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# Reporting back from Candás Manifesto

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# Main manifesto messages and demands

## PREAMBLE

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We, the rural people of Europe, are:

*Acclaiming* the common European democratic, social values, the human rights and the UN sustainable development goals;

*Appreciating* rural diversity and rural heritage, the feeling of community and rural people's commitment;

*Being aware* of the lack of rural discourse and will in politics, policies, values, valuation and rural development;

*Conscious* of the distance between decision-making and rural actors;

*Concerned about* exodus, the climate challenges, the declining economies and services, poverty and social exclusion.

(From "Manifesto final" at <https://europeanruralparliament.com/index.php/component/phocadownload/category/74-advocacy>)



# Main manifesto demands

## 4. Rights

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We assert the right of rural areas, villages and communities to full recognition by all the people and institutions of Europe, to a quality of life and standard of living equal to that of urban populations, and to full participation in political processes.

*We ask* governments at all levels to endorse that right. In all aspects of policy and action related to rural communities, people should be afforded equal rights irrespective of age, gender, sexuality, ability, ethnicity, faith or geography.

# Main manifesto demands

## 12. Poverty and inclusion

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We recognise the progress that has been made in fighting poverty and social exclusion in Europe, but millions of people are still afflicted by poverty and social exclusion of different kinds. Social and territorial cohesion are integral to our vision of Europe.

*We call for* urgent action to change the situation of European rural citizens affected by extreme poverty including children, young families, women living in tiny villages, the growing number of lonely old people, and refugee and migrant women, who live in their family, do not speak the local language and do not have contact with the local society.

- **No focus due to Covid?**

# Main manifesto demands

## 13. Climate change and environment

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*We welcome* the Green Deal of the EU and expect actions to be implemented in villages and communities based on the Deal.

*We highlight* the major role which rural communities can play in bringing about the transformation needed to avert climate and ecological catastrophe and recognise the need to assist rural areas to adapt to climate change and ensure that they are not penalised by climate obligations.

*We ask for* increased use of agro-forestry, agro-ecology and bio-economy approaches to land management, and for a greater focus on local, community-led responses, and community-based conservation and restoration initiatives - including the acknowledgement of Indigenous and Community Conserved Areas which empower local citizens and provide the necessary conditions for a just and inclusive transition. *We also urge* that the conditions created by climate change currently and as foreseen should be taken into account in all rural Europe not forgetting disadvantaged regions when assessing the allocation of financial support.

# Main manifesto demands

## Solutions

### LEADER and CLLD

***LEADER and CLLD: We strongly advocate*** a territorial, integrated and partnership-based approach to rural development, pursued in a bottom-up and place-based spirit. We wish to see the widespread application of the LEADER principle with a simplified regulatory framework, and its extension into 4 Community Led Local Development and Smart village policies, both within and beyond the EU. ***We urge institutions and governments to earmark*** the funding from EARDF or other funds making use of the approach (MMF, ESF, ERDF). ***We urge governments*** to lay the groundwork of partnership between sectors for the use of LEADER and CLLD

For good ideas: <http://elard.eu/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Good-practice-using-LEADER-as-a-multilevel-governance-tool.pdf>

# Peoples Declaration of Candás 9.11.2019

## 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.

# Conclusions

*"Words are free.*

*It's how you use them that may cost you."*

- Policies and intentions are abundant and positive from our point of view, especially at European and global level
- Rules, regulations, earmarking are mostly missing that have the power to influence the uptake of strategies and visions
- National or regional Governments have the power to change the situation - we need to focus on reaching them

***We are on the right way but need more action!***