

LEDA PARTENARIAT (LDnet) ASSOCIATION

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Rue de la Loi 38, Brussels, 9 October 2017 at 18:00.

Present: Urszula Budzich-Tabor, Katalin Kolosy, Robert Lukesch, Jean-Pierre Pellegrin, Haris Martinos, François Galabrun

Gave proxy: Rosalba La Grotteria, Filippo Strati, Bert Verbrugghe, Toby Johnson.

Sent apologies: Eileen Humphreys, Peter Ramsden, Hartmut Siemon, Maria Joao Rauch, Alistair Adam-Hernandez.

MINUTES

1. Agenda, Proxies, Apologies

Urszula Budzich-Tabor was elected to chair the meeting. The draft agenda was adopted. Members' proxies and apologies received were reported by the secretary of the association, Haris Martinos.

2. Annual Report (attached)

The report, prepared by the president of the association, Eileen Humphreys, was presented in her absence by Haris Martinos, and was discussed.

The treasurer of the association, Jean-Pierre Pellegrin, reported that expenditure in the 2016-2017 period amounted to €880 (internship costs and hosting of LDnet website) and that €6,882 remain available. There are still some claims for reimbursement and catering costs of networking at EWRD 2017 expected.

3. Circular economy and CLLD

The outcome of the Erasmus+ traineeship was discussed and was considered to be successful and worth repeating. The assembly expressed its appreciation for the work of the trainee, Yasin Akkoub, and concluded that his draft report should be discussed further within LDnet and opportunities for developing it further and for a follow up should be explored.

4. Priorities for 2017-2018

The discussion on the annual report highlighted major challenges concerning CLLD and generally community-based development approaches. There are basic difficulties, even, in connection with the meaning of 'community' and the role of (at least, the smallest commune-type) local government and the related issue of 'legitimacy' of CLLD vis-à-vis elected local leaders. In the case of multi-fund CLLD there is stifling European and national level bureaucracy and persisting uncertainties regarding the measurement of its results. These are issues that will be explored further at the EWRC workshop on "Communities as change agents: local development in the EU beyond 2020".

The work of the association in 2017-2018 should seek to address some of these issues, notably, through close cooperation between practitioners and researchers. This should entail **cooperation with other organisations**. Priority should be accorded to developing further the cooperation with the **Regional Studies Association** that was launched successfully during the 2016-2017 period. It was also noted that there similar reflections in **AEIDL**, on the fundamentals of CLLD, with which we could link up. We should also maintain close links with other European level organisations, such as **ELARD**.

LDnet should pursue for a second year **traineeships**, ideally under Erasmus+, that will allow its own research initiatives. Priority should be accorded to securing the placement of a post-graduate student from HAWK Göttingen who has completed his/her master's course. A targeted search should also be undertaken in France with universities offering rural development and other relevant degrees. The financial contribution of the association to future traineeships should be much lower than €800 per placement.

Similarly, we should continue to pursue opportunities for joining appropriate **research project proposals** as a partner, on the lines of H2020/PREDICT.

Finally, original contributions to the **LDnet website** should be sought from a broader range of people, beyond the membership. Such contributions could be in various languages with a short English summary.

5. Election of board of the association

The assembly re-elected, in principle, the existing board members for the period 2017-2019.

It mandated the secretary of the association to ascertain with those not present that they wish to serve for the next two-year period and in what way they propose to contribute.

The assembly noted with appreciation the availability and willingness of Alistair Adam-Hernandez and Katalin Kolosy to join the board, if any vacancies occur, and agreed to this course of action.

It was pointed out that the association operates in an informal manner and any active members can play a leading role in particular activities irrespective of whether they are on the board.