General Assembly ELARD
15:00 – 18:30 CET, 30.11.2021

I. Attendees:

	Representative present in Halmstad	Representative participating online	Organisation	Country
1	Marion Eckardt ELARD President		LUS - Local Development Sweden	Sweden
2		Hartmut Berndt ELARD Vice-President	Association LEADER Germany	Germany
3	Neli Kadieva		Bulgarian Network of LAGs	Bulgaria
4	Jana Šain		LEADER Network Croatia	Croatia
5		Jan Florian	National Network of Local Action Groups of the Czech Republic	Czech Republic
6	Christian Prip		Danish LEADER Network	Denmark
7	Kristiina Tammets		Estonian LEADER Union	Estonia
8		Marjo Tolvanen	Village Action Association of Finland	Finland
9	Thibaut Guignard		Association LEADER France	France
10	Francois Galabrun		Association LEADER France	France
11	Alexis Lebrat		Association LEADER France	France
12	Lana Chaduneli		Georgian Association of Local Action Groups (GALAG)	Georgia
14		Pedro Brosei	Association LEADER Germany	Germany
15	Iro Tsimpri		Greek LEADER Network	Greece
16		Timea Németh	Hungarian National Rural Network	Hungary
17		Nicola Vita	Regional LEADER Network of Basilicata	Italy
18		Terry Keenan	Irish Local Development Network	Ireland
19	Anita Seļicka		Latvian Rural Forum	Latvia
20	Santa Harjo-Ozoliņa		Latvian Rural Forum	Latvia
21		Virginija Šetkienė	Lithuanian Rural Communities Union	Lithuania
22	Patricia Varzari		National LEADER Network in the Republic of Moldova	Moldova
23	Xenia Marcov		National LEADER Network in the Republic of Moldova	Moldova
24	Galina Petrachi		National LEADER Network in the Republic of Moldova	Moldova
25	Piotr Sadłocha		Polish Network of Local Action Groups	Poland
26	Luís Chaves		Minha Terra Network	Portugal
27	David Canaveira		Minha Terra Network	Portugal

28	Terézia Straussová		National Network of Slovak LAGs	Slovakia
29		Jela Tvrdoňová	National Network of Slovak LAGs	Slovakia
30	Goran Šoster		Slovenian Rural Development Network	Slovenia
31		María José Murciano Sánchez	Spanish Network for Rural Development	Spain
32	Radim Sršeň		Alumni member	Czech Republic
33	Beata Styczeń		ELARD Administrative Coordinator	

II. Agenda:

1. Start and welcome

Marion Eckardt, President of ELARD, opened the meeting and welcomed everyone; all present physically (Hotel Mårtensson, Storgatan 52, 302 43 Halmstad, Sweden), and online via the Zoom platform *(Meeting ID: 881 9400 6243)*.

2. Agenda

The Agenda has been presented.
The assembly did not raise an objection or amendments.
The Agenda was approved unanimously by the General Assembly.

3. Minutes of the last meetings

Minutes were available to participants for prereading before the meeting.
There were no comments raised regarding these items.
The General Assembly approved the minutes of the 20.05.2021 GA and 5.10.2021 Members meeting.

4. Members issues

- Reports and meetings
  - Ms Marion Eckardt presented a summary of the meetings, where ELARD and its members were represented. Special attention was given to the European Court of Auditors report concerning the added value of LEADER and follow up on that, with the next audit meeting
  - Kristiina Tammets presented ELARD Knowledge Exchange Platform (EKEP) report *(Attachment 1),* and informed about submitted applications, successful projects, participation in consortiums and coming activities.
- Members Fees
  - On the 29th of October, the President held a meeting with neighbouring countries concerning membership fees. Due to lack of stable financing (Budget based on donors and projects), those members cannot afford to cover full membership fees. The outcome of the discussion was to propose council to make decision about the height of the membership fee individually in dialogue with the members.

