



LATVIJAS LAUKU KOPIENU PARLAMENTS

5th LATVIAN RURAL COMMUNITIES PARLIAMENT

On June 16 - 18, 2021, the 5th Latvian Rural Communities Parliament took place in Stāmeriena, Gulbene district and online, bringing together representatives of communities, local municipalities and state institutions, researchers, entrepreneurs, and other rural development enthusiasts to discuss the creation of a competitive and attractive rural environment. regions and small towns.

Within the framework of the Communities Parliament, it was confirmed that local initiatives implemented by energetic local communities, smart villages, newcomers, entrepreneurs, municipalities, and rural enthusiasts, offering new approaches and solutions to improve the rural environment and improve socio-economic conditions, are a strong basis for Latvia's rural viability.

In 25 working groups and joint panel discussions, members of the Communities Parliament highlighted and analysed the remaining challenges in rural areas in various areas, seeking the necessary solutions, identifying existing knowledge and available social, economic, technological, and environmental resources.

Based on the discovered Latvia's rural strength, growth and change experience stories, questions raised in working groups, and identified necessary steps for the development of rural and small towns, the members of the Latvian Rural Communities Parliament propose an action plan for the following two years, meanwhile committing to using this Resolution in their work and passing it on to the various parties involved, as well as including it as a result of discussions at the Conference on the Future of Europe.

5th LATVIAN RURAL COMMUNITIES PARLIAMENT RESOLUTION

○ STRONG rural

To build cohesive communities based on mutual trust and cooperation, recognizing common values, local identity, and uniqueness at the local, national, and global levels.

Recognize the demonstrated capacity of rural communities and the non-governmental sector to **respond flexibly** to the risks posed by the Covid 19 pandemic and the capacity to **find a variety of innovative solutions**. Develop targeted and systematic support for the long-term implementation of new initiatives and practices in future policies, **promoting community resilience and leadership**.

Strengthen the legal framework for the participation of each individual, especially in small and / or remote rural areas, in **local government**, such as equal opportunities to argue and follow the decision-making process.

To inform and educate local people about their opportunities for participation. **Create a supportive environment** that encourages communities to realize their potential and expand **participatory tools that are relevant and accessible to local needs**, available digitally and in person.

Reduce regional socio-economic disparities in the design, distribution and use of financial instruments, **considering the uniqueness of rural areas**, and ensuring **targeted and locally based investments** to strengthen rural populations, communities, and territories. Design support instruments that include policy synergies and cross-sectoral cooperation, a multi-fund approach and simplified administrative procedures.

○ VIABLE rural

To review housing policy by developing state and municipal support programs for the **provision of quality housing** in rural areas, such as ensuring the availability of finance for the purchase of land and housing, renovation, property rights and other issues.

Supporting the diversification of the rural economy, including strengthening forms of entrepreneurship outside the primary sector, including opportunities for teleworking and co-working spaces. Stimulate structural change in the rural economy through support programs for small and medium-sized enterprises, in particular entrepreneurship, which stimulates youth employment and provides services to socio-economically excluded groups, as well as in remote and sparsely populated areas.

○ SMART rural

To recognize **the importance of local initiatives - smart villages** - and stimulate targeted community mobilization and cooperation by promoting the entry and use of social and technological innovations in rural areas. To implement **community development planning** based on values, knowledge, experience and needs at the village level, including it in the development and implementation of **municipal development programs and policy planning documents**. To provide support for community-building and local development initiatives at both municipal and national levels.

To ensure the availability of **high-quality communication infrastructure** outside the big cities. To identify digital literacy in rural areas and provide the necessary **support**, e.g., teachers and mentors for competence development. To ensure **equal accessibility of public and private e-services** in the entire territory of Latvia, making the necessary adjustments to their accessibility to the rural population.

○ GREEN rural

To develop and strengthen a **sustainable and strategic food system** in Latvia, supporting **cooperation** between local producers and access to the local market and consumers. **Stimulate short food chains and relevant local initiatives**, as well as stimulate consumer demand for quality local products.

To identify, promote and encourage **individual and community-produced renewable energy practices**, including strengthening synergies between research and practice, towards efficient and independent production of alternative energy for local consumption.

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The Latvian Rural Forum is a national organization that unites more than 80 organizations in all regions. The mission of LRF is to promote balanced development of Latvian rural territories to create it as a place where contented people live, being able to meet their economic and social needs in the place of their residence. More: laukuforums.lv.

5. The Latvian Rural Communities Parliament was organized by the Latvian Rural Forum in cooperation with Gulbene district municipality and the association "SATEKA". The event was financially supported by the Society Integration Fund from the Latvian state budget allocated by the Ministry of Culture. The discussions of the Parliament are part of the Conference on the Future of Europe and are supported by the Representation of the European Commission in Latvia.



Ministry of Culture
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