



# Newsletter

July/August 2013

## NEWS

### PREPARE Gathering 2013 from 4. till 7. September in Bosnia and Herzegovina



PREPARE Gathering **in Bosnia and Herzegovina will take place from 4th to 7th September 2013.**

The Gathering is a linked series of events, which aim to bring together representatives of civil society as well as public sector organisations, primarily from Central and South-Eastern Europe but also from EU member states.

Almost 100 participants from 20 countries will present and discuss the themes connected with networking in rural areas. PREPARE Gathering will continue building the bridges between the civil society and governments, striving for wellbeing of rural people across the continent.

### First Scotland's Rural Parliament announced

The first meeting of Scotland's Rural Parliament will be held next year. The event will empower Scotland's rural communities by bringing people and policy makers together to look at improving policies and actions that address rural issues.

Norman MacAskill, Head of Rural Policy with the Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations (SCVO), said: "*The rural parliament model has been tried and tested in many European countries, and the time is right to give it a go in Scotland. A Scottish Rural Parliament could enable a stronger, more coherent voice for Scotland's rural communities that reflects their strengths, their common interests and their rich diversity.*"

Further information about Scotland's Rural Parliament – including the date of its first sitting – will be issued by the Rural Parliament Management Group in due course.

**More information:** [news.scotland.gov.uk/News/Scotland-s-Rural-Parliament-377.aspx](http://news.scotland.gov.uk/News/Scotland-s-Rural-Parliament-377.aspx)

### 10th Estonian Rural Parliament



Estonian Village Movement Kodukant, PREPARE member, organized **10th Estonian Rural Parliament (Maapäev)** which took place from **8. to 11. August at Saaremaa island**. The event gathered 390 participants, including 314 representatives from 15 counties, 26 foreign guests and 50 guests, performers, volunteers in order to discuss the problems of the countryside. During 3 days participants visited Saaremaa's communities, having idea-hunting trips to 34 villages. They also prepared the Village Movement

Kodukant new strategy for 2014-2020.

Strong international delegation from several European countries contributed to the 10th Rural Parliament with dialogue about future Common Agriculture Policy in the period 2014 – 2020.

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## The First Latvian Rural Communities Parliament

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**The First Latvian Rural Communities Parliament**, held on June 7th to 8th in Preiļi and neighbouring municipalities, brought together around 190 activists from rural communities and supporters of all regions of Latvia. During discussions in working groups by sharing experience and listening to each other participants were searching for new solutions to the old long-term problems. As a result, an action plan was made that is designed for coherent actions of communities, municipalities, ministries and Saeima for the next two years. **More.**

## Commissioner urges PREPARE to continue its work

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**Dacian Cioloș, EU Agriculture Commissioner**, praised the work of PREPARE in mobilising civil society, and urged that it should continue this work, particularly in the EU accession countries and the Neighbourhood states.

The Commissioner was speaking at an informal meeting of key players in rural development in the EU, held in Brussels on 11 July to mark the publication of PREPARE's new book, *Community Spirit*

*wins*.

'The commitment of rural people is vital for the process of rural development', said the Commissioner. 'This book, recording PREPARE's successful work since 2000, is far more than a legacy. It should be a stimulus for people to improve their own futures in the wider Europe. The EU programmes in the accession countries, and through the Neighbourhood Policy for south eastern Europe and the southern Mediterranean, will include rural development. Strengthening civil society is a vital part of that work. PREPARE can help to ensure that the people themselves are active: someone has to do the work on the spot.'

This call for continued action by PREPARE was echoed by **Blerand Stavilevci, Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development for Kosovo**, who is president of the Standing Working Group on Rural Development in South Eastern Europe. Speaking for the group of 11 governments of former Yugoslav states, plus Albania and Bulgaria, Mr Stavilevci said that these countries are working together to tackle the problems of economic decline and the loss of young people. They wish to achieve sustainable economic development, across the borders between countries, and to maintain the rural traditions of the region. They know that cooperation between governments and civil society is the crucial element in rural development programmes, and they recognize the experience that PREPARE has gained in activating rural people.

