



Bringing Inner Areas Back to the Centre of European Attention

 **Date:** 30th September 2025

 **Time:** 11:00 – 13:00

 **Location:** Room 1G2, European Parliament Building, Brussels

Register at the following link or QR code:

<https://forms.gle/HMn6LkJyok6SL4QZA>

Italian-English simultaneous interpretation will be provided

Note: The streaming link will be sent to the registered email address one day prior to the event.



Introduction

We are pleased to announce a new event scheduled for 30th September 2025 in Brussels.

This conference is co-organized by CERSTE (Centre Européen des Recherches Socio-Économiques, Technologiques et Environnementales) and ELARD (European LEADER Association for Rural Development), demonstrating a commitment to strengthening strategic collaboration between scientific research institutions and the European rural development network.

The meeting will focus on analyzing the recently published European Union budget and the related new political and financial directions, specifically regarding cohesion policies, rural development, energy transition, and territorial disparities.

This event provides an opportunity to reflect on the prospects and challenges arising from the new European framework and explore how to translate these policy directions into practical strategies benefiting Rural Areas, positioning LAGs as tools for sustainable innovation and participatory local development.

Conference Program: 11:00 AM – 1.00 PM

(moderated by Alfonso Scarano, CERSTE)

- Institutional Welcome

Conference

- **Armando Pugno**, CERSTE – Centre Européen des Recherches Socio-Économiques, Technologiques et Environnementales
- **María José**, Murciano Sánchez, Deputy President of ELARD - European Leader Association for Rural Development
- **Mihail Dumitru** - Deputy Director General, DG AGRI
- **Nicola De Michelis**, Director, European Commission, Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy, Deputy Director-General for Programme Implementation, Smart and Sustainable Growth and Programme Implementation IV (REGIO.G): *“New Geopolitical Balances and the Role of Peripheral Areas”*
- **Mauro Agnoletti**, Director – UNESCO Chair on Agricultural Heritage Landscapes – University of Florence, President of the National Association of Historical Rural Landscapes *“Rethinking European Agricultural Policies: From homogeneization to territorial diversity”*
- **Sabrina Lucatelli**, Director of “Riabitare l’Italia” and Vice-President of the “OECD Group on Rural Policies” *“Place Based Strategic Approach to development of Remote Rural Area: Lessons from the Italian Inners Areas Strategy”*

- **Piotr Sadlocha**, President of ELARD - European Leader Association for Rural Development “*Will LEADER still be a LEADER after 2027*”
- **Domenico Passarella**, VicePresident of FederEdilizia: “*Revaluation of real estate assets in rural areas*”.

Q&A

Invited Participants

- Members of the European Parliament;
- European LAGs;
- Relevant EU Directorates-General (Agriculture, Rural Impact, Regional Development, Environment, Energy, etc.);
- Representatives of Italian Regions in Brussels
- Associations, Construction and Agricultural Forestry Sector Companies;
- Universities, Research Centers and Institutional stakeholders.

Objectives

- Support local actions through national and European cohesion policies, rural development, and environmental protection.
- This new Brussels meeting is part of a structured discussion, alliance-building, and exchange of best practices, aimed at enhancing the role of Rural Areas within the European debate. Amid new strategic priorities—from the Draghi Plan to the Rearm Europe initiative and global technological competition—the risk is that crucial resources may increasingly divert away from cohesion and territorial development policies. It is, therefore, essential to reaffirm collectively the central role of Rural Areas as laboratories for social innovation, environmental sustainability, and inclusion, countering financial and political marginalization.

ELARD - European Leader Association for Rural Development

<https://elard.eu/>

CERSTE - Centre Européen des Recherches Socio-Économiques, Technologiques et Environnementales

<https://www.cerste.eu/>

PRIS - Associazione di Paesaggi Rurali di Interesse Storico

<https://associazionepris.it/>

www.unesco-agriculturalheritage.unifi.it

FederEdilizia, <https://www.federedilizia.com/>

To facilitate participant coordination, a dedicated WhatsApp group has been created, accessible via the link or QR code:

<https://chat.whatsapp.com/LVXpJh1oUfSCPA1W7gyNSa>

Participants will meet around 10:00 AM on 30th September in front of the main entrance of the European Parliament, where entry badges will be distributed, security check performed, and attendees escorted to the conference room.

