

Rural People's Declaration of Candás (Asturias)

9th November 2019

We, 335 participants from 38 European countries, met during the 4th European Rural Parliament at the village of Candás Asturias, Spain, from 6 to 9 November 2019. Participants included rural people, representatives of civil society organisations, researchers, national governments and European Union institutions. We see the dominating urban and growth agendas combined with the disconnection between local people and decision-makers as a threat to rural life. A real rural agenda combined with inclusive cooperation and partnerships at all levels is needed to ensure rural Europe to thrive.

We, the rural people of Europe;

Understand and recognise rurality

- demand that rural is considered equal to urban in minds and practice;
- expect the right to choose where we live and work;
- call on governments to recognise and appreciate the value of rural volunteering, community life, entrepreneurship and natural resources;
- ask politicians to accept rural people, communities, entrepreneurs and municipalities as partners;
- request that the voice of rural people is heard in policy and consultative processes;

Quality of life

- insist poverty and social exclusion are addressed;
- ask governments and decisionmakers to ensure that services are as close as possible to rural people to avoid security risks and loss of time/money;
- are ready to contribute with local service solutions and economic initiatives;

Policy, programmes and financing

- welcome a real rural development policy for villages, communities and small towns;
- support smart, community-friendly initiatives and programmes like LEADER/CLLD and ERASMUS but demand that the regulation and administration of these programmes is simplified;
- require flexible working conditions and opportunities with effective support systems;
- ask for real, meaningful and engaging civil society participation in designing and delivering European programmes;

Working together

- encourage and support all forms of cooperation between local actors, including contractual solutions, project-based activities and multi-level partnerships of public, private and civil society actors;
- want to cooperate with local established structures and stakeholders including LEADER groups, Village/Community NGOs, development partnerships and local authorities.



Belarmino Fernández Fervienza
President READER



Maria João Botelho
President ELARD



Staffan Nilsson
President ERCA



Åris Ädler
President PREPARE



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