**Mr Stavilevci** welcomed the prospect of cooperation between PREPARE and the Standing Working group. He invited PREPARE to be represented at the Agricultural Policy Forum in October, and the Annual Inter-Ministerial Conference in November.

Responding, **PREPARE Coordinator Goran Šoster** stressed PREPARE's aim to build bridges between civil society and governments. PREPARE is now actively focused on supporting the work of civil society in the countries of south eastern Europe. Governments and civil society organisations from that region will be represented at PREPARE's annual Gathering, to be held in Bosnia & Herzegovina in September 2013.

## Conference "Rural Development in Bosnia and Herzegovina"

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In frame of the project ACoRD (Alliance for Common Rural Development) the *Conference on Rural Development in Bosnia and Herzegovina* was held on 28. May in Sarajevo, with significant contribution by PREPARE representative.

The Conference was attended by more than 80 participants, representatives of civil society from all parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as representatives of public sector from entity and state levels. Relevant rural development stakeholders from Europe and neighbouring countries: Slovenia, Croatia and Serbia

also participated at the Conference.

All presentations and photographs from the conference are available [here](#).

## Croatian-Slovenian toast on the border as Croatia enters EU



Representatives of Slovenian and Croatian Rural Development Network with their colleagues from both sides have met on the bridge over Drava river in the middle of the border zone to celebrate Croatian EU membership. It was a nice and warm welcome of Slovenian friends to the members of Croatian Rural Development Network.  
One of the toasts was dedicated to all PREPARE members! Cheers!

## The importance of Urban/Rural Partnerships

**The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)** – an international body with membership from 34 countries across the world including the European Union – set up to identify problems, discuss and analyse them and promote policies to solve them has carried out a series of case studies on rural-urban partnerships. It is submitting its findings to three OECD working parties for discussion and approval: the Working Party for Territorial Indicators; the Working Parties for Territorial Policy in Rural Areas and in Urban Areas. The European Union is also seeking a more integrated approach to economic development. It has also set up, a group consisting of urban and rural networks (called RURBAN) to feed into this debate and this group is supported by both the Director General for Regional and Urban Policy and the Director General for Agriculture and Rural Development.

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## Member States Views on the future implementation of CLLD - Mapping report

Several of the National Rural Networks (NRNs) identified a need to establish a new **Thematic Cluster on the development and future implementation of Community Led Local Development (CLLD)** across Member States. The Hungarian NRN has agreed to coordinate the Cluster and preparatory work is underway to frame the strategic objectives of the group. In order to support the establishment and development of this Thematic Cluster the **Mapping Report** has been prepared to summarise available policy information and identify the current state of play of CLLD and the multi-fund approach in Member States.

## EVENTS

### The first European Rural Parliament, ERP (Brussels, 13. November)



**The first European Rural Parliament, ERP**, will be organized in Brussels on **13 November 2013**. It will speak for the many local development groups that represent and work for the good of all the inhabitants in their area.

Participation in ERP will be limited to 150 people: three participants from each country's national rural movement and network, and two representatives from each European rural network.

An application form will be available from **15. August**. More details available at [europeanruralparliament.com/](http://europeanruralparliament.com/)

### Conference "Family farming" (Brussels, 29 November 2013)



The Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development of the European Commission is organising a conference on "*Family farming: A dialogue towards more sustainable and resilient farming in Europe and the world*" in Brussels, on 29 November 2013.

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### **About PREPARE:**

The PREPARE partnership is a group of European and national non-government organizations. The partnership was created in 1999 and has expanded as new national rural movements have joined. The aim of PREPARE programme is to strengthen civil society and to promote multi-national exchange in rural development, with a main focus on the new EU member states of Central and Eastern Europe, as well as accession countries and the "new neighbours" of the enlarged EU.

The main founder of PREPARE activities is **Charles Steward MOTT Foundation**.

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