- At the Council meeting (2nd of November), the situation of neighbouring countries and their financial input in the ELARD budget was discussed. ELARD does not want to lose these members. It was at the council meeting realized, that only General Assembly is entitled to decide on the height of membership fee. Therefore, Council recommended to reduce the fee to 500 EUR. Moreover, the further decrease should be possible based on Application and the General Assembly decision.
- The membership fees for all other members remain unchanged.
- The new model will be developed taking into consideration new programming period circumstances.

Decision:

- To keep the membership fee as it is decided 2017 for 2022
- Develop a new model for 2023 onward.
- Reduce the membership fee to 500 € per year for members from neighbouring countries

The membership fee scheme for 2022 was put to the vote.

Vote results:
Yes: 18; No: 0; Abstain: 0

The General Assembly agreed on proposed fees.

(Attachment 2 – Decision Annex 1)

- Since already North Macedonia and Georgia has applied for reduction to 300 €, and Kosovo is planning to do so, General Assembly proposed reducing 2022 membership fees to 300 EUR for Georgia, Kosovo, North Macedonia and Moldova, regardless of whether the Application is received or not.

Vote results:
Yes: 18; No: 0; Abstain: 0

Decision:

The General Assembly agreed on fees for neighbouring countries for 2022 reduced to 300 €

(Attachment 4 – Decision Annex 2)

- Council change – co-opted member during 2022
  President Marion Eckardt expressed her satisfaction with the cooperation within the Council. Concerning her possible term of office extension and new Vice-presidency elections, she expressed the request to keep current Council members until the end of her Presidency. This would require co-opted Council member (Maria Jose Murciano Sanchez) throughout 2022.
  The proposal was put to the vote.
  The General Assembly agreed unanimously on the Council co-opted member.

- Meeting schedule January-June 2022
  The meeting schedule was presented as per Attachment 5.
  New meeting proposals for ELARD representation were made: by Mr Radim Sršeň – LINC; by Mr Guignard – Ruralisons L´Europe in France

The Council meetings:	27/01/2021; 02/03/2022; 20/04/2022; 01/06/2022
Members meeting:	23/03/20211 - General Assembly - digital
	2-3/06/2022 – Strategic members meeting, Femsjö, Sweden
Other meetings:	31/01 – 03/02 – Ruralisons L´Europe, France(with emphasis on LEADER during French Presidency in European Council)
	21-23/06/2022 LINC / Czech Republic / together with the start of

- Romanian membership
  Until the GA meeting, despite earlier communication, any application from Romanian organisation was not received. The point was not discussed nor voted. The Presidency will analyse national Federation of Local Action Groups from Romania membership, the outcome will be presented for the next GA decision.

5. Members application

The candidate's application form *(Attachment 6)* was available for Members review before the General Assembly meeting.
Association Leader France presented its organisation, members, the scope of activities and motivation to re-join ELARD after three years of absence.
The Council recommended accepting Application for full ELARD membership.

Decision:

To welcome Association LEADER France as a full member of the ELARD.
The item was put to the vote:
Vote results:
Yes: 20; No: 0; Abstain: 0
The General Assembly decided to welcome Association Leader France as the full member of the ELARD.
(Attachment 7 – Decision Annex 3)

6. 6. Vice-president 2022

- Application Germany
  Mr Hartmut Berndt presented his background and positions in various organisations and bodies he currently holds. He also explained his vision and motivation to be ELARD's Vice-resident. Full profile of the candidate and plans for the 2022 Vice-presidency are available in the application form *(Attachment 8)*
- Application France
  Mr Thibaut Guignard presented his position in LEADER structures in France, mentioned his main interests and focus he wants to keep as ELARD's Vice-president. Full profile of the candidate and plans for the 2022 Vice-presidency are available in the application form *(Attachment 10)*

