



On 14-16 June 2023, the 6th Latvian Rural Communities Parliament took place in Ergli, Madona Municipality and online, bringing together representatives of communities, local and national authorities, researchers, entrepreneurs and other rural development enthusiasts to discuss proactive and cross-sectoral solutions based on local needs and modern opportunities to ensure quality of life for rural communities.

The Parliament of the Communities was an affirmation of the need to focus on the future by acting boldly, introducing new processes and seizing existing opportunities, while fostering an enabling environment for initiatives, at the same time as promoting equal dialogue and cooperation between the different actors at local, regional and national level.

In 16 working groups and 6 discussions, the participants of the Parliament highlighted and analysed the holistic approach to rural development, concrete implementation processes, results of analyses and studies, existing practices in Latvia and other European countries and the decisions needed to create changes that will contribute to a positive impact on the challenges of rural areas, in particular the shrinking population, economic stagnation, declining access to and quality of services and infrastructure in rural areas.

Based on the innovations, active community development processes, existing tools and methods for development, as well as diverse, collaborative and implementation mechanisms, the participants of the 6th Latvian Rural Communities Parliament set out actions for the next two years, while committing to use this resolution in their work and to share it with different stakeholders.

6TH LATVIAN RURAL COMMUNITIES' PARLIAMENT RESOLUTION

- **Introduce citizens' councils** as a tool for participation, sustainability, cooperation, needs-based municipal work, etc.
- **Promote a shift in perceptions towards two-way interaction between society and public administration as a fundamental principle of democracy**, based on trust and in a win-win environment. **Communities to demand participatory opportunities for local authorities** and to exert pressure to show that the public cares.
- **Include civil consensus and dialogue as a sine qua non for reforms** (e.g. education, ATR, etc.) and changes in the public service network, including explanatory and information work for the public.
- Public administration to move forward in an accountable, coordinated and targeted way, with **the responsible authorities taking "ownership" of initiatives, processes, conditions, etc.**
- Equal and diverse stakeholders **to work together to transform the child nutrition ecosystem through** a common platform for collaboration.

- **Creating bioregions** for development and sustainable actions for positive change in the regions.
- **Engaging citizens, especially vulnerable groups, the unheard and the apathetic, by** creating an environment of trust and action to improve one's living space through experience of doing and strengthening respect and understanding of values.
- **Creating co-responsible spaces**, building unique place identities and enabling open physical spaces in the regions.
- **Work with civil society as a long-term horizontal priority, not a sectoral one, with** adequate financial and resource investment. Active communities and NGOs should also plan their engagement and ownership for the long term, not just in the form of one-off activities.
- **Implementing a vision for the future, not just a national policy based on reaction, including** preventive measures and **systems to build community resilience and models of action in times of crisis.**
- **Introduce area-based solutions, including** in the allocation of public funding. Implement LEADER/SVVA (Community-led Local Development) with significant, unique added value and with support from different funds and programmes.

Contact information • Latvian Rural Forum • +371 28855427 • info@laukuforums.lv

The Latvian Rural Forum is a national organisation that brings together more than 80 organisations in all regions. The mission of the Latvian Rural Forum is to promote the balanced development of Latvia's countryside, so that it becomes a place where people are satisfied and able to fulfil their economic and social needs. More information: laukuforums.lv.

The Latvian Rural Communities Parliament is organised by the Latvian Rural Forum in cooperation with the Madona Municipality and the Madona Municipality Foundation. The partners of the event, providing support and financial contribution, are the Society Integration Foundation from the funds allocated by the Ministry of Culture of Latvia, the Baltic-American Freedom Foundation and the National CAP Network.

