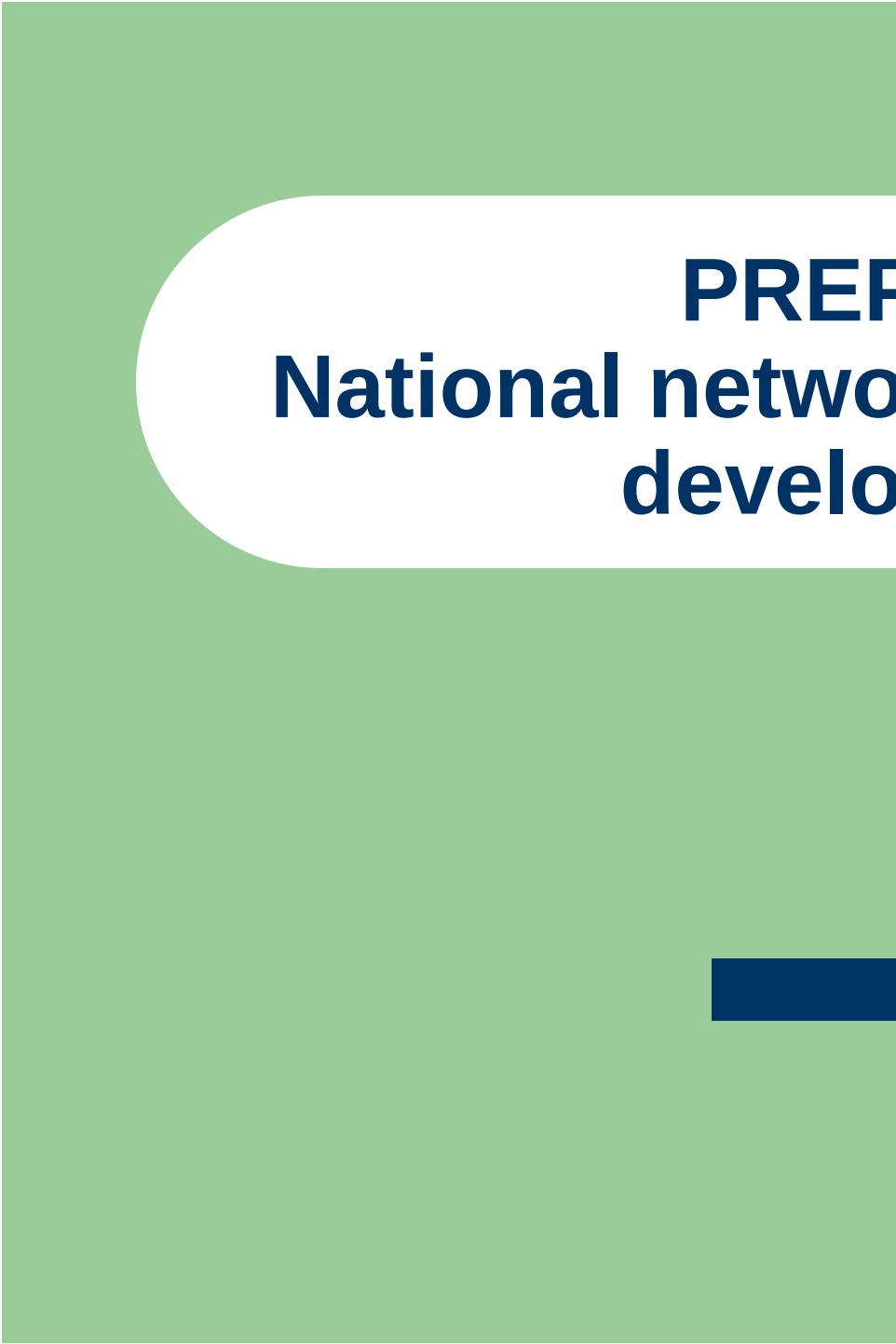




PREPARE

National networks for RURAL development

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Why have networks ?

