



European Local Development Network Association MTÜ

Minutes of General Meeting No 2025/01 (Draft)

Held on 18 June 2025 via Zoom

Present:

Attendance list in Annex 1, including apologies for absence.

1. Introduction

Peter Ramsden, Founding Member and Chairperson of the Association, welcomed the participants to this inaugural General Meeting of the European Local Development Network Association MTÜ and outlined the Agenda of the meeting.

2. Membership update

Haris Martinos, on behalf of Joanna Storie, Founding Member and Secretary & Treasurer of the Association, reported that the membership of the Association stood at 42 individual members and 4 partner organisations, a total of 46 members.

Twenty-seven members attended and the quorum of “at least 25% of members” was fully met.

3. Background

3.1 Haris Martinos, on behalf of Joanna Storie, reminded the participants that the initiative to set up the European Local Development Network Association MTÜ emanated from a resolution of the non-profit LEDA-Partenariat Association (registered in France) envisaging that:

- a. future support for the LDnet Network will be provided by a non-profit association registered in Estonia, and
- b. the LEDA-Partenariat Association will transfer its remaining funds, estimated at € 8,000, to the newly established non-profit European Local Development Network Association MTÜ (registered in Estonia).

3.2 Haris Martinos proposed that the Association should use the abbreviation “LDnet” and that the broader network of members, friends of the Association and contributors to its website and events should be known as “LDnet network”. **Both these propositions were adopted unanimously by the Meeting.**

4. The aims of LDnet, the state of play in local development and the main challenges

4.1 Peter Ramsden provided an overview of the aims and activities of the LDnet network, its methods of work, legal status and resources. He quoted the LDnet mission statement – as in Annex 2 – and outlined the recent series of webinars which has been completed successfully. He highlighted some pressing challenges for local development in Europe, notably the uncertainties regarding EU-funding in the post-2027 period and lack of capacities at various levels.

4.2 Peter Ramsden proposed as possible priorities of the Association, in the short-to-medium term, to:

- build on the success of the recent series of webinars;
- grow the membership of the Association;
- instigate and contribute to more debates on future Cohesion policy;
- help build capacity at all levels of the delivery chain, including urban CLLD, innovation and financing.

He also proposed a policy of no membership fees, to be review at a future General Meeting, together with the possibility of a fund-raising campaign.

4.3 Several members participated in the ensuing discussion and several suggestions were made, including on the importance of:

- influencing decision-making at European level;
- more effective communication of ideas, notably through social media;
- experimenting at local level, e.g. conducting pilot work and action research in selected areas;
- maintaining a sharp focus in the short term on a small number of themes, such as post-2027 EU funding and capacity building for urban CLLD;
- fund-raising for projects on topics of interest to local development and the Association.

4.4 The Meeting endorsed the four priorities proposed in point 4.2, with an emphasis on strategy contribution and effective communication, as well as the policy of no membership fees for the time being. It also expressed a preference for organising the work on the priority areas through Working Groups comprising board members and other members of the Association.

5. Election of Management Board

5.1 Urszula Budzich-Tabor spoke on the role of board members and ways in which the board could operate, drawing on relevant experience. She also explored the preferences of the participants regarding the size of the board, which according to the Articles of Association may range from 2 to 12. **It was unanimously agreed to settle for a 12-member board and reconsider the size of the board at the next General Meeting.**

5.2 At the Chairperson's invitation, members wishing to serve on the Management Board of the Association declared their candidature and made brief statements as to the contribution they intend to make to the Board.

Twelve members declared their candidature and following voting by those in attendance, all of them were **elected to the Board**, namely (in alphabetical order):

- Rui Bochmann Franco
- Pedro Brosei
- Urszula Budzich-Tabor
- Timur Kogabayev
- Rosalba La Grotteria
- Haris Martinos
- Neslihan Önder Özen
- Giuseppe Pace
- Peter Ramsden
- Maria Joao Rauch
- Joanna Storie
- Julia Ziółkowska

6. The Meeting passed a vote of thanks to Jean-Pierre Pellegrin, for his immense long-term contribution to the creation and operation of the LDnet network.

7. The meeting closed.

Annex 1: List of Participants and Apologies for Absence

Partner organisations:

Balázs Brucker, representing **HUN-REN CERS Institute for Regional Studies**

Maria José Domingos, representing **Rede DLBC Lisboa**

Individual Members

(in alphabetical order):

Adam Hernández	Alistair	Martinos	Haris
Ādlers	Āris	Önder Özen	Neslihan
Alkhateeb	Ghieth	Pace	Giuseppe
Bochmann Franco	Rui	Pálné Kovács	Ilona
Brosei	Pedro	Pellegrin	Jean-Pierre
Budzich-Tabor	Urszula	Ramsden	Peter
Calabrese	Ivana	Rauch	Maria Joao
Kah	Stefan	Storie	Joanna
Kogabayev	Timur	Van Doren	Pascale
La Grotteria	Rosalba	Ziółkowska	Julia
Marcheggiani	Ernesto	Zsibók	Zsuzsanna
Markotic Krstinic	Bojana		

Apologies for absence:

Toby Johnson
Luís Chaves

Annex 2: LDnet Mission Statement

The unique feature of LDnet is our interest in Local Development across all types of territory (rural, coastal, urban, mountains and islands) and across a wide range of themes from its origins in social inclusion, job creation and local economic development to more recent concerns about climate change, the circular economy and digital transitions.

LDnet acts as a bridge between experts, researchers, activists and policy makers in a wide range of public, private and third sector organisations. Geographically our main focus is the EU Member States plus Norway and Switzerland, the EU candidate countries (Western Balkans and Turkey), the neighbourhood countries (e.g. Eastern Partnership, Maghreb, Middle East, UK) and beyond.

Our aim is to position participative, integrated and sustainable local development approaches at the core of designing, implementing and evaluating economic, social and environmental development policies at all levels of governance.