Sanchez	REDR Network of rural development	Spain

1. Welcome
   - ELARD´s president Marion Eckardt welcomed all participants and introduced the agenda of the meeting.



2. Agenda
   - None of the participants suggested a supplement to the proposed Agenda.
3. State of play members
   - Marion introduced a Padlet, where all participants can describe the situation of CLLD implementation, evaluation, transition period, Next Generation Fund and preparing new Strategies in their countries. See: https://padlet.com/marioneckardt/aspsp7kie8llr0fr.
   - Afterwards alarming situation in Slovakia was discussed, where ELARD send letter requesting unblocking current situation. Unfortunately the reaction of Slovak MAs is worrying, since they stopped communicating with Slovak LAG network.
   - Evaluation of LEADER on MS but also on LAGs level is planned in majority countries, in some also evaluation of added value.
   - Next Generation Fund – in some countries LEADER/CLLD will be part of this fund, but the negotiations are still ongoing.
   - In some countries smaller LAGs are merging. The procedure is stimulated top-down, but it is consulted with LAGs.
   - Start of the new Strategies is in some countries limited by transition period of EAFRD. But for example in CZ where strategies are financed also by ERDF and ESF, the implementation of new strategies will start this or next year already.

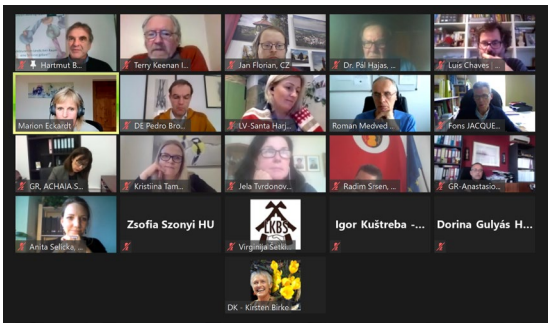
- Multifunded CLLD can be introduced in some countries. Different questions connected to this topic raised. Contrary to this, in SWE is being discussed returning to mono-funded CLLD.
- More details from all MS can be found in attached PPT file.

4. DRAFT Vision, values and business plan of ELARD (Attachment 1)
   - Marion introduced draft, containing vision: "A viable Europe through local democracy and participatory approaches in all rural areas and beyond.", business idea and points not to be forgotten in activity plan.
   - The draft was appreciated by the members with almost no comments.
   - Kirsten Birke Lund suggested to include the multifunded aspect somewhere, that we should work for CLLD in all funds . Jela Tvrdonova suggested to implement somehow promoting the added value of LEADER/CLLD. Anastasios Perimenis mentioned 30 years of LEADER. Terry Keenan proposed to implement all presented ideas into the draft and present it on next General Assembly.
5. Partnership conditions of ELARD (Attachment 2 – proposal cooperation evaluation unit, Attachment 3: Background mail, Attachment 4: Proposed Partnership conditions)
   - Marion introduced "Proposal for Partnership principles of ELARD with external organisations and consortia with assets" which was previously discussed by Council.
   - Jan Florian suggested that the value of partnership does not have to be calculated in money, but in some cases it can be valued in other equivalent benefits. Luis Chaves mentioned that this should not limit our aim to cooperate on surveys and/or projects, which are of key importance for us. It can not be used as a price list. Jela Tvrdonova mentioned that if ELARD is doing some services for external subjects, it is fair to ask to get it payed. Luis Chaves proposed that Council should discuss each case separately. If the partner has a possibility to refund the costs of ELARD, we should of course ask for it, but in some cases we should cooperate pro-bono. Radim Srsen reminds several previous cases where ELARD was asked for partnership or cooperation, which could be valued. Piotr Sadlocha does not see any problem in asking for financial support from private consortiums. Terry Keenan would charge only organizations or activities outside of our main interest.
   - Marion concluded, that the document was meant as an internal guide on how to work with different cooperation offers. It will be used by President and Council only, as guidelines but not as a fixed "pricelist". The discussion we are having for the transparency in the organisation. Marion will also contact the evaluation-team for cooperation again.
6. Proposal for Rural Vision week (Attachment 5)
   - Proposal for fringe-workshop on Rural Vision Week on 25/03/2021 was approved. Everybody is welcomed to register!
7. EWRC proposal (Attachment 6)

- All speakers approved to contribute. Proposal will be submitted before 26th of March. The European Week of Region and Cities will take place on 11-14/10/2021.

8. ECA investigation
   - There has been an European Court of uditors investigation on added value of LEADER, in 12 countries.
   - Luis Chaves and Jela Tvrdonova commented meeting with ECA.
   - Kristiina Tammets suggested to collect best practice around members on evaluating added value
   - ELARD will continue to work with this question.
9. Administrative Coordination Officer
   - From 21 applicants Council selected 4 candidates for interview, which took place on 18/02/2021. In interviews were participating Marion Eckardt and Hartmut Berndt. Contract with selected candidate will be signed during this week still hopefully and the contract starts on 1/4/2021.
10. Bank and administration
    - The bank account at ING Belgium is frozen. Marion and Virginia are trying to solve the situation. We will try to open the account again, but if not, a new account needs to be opened. One of the possibilities is to open a bank account in Sweden, since it must be done in person by the legal representative.
    - ELARD has new official address: Avenue Reine Astrid 59B/9, 1780 Wemmel, Belgium.
11. Have your say
    - Marion informed about two important surveys for LAGs and networks and asked participants to spread them:
      - Forests- New EU strategy open until 19th of April (attachment 7)
      - Demographic change in Europe – green paper on ageing open until 21st of April (attachment 8)
12. Other points of interest
    - REInA (Rural European Innovation Area), launching event on 6-7/4/2021, reina.startupole.eu
    - Possible future members – Luxembourg, Kosovo already applied. Turkey, Serbia, France has been in contact with us
    - Spreading the LEADER-principles – coming weeks we will be present in Turkey, Armenia
    - 30/9-2/10/2021 – LAG festival in Slovenia due to the change of presidency in EU Council, which will be Slovenian after summer. Topic: Smart villages for a digital, green and resilient Europe
    - Luis Chaves introduced plans to celebrate 30th anniversary of LEADER with a special logo and other activities.
13. Next meeting
    - 20/4/2021 - Council
    - 20/5/2021 – General Assembly – full day

- 15/6/2021 - Council
- 29/6/2021 – Members Meeting, 13:00-16:00



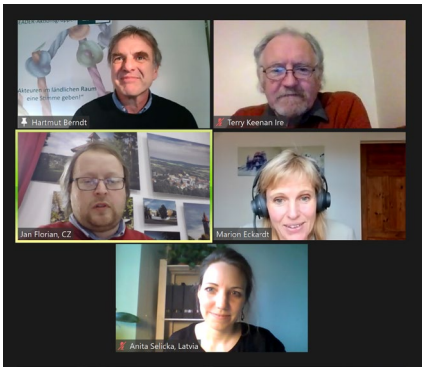
14. End of Meeting

ELARD Council meeting
16:00-16:30
3.3.2021

Minutes

ELARD President Marion Eckardt the situation of ELARDs bank account in ING Belgium.

The ELARD council agreed to give mandate to open a new bank account in Sweden, in case it will be necessary and if the legislation allows it.



Jan Florian
Notes

Marion Eckardt
President

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