

Slovenian Rural Parliament

European Rural Movements

Professor Michael Dower



Heritage Trails

Region (Dolenjska-bela Krajina) with many heritage features

Link these into a serious new tourism offer

Cooperation between local authorities, tourist board, heritage institute, owners of 40 sites

Training and support for tourist enterprises

Formal regional partnership, now a LAG



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 and projects



Mountain Pastures, Triglav

- Traditional system – milk, cheese, meat
- Socialist period – centralized processing, milk piped from hill to valley
- Now – revival of tradition: small associations of farmers, cheese production on the hill
- Regional brands - Tolmin, Bovec - with local marketing



PLANINA KUHINJA
1020 m





PREPARE

– Partnership for Rural Europe

Aim

- 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 activity

- Help to create and strengthen national rural NGO networks in Central + Eastern Europe
- Organise multi-national Gatherings and other exchanges on Rural Development
- Support networking between all involved in rural development e.g. by newsletters, Website etc
- Influence European Rural Policy, through :
 - EC's Rural Development Advisory Committee
 - European Rural Network - Coordination Committee
 - ARC Agricultural and Rural Convention

PREPARE Partners

Forum Synergies – transnational network of sustainable development

ECOVAST – European Council for the Village & Small Town

Swedish Popular Movements Council

Finnish Village Action Movement

Croatian National Rural Network

Czech National Rural Observatory

Kodukant, **Estonian** Movement of Villages

Hungarian Rural Parliament

Latvian Rural Forum

Lithuanian Rural Communities Union

Polish Forum for the Animation of Rural Areas

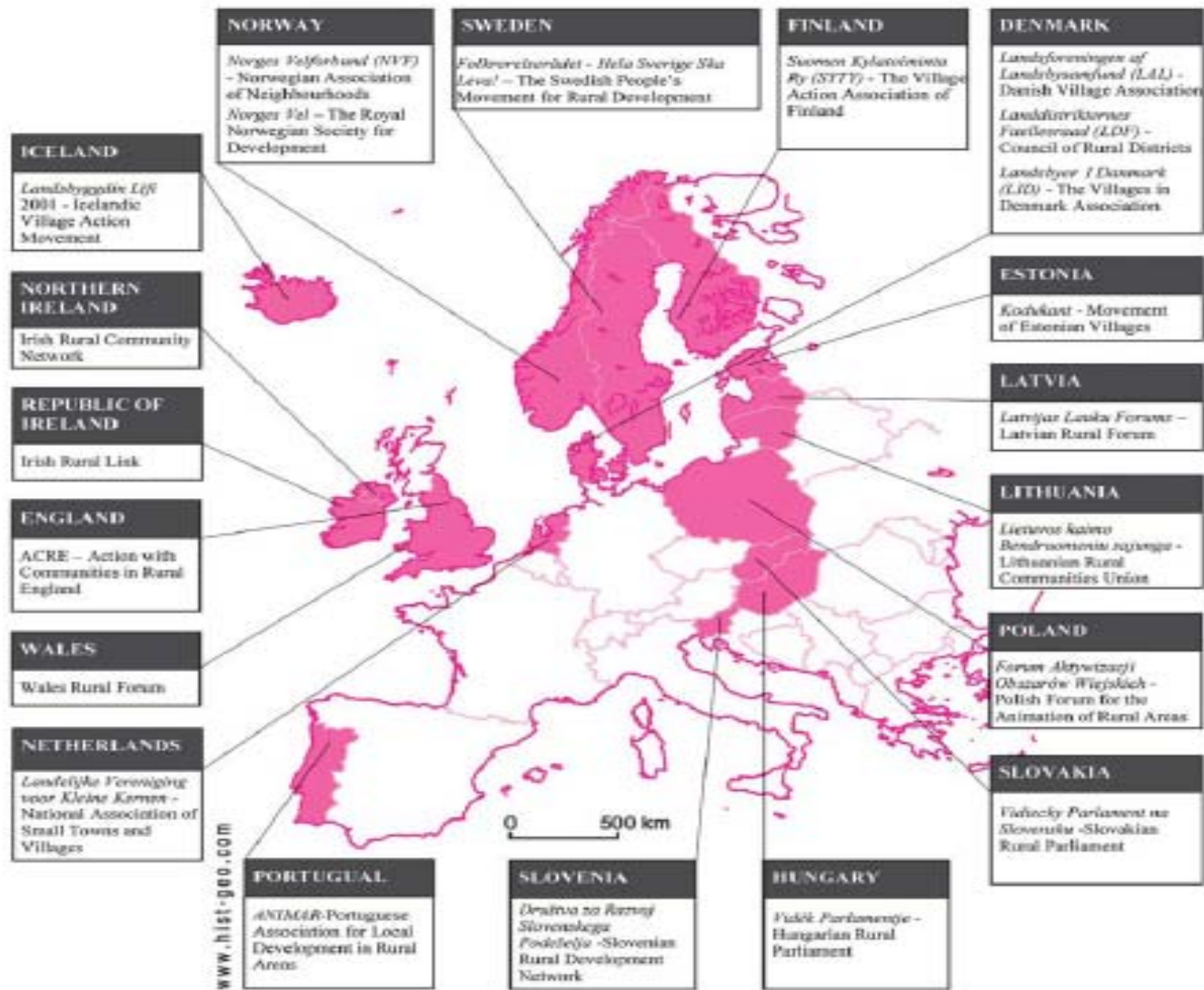
National Rural Development Network of **Serbia**

