

A rural agenda is urgently needed for rural areas after COVID crisis



□The European Committee of the Regions (CoR) and the [European Parliament Intergroup on Rural, Mountainous and Remote Areas \(RUMRA\)&smart villages intergroup](#) at the European Parliament with the supports of the International Association [Rurality-Environment-Development](#) (R.E.D) and [Euromontana](#) have organised a conference in Brussels on 27 November to talk about the specific needs of rural areas post-2020.

After the presentation of the concept of the Long Term vision for rural areas by Dubravka Šuica, Vice-President for Democracy and Demography at the European Commission, Franc Bogovič, Member of the European Parliament and co-chair of the [RUMRA&smart villages intergroup](#) at the European Parliament, mentioned that “Commission Vice-President , Šuica, and I are equally convinced that the challenge to reinvigorate and develop rural Europe is a horizontal challenge that needs to be tackled with a coordinated smart strategy from many angles simultaneously. Agriculture, cohesion, connectivity, green energy, mobility, education, services, digital platforms and health care-care are all equally relevant areas in this context that need to be developed in a coordinated effort that I coined with the term „Smart Villages“.

As pointed out by, Juan Andrés Gutierrez, President of Euromontana “Now is time to create at EU level the enabling conditions for vibrant, attractive, and resilient rural and mountainous areas. The Vision must propose concrete and ambitious measures to ensure the vitality and resilience of our regions, with people who live, work and travel there. This is why we want to unleash the (innovative) potential of our regions as shown in the different good practices today and keep living rural and mountainous territories”.

Gérard Peltre, President of R.E.D and the European Countryside Movement added that “Rural areas are a diversity of resilient rural territories where local actors cooperate to meet the challenges of a changing world. R.E.D. therefore calls on the European Commission to adopt a European Rural Agenda with ambitious and concrete political objectives to strengthen the innovative dynamics of rural territories, organise intelligent inter-territorial cooperation, and stimulate the mobilisation of citizens in local development strategies”.

[Ulrika Landergren](#) (SE/Renew Europe), Member of Kungsbacka Municipal Council and Chair of the Commission for Natural Resources (NAT) of the European Committee of the Regions, concluded by saying that “the current pandemic crisis has exposed and exacerbated the consequences of a number of long-standing threats faced by rural areas, and has added to the urgency for rural revival in regions across the European Union and calls for rural areas to be better taken into account, in the next programming period by increasing the level of the EAFRD and by making sure that all the EU policies pay the

relevant attention to rural development in a broad way, and not only focusing on agriculture related issues”

Further information:

Working document on [EU strategy for Rural Revival](#)

Working document on [Experiences and lessons learned by regions and cities during the COVID-19 crisis](#)

[European Parliament resolution of 3 October 2018 on addressing the specific needs of rural, mountainous and remote areas \(2018/2720\(RSP\)\)](#)

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