Decision:
Mr Hartmut Berndt, BAG-LAG, elected for vice-president 1.1.2022-31.12.2022
Vote results:
Yes: 20; No: 0; Abstain: 1
The General Assembly elected Mr Hartmut Berndt for the Vice-president of ELARD, for 2022.
(Attachment 9 – Decision Annex 4)

Mr Thibaut Guignard, LEADER France, elected for vice-president 1.1.2022-31.12.2022.
Vote results:
Yes: 21; No: 0; Abstain: 0
The General Assembly decided to elect Mr Thibaut Guignard, the Vice-president of ELARD, for 2022.
(Attachment 11 – Decision Annex 5)

7. The President 2022

Following the General Assembly (proposal 20/05/2021), Ms Marion Eckard and the organisation she represents, Lokal Utveckling Sverige (Local Development Sweden), agreed to take the responsibility of the ELARD Presidency for 2022.
The Activity Plan *(Attachment 12)* and Budget for 2022 (*Attachment 13)* was presented.
There was no comments or discussion concerning the above.
The issue of significant dependency of the annual budget on Presidency financial input was raised, which makes the organisation vulnerable to fluctuations. This subject will need to be addressed in the future.
There is a possibility that more considerable emphasis on projects will help manage this problem and decrease the financial burden on the Presidency.
There was also another opinion expressed that taking the Presidency responsibility requires a financial commitment. It is good for the organisation. It builds cooperation and accountability. The Presidency is the benefit for the country, so the financial input is something expected.

After those exchange of opinions, the President asked for voting

Decision:
Ms Marion Eckardt, LUS, elected for president 1.1.2022-31.12.2022.
Vote results:
Yes: 21; No: 0; Abstain: 0
The General Assembly decided to elect Ms Marion Eckardt as the President of ELARD for 2022.
(Attachment 12 – Decision Annex 6)

8. Preliminary Conclusions ELARD event (Attachment 17 – proposed conclusions)

LEADER 30 years Conference is an event put as the part of the Conference on the future of Europe, that is why we need to focus on conclusions, and by them influence the future policy.
The preliminary Conclusions were prepared as the starting point for the discussion. It is important to mention that they are to reflect the event discussion (Long Term Vision for Rural Areas; presentations and panels), not all essential issues.
The President presented draft conclusions in two sections: Rural Development Policies and LEADER and CLLD related.
Comments submitted by the participants have been included in the draft document.
The Conclusions will be reviewed after the event and circulated among members for consultation before preparing the final version.
Part of the discussion was explicitly devoted to the LEADER's logo, which is to be delisted from the obligatory European Commission communication according to some social media information.
Members tend to keep the logo as the part of whole LEADER brand, which has been known in Europe for 30 years, is well recognised, and even if it needs lifting, it should stay to be used by LAGs across Europe.

9. European Rural Parliament 5th Gathering 12-15th September

Members were informed about the next steps concerning the preparation of the European Rural Parliament gathering in 2022. All were encouraged to get to know the programme and come back with proposals concerning workshops they would be interested in, which are not yet on the

schedule, as well as other content-related feedback. All requests concerning workshops should be directed to Marion Eckardt and Anita Selicka.
More information in attached documents:

- Preliminary Programme (Attachment 16)
- Preliminary Workshops (Attachment 17)
- Preliminary Study visits (Attachment 18)

10. Representation/Future events
    - 7th of December CDG ERDF (Attachment 19 – proposed agenda)
    - 7th of December GA Rural Networks (Attachment 20– proposed agenda)
    - 9th of December Preparatory meeting Ruralisons L´Europe (Attachment 21 – Agenda)
    - 15th December Rural Revitalization TG ENRD
    - 21 – 23rd of June LINC Czech Republic.
    - First week of February Ruralisons L´Europe in France
    - 6-8 September Startup Olé in Salamanca

11. Other points of interest
    No points raised by participants.

12. End of meeting
    The President, who conducted the meeting, thanked all for their participation and contribution and closed the session.

Marion Eckardt	Beata Styczeń
President	Administrative Coordinator