Slovakian Rural Parliament

Slovenian Rural Development Network

National rural movements

- 12 of the PREPARE partners are national rural movements (*or networks or forums*)
- 7 of these (Croatia, Czechia, Latvia, Poland, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia) were set up with support from PREPARE
- We are now working to encourage the creation of such movements or networks in Albania, Bosnia, Macedonia, Montenegro, Turkey and Ukraine
- In the whole of Europe, there are 20 national rural movements (see the report by Vanessa Halhead, now on PREPARE Website www.preparenetwork.org)



Western Europe

Danish Village Association

Action for Communities in Rural **England**

Icelandic Village Action Movement

Irish Rural Link

Netherlands Association of Small Towns and Villages

Northern Ireland Rural Community Network

Norwegian Association of Neighbourhoods

Portuguese Association for Rural Development ANIMAR

European Rural Communities Association ERCA
links east and west

Elements of national rural movements

Action groups at local level (e.g. 4000 in each of Finland and Sweden)

Networks of these groups at county and national level

Forums, with other NGOs at national, regional, local level

Links to public or multi-sector networks including micro-regions and LEADER-type groups

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
often called **Rural Parliaments**

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

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

International networking

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

Nearly 4000 village action groups

- County Federations of these groups
- Village Action Movement
- National Liaison Unit for Local Action Groups
- 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
(e.g. promotion of village tourism)

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

Czech National Rural Observatory

2003 Start of training for local animators
(with PREPARE support)

2004 growth in number of LEADER-type
LAGs

2005 Further training of LEADER-type
animators (with PREPARE support)

Creation of National Rural Observatory and
of linked LEADER Network

Rural development

“... a deliberate process of sustained and sustainable social, economic, cultural and environmental change, designed to improve the quality of life of the local population.”

Community-based development

Development should be based on the local community, because :

- They know their problems and needs
- They control the crucial resources
- Their skills, knowledge, energy are the main resource
- Their commitment is vital

Capital

To be active in development, a community needs capital.

Capital = accumulated wealth, which can be used in pursuing an activity. It may include :

- physical capital e.g buildings or equipment
 - environmental capital e.g. healthy ecosystems, pure rivers, fine landscapes
 - cultural capital e.g crafts, collective memories
- but also

Social capital

- human capital, including the personal skills, knowledge, health of the people
- social capital, that is the ability of people to work together.

The core of social capital is “networks together with shared norms, values and understandings that facilitate co-operation within or among groups” (OECD 2001).

Let me offer a few practical examples of such cooperation.

Primary school, Sweden

Small village near the Arctic Circle

Falling numbers of children

County Council proposed to close school

Local people campaigned against closure
and offered voluntary effort in teaching

School was saved

Social capital in action



Village and school hall, England

New community hall in small village

Half of costs from County Council

Other half 'in kind' by the labour of villagers

Also used as dining-room of primary school

Face-to-face network, with high social
commitment + support by public body



Village facilities, Bode, Sweden

Hard climate + remote rural community

Strong commitment to social support

Multi-purpose complex – community hall,
library, youth club, day care centre,
housing for old people

Funding from government, local
authorities and village resources

Social and physical capital combined



The house of the Apple and the Pear

Normandie-Maine Regional Park, France

Producers of apples, pears, cider, calvados and poirée (pear drink)

Cooperation to create and run a centre for training, advice and interpretation

+ trails, so that tourists can visit the farms, and taste and buy the products

An interest network – public and private



**POIRE
CIDRE**
JUS de POMMES
CALVADOS
PRODUCTEURS RECOLTANTS
LEBOSSE.Ph · BOURCIER.C

Woodworkers, Val d'Aosta, Italy

1,000 years tradition of working in wood –
ladders, tables, religious and secular
carving, coffins, bowls, flowers etc

Annual fair, 30-31 January, with tens of
thousands of visitors

Thousands of full-time or part-time jobs

Craft training school in each side valley

A major community-wide network



Restoration of churches, Romania

Tradition of decorated churches

Threat of decay and demolition

Leadership by architect + enthusiasts

Training of local people

Collective effort to restore the churches

Face-to-face local cooperation