Internationally, because :

European localities, though highly diverse, share many common problems - fragile communities, weak or narrow economies, poor infrastructure

We can share ideas/skills to address these problems

We are increasingly part of one European economy and political system : we need to be able to influence this in the name of European localities.

Why have networks ?

Within each country, in order to

- express the needs of localities
- release the energy of people, at local level
- encourage creation + work of local action groups
- enable local action groups, partnerships and NGOs to work together.
- provide a point of contact between government and civil society
- connect the country to the international networks

European Networks

Forum Synergies – international network for sustainable development

ECOVAST - European Council for the Village and Small Town www.ecovast.org

RED – Ruralité, Environnement, Développement, www.ruraleurope.org

Environmental Partnership for Central Europe
www.ecn.cz/epce.

PREPARE – Partnership for rural Europe

- To strengthen civil society in rural areas
- To promote trust and dialogue between all rural stakeholders
- To promote multi-national exchange in rural development
- To empower local communities
- To express the voice of rural Europe

PREPARE Organising Group

Forum Synergies, ECOVAST, Swedish Popular Movements Council, Swedish Federation of Rural Economy and Agricultural Societies, Slovakian Rural Parliament, Hungarian Rural Parliament, Slovakian Rural Parliament Finnish Village Action Movement, Slovakian Rural Parliament, Slovenian Rural Development Network, Polish Forum on the Animation of Rural Areas, Lithuanian Rural Communities Union

Scope of the PREPARE programme

- **Multi-national exchange**
Travelling Workshops and Gatherings
- **Regional conferences and seminars**
- **National projects**
- **International networking:**
 - the PREPARE Network
 - Website www.preparenetwork.org
- **Representing the national networks on European level**

Swedish Popular Movements Council

- Over 4000 local action groups
- County Federations of these groups
- Popular Movements Council
- *Hela Sverige Ska Leva*
(All Sweden Shall Live)
- Swedish Rural Parliament, every second year
- Liaison with Government

Finnish Village Action Movement

- Over 3500 village action groups
- County Federations of these groups
- Village Action Movement
- National Liaison Unit for Local Action Groups under LEADER, ALMA, Objective I and POMO
- Link to Rural Policy Committee, and to RD Committee of Finnish Parliament

Kodukant (*our home*), Estonian Movement of Villages

Inspiration and support from Sweden

- 1992 pilot project in 2 counties
- 1996 National Village Movement support programme
- 1997 Creation of Kodukant
- Rural Assembly, every second year
- Active programmes, with funding from government and elsewhere

Hungarian Rural Parliament

- Inspiration from Sweden
- 1998 Rural Parliament created
- Members : NGOs, local self-governments, others
- Link to micro-regions = groups of local self-governments who work together, often with NGOs, on local development
- Hosting of visits from other countries, including CIS and Balkans
- National meetings, in Parliament

Slovakian Rural Parliament

- Inspiration from Sweden and Hungary
+ support from PREPARE
- Initiative by government agencies and NGOs
- 2000 - Rural Parliament established
- 600 individual and 80 institutional members
- Network of c. 50 focal points
- Training for potential LEADER Groups

Slovenian Rural Development Network

- First national PREPARE project
 - joint initiative with Ministry of Agriculture
- National workshop, October 2001
- 12 Regional workshops, early 2002
- 2003 – Network established
- Programme of information, training, network support
- Project to promote farm diversification

Polish Rural Forum

- Initiative by the Cooperation Fund, with support from PREPARE
- Aim – cooperation between rural and environmental NGOs
- 2003 - creation of Rural Forum
- Over 50 rural development organisations have signed agreement to cooperate
- Joint work programme, including training of rural animators

Activities of national networks

Information to all members

Training of local action groups and others

Networking - websites, newsletters, meetings

Major events, each year or every second year

Action programmes, including (for some) service to
LAG Networks

Liaison with government, as **'the local voice'**

International networking