

Unity and Diversity

- **Let's form an alliance and make our voice heard together!**

Now is the time to influence the next EU period. The rural people – all rural people, not only the special interest groups – need to send a common message to the EU for a better rural future.

In a perfect world this would be done in big conferences. But the NGOs representing horizontal rural development do not have the resources to do this efficiently on a European level. Instead ERA (European Rural Alliance) is proposing a “**Unity and Diversity**” action.

This simple framework has two parts.

The first part is represented by the overall statement prepared by ERA and its members on the base of the experiences of their experiences with civil society in the practical rural development. This would be the **unity** on a general political level.

The second part will be individual statements of your organization - national and/or European, interested in horizontal –rural development. These statements will deepen and complete ERA overall statement with concrete ideas, opinions, priority areas preferred by individual organizations on the base of their various interests/experiences. This would be the **diversity** demonstrating that the rural area in Europe is not homogeneous and a one size fits all –policy is not possible.

So please, if you agree with ERA general strategy statement, complete it with your own organization's statement underlining your future rural development priorities!

So, we are not asking you to simply sign the general statement but to develop it by adding your own constructive comments in your own paper. Your statement should be signed and sent by fax or even better as a scanned and sent by mail before the 31 May 2010. (contact details: fax mail..)

ERA will use all contributions within the coming Agriculture and Rural Convention process but also directly as voice of rural areas in consultation procedure and communication with EU authorities in the future rural policy debate

What to do with the “file of statements”?

ERA will do its part. We will use it in the ARC –process (www.arc2020.eu), and we hope that you do the same in the ERA working group. But we will also see too that the commissioner in

ERA Board members