

Lessons learnt from the 1st European Rural Parliament

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This presentation

1. to explore the possible synergies and **positive effects of NRNs cooperating** with other networks and rural parliaments;
2. how such cooperation can **positively impact** on communicating rural development.



ERP objectives

Objectives for the ERP:

“to provide a common voice for and to strengthen the rural movement in Europe”

- Strengthen the European Rural Movement and **support local democracy, civil society, social integration and equality**
- **Inspire the founding of new structures** within the social fabric of society and a transformation to a sustainable Europe
- **Create a dialogue** between national rural movements which will strengthen identity and local development, create **effective exchange of knowledge and skills** and stimulate co-operation and development
- **Strengthen the links between decision makers and rural movement/civil society**
- **Influence** national and European programmes **by engaging in issues and strengthening democratic processes at local levels.**
- **To identify a structure** that will enable the joint European Rural Parliament **to meet at different locations across Europe.**



About the 1st ERP

The first ERP, was a success in many ways:

- Representatives from 30 countries, 70 organisations, and more than a dozen European networks met and discussed local issues on equal terms
- 74 women and 78 men – (participation limited to 150)
– 8 percent under 25 years and 8 percent over 65.
- Only 6 months of preparation – from zero to an infrastructure with website, newsletter, application forms, etc.
- On-going processes in groups with committed people who wish to continue discussions internationally – but working from home!



Exploring synergies

Synergies and **positive effects of NRNs cooperating** with other networks and rural parliaments?

- The co-operation with the Finnish and Swedish network was crucial for the result – but where were the others?
- Different networks – same focus - win-win
- Think Tank, development of methods – important input.
- Broader contacts – greater credibility and higher impact - if we create results!

*“A rural parliament is primary a method – not an event!
It’s a forum where grassroots meet decision makers on equal terms*



Communication and cooperation

How can cooperation **positively impact** on communicating rural development?

The rural networks have an important role to:

- Collect, analyze and systematize experiences – ***spread the knowledges***
- Build new structures for ***raising common local issues on both national and European levels.***
- Utilise effective methods and tools for ***continued creative discussions on various levels of European society***
- ***Co-operation and communication is the roth*** for strengthening the movement and influence the policies



The way forward

“If we don’t use our common forces in smart and efficient ways the rural areas will suffer and the inhabitants decrease. ”

Some of the final conclusions from the ERP:

Cooperation between MEPs, European networks, organisations and representatives on national rural networks needs to improve if all are to benefit from future rural parliament.

But, this is the way forward to make ideas become reality and for affecting rural development.

Thanks!

