

# ELARD

European LEADER Association for Rural  
Development  
June 2010



EUROPEAN LEADER ASSOCIATION FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT



# Identity

- International non-profit organization founded in 1999 by European national LEADER networks :
  - French Network for Rural Development
  - Greek Network for Rural Development
  - Irish Network for Rural Development
  - Italian Network for Rural Development
  - Spanish Network for Rural Development
- Today, ELARD is representing more than 800 Local Action Groups through national and regional voluntary networks in:
  - France, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Spain, Portugal, Czech Republic, Latvia, Hungary, United Kingdom, Belgium, Romania , Lithuania , Poland and Slovenia.
- In contact with Rural Networks in Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus.



# LEADER

## & Rural Development

- 56 % of the population in the 27 Member States of the European Union (EU) living in rural areas, which cover 91 % of the territory
- LEADER has always viewed local people as the main asset of rural areas, and the distinctive characteristic of LEADER projects was the reliance placed on the people who live in rural areas, and on their ability to discover what was best suited to their environment, culture, working traditions and skills.



# LEADER & Rural Development

- ELARD aims today
  - To support rural and regional development under LEADER philosophy:
    - **The area-based approach**
    - **The bottom-up approach**
    - **The Local Action Group**
    - **The Innovative Approach**
    - **Integrated & multi sectoral approach**
    - **Networking**
    - **Cooperation**
  - To promote experience sharing and cooperation through its members , partners and European Institutions
  - To influence European Policy on rural development taking in account the regional strength of local areas in Europe.



# Greek LEADER+ Network Presidency

- Since October 2007, the Greek LEADER+ Network has undertaken ELARD's presidency
  - A new phase of maturity for the Association
  - Increasing memberships and awareness to involve the new enlarging countries
  - Increasing cooperation and exchange with other European or International Rural Networks
- ELARD has been accepted in September 2008, as the European Association representing Local Action Groups in the European Network for Rural Development set up by the Commission.
  - Representatives of the Association are invited to participate both in the Co-ordination and Sub-Leader Committees of the ENRD.



# Being a member of ELARD

- Transnational level
  - Information and experience sharing through all European LAGs and other European Rural Development Networks:  
[www.elard.eu](http://www.elard.eu), Newsletter, Events
  - Contact with other European LAGs in order to proceed to transnational cooperation.
- European Level:
  - Direct information concerning Rural Development Policies and Actions and the future of Rural Development by the European Commission.
  - Brussels offices to coordinate and support members visits or actions if needed.
- Join a strong network that represents interests and value of rural development people and areas.



# To get in touch with ELARD

- [www.elard.eu](http://www.elard.eu)

New website with full content , newsletter list, forum, registration process for new members

- Offices in Brussels:

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