



RUR@L

ENRD Newsletter

May ^{EN} 2011

NEWS

ENRD REPORT

Agraria Fair, Romania

The Agraria fair in Cluj, Romania took place from the 4-7 May, 2011. The fair is a major annual exhibition on agriculture and rural development. The DG AGRI stand attracted a lot of interest, in particular for the presentations of local RDP projects, whereby local project managers shared their experiences on setting up their businesses and receiving RDP funding. [Click here](#) for further information.

LINC event on the banks of the Elbe

Around 200 LAG representatives, NRNs and other stakeholders took part in this year's LINC (Leader Inspired Network Community) event - an initiative aimed at encouraging local cooperation in rural development. LINC stands for Leader Inspired Network Community. This year's event was organised by the LAG ILE-Region, Sächsische Schweiz, and participants were invited to join in a number of workshops and tours. As always, the highlight of the event was the array of networking activities on hand, which included rock-climbing and rowing. Until next year! [Click here](#).

Festival of Europe

DG AGRI was present at Berlaymont, Brussels on 7 May, 2011, as part of the Festival of Europe European Institutions Day. Questions were received on all topics/issues related to EU rural development, including projects co-financed by the EU under EAFRD during the period 2007-2013. A display of the projects attracted a lot of interest and these were accompanied by fun activities, games and quizzes. [Click here](#) for further information.

Please note: 'Rur@l News' is an online publication; for further information, please go to <http://enrd.ec.europa.eu>

POLICY BRIEF

NRN Meeting Tackles Rural Entrepreneurship

The issue of 'rural entrepreneurship' was addressed at the 11th National Rural Network (NRN) meeting in Germany on April 27. An overview of the Rural Entrepreneurship Initiative – launched in 2010 - to explore ways to improve possibilities for business

development in rural areas was presented. Extensive workshops were held on emerging themes, which resulted in a set of prescribed action points for the NRNs, to further progress work on this important rural development issue:

- The French NRN took the lead on **Short Supply Chains**. A 'working group' will be set up and a preliminary meeting will be held to clearly define the scope of this working group;
- **Social Aspects of Rural Entrepreneurship**: The Belgian Walloon NRN has committed to producing a video, which promotes the importance of young farmers, as well as other activities. In addition, the Italian NRN is to support the launch of two further actions - an ambitious joint NRN Framework Programme on several social aspects of Rural Entrepreneurship, and a survey on how rural areas are perceived by young people in the EU Member States;
- The Swedish NRN will lead on **Overcoming Obstacles of Rural Entrepreneurship**. A Task Force on local funding is to be set up, with a workshop planned for late June 2011, and a survey of funding capital schemes also to be carried out.

All three action plans will incorporate the use of the ENRD Rural Entrepreneurship Gateway - a forthcoming online tool, which will effectively provide users with access to lots of interesting information on rural entrepreneurship. In addition, a synopsis of planned ENRD activities over the next 12 months was presented. And there is no shortage of planned NRN activities,

as was evident from the many NRNs who took the opportunity to promote an array of exciting and innovative events, to take place over the coming months. For more on the NRN meeting, [click here](#). For further information on NRN activities in your area, please consult the events [calendar](#) on the ENRD website.

RDP Projects Database Now Online!

The RDP projects database is your 'one stop shop' for all you need to know about rural development projects on the ground, across Europe. Simply search for themes that interest you – and discover the wide array of projects that can be funded by the EU! [Click here](#)



- ENRD web and publications survey ...your opinion matters!
> [Click here](#) to give your views on the ENRD magazine and newsletter;
> [Click here](#) to rate the ENRD website.
- The ENRD website is now available in the Polish language. [Click here.](#)
- The fully revamped Transnational Cooperation (TNC) guide is now online with practical tools and audio-visual contents. [Click here.](#)
- Attention LAGs! New Leader Cooperation Offers have been posted on the website. [Click here.](#)



New Focus Group on Better Local Development Strategies

A new Focus Group on Local Development Strategies (LDS) was officially launched at the 6th Leader Subcommittee (LsC) meeting, held in Brussels on 17 May, 2011. The aim of the new focus group is to provide assistance to Managing authorities and Local Action Groups (LAGs) so as to improve the quality of their local development strategies. LAGs have the responsibility of designing and implementing an 'integrated' local development strategy. However, in practice, designing a high quality LDS can prove to be demanding and according to a recent special report by the European Court of Auditors (ECA), there is some disparity in the quality of the strategies developed by various Member States, particularly as regards how stated objectives will finally be achieved. Therefore, the mandate of the new group is defined as follows: to identify minimal obligatory elements in the design of local development strategies, to be defined in the rural development programmes or other programming documents; and to collect tools and good practices already used at LAG level. Member States have

been invited to nominate volunteers to support the work of the new focus group, ahead of a work-plan to be developed before July 2011. So far, over 30 individuals have expressed an interest in joining the focus group and this figure is growing. The focus group will be chaired by the Portuguese and Finnish National Rural Networks, alongside the European Leader Association for Rural Development (ELARD). The meeting also focused on lessons learned from the Leader approach and rural development policy, after 2013. It was stressed that Europe 2020 will require full integration between various policy elements. In particular, as regards Leader, there should be a focus on innovation and local governance e.g. strengthening the role of the LDS. In addition, there should be a clearer distribution of tasks between LAGs and authorities and a greater focus on capacity building, increasing the participation of the private sector and streamlining transnational cooperation. The LsC meeting also presented an overview of ENRD activities for the coming year. [Click here](#) for further information.

NRN FOCUS

Rural Economy discussed at Northern Ireland Seminar

Over 70 delegates – comprising economists and rural development practitioners – attended a seminar on March 29, in Northern Ireland, entitled "The changing state of the rural economy: Where to now?" hosted by the Rural Network for Northern Ireland. The seminar discussed ways in which rural development actors could contribute to supporting a healthy rural economy, in these challenging times. [Click here](#) for further information.

Conference on Rural Development Measures

Registration has opened for an international conference on the 'Efficiency of Rural Development Measures' to take place on 2 June, 2011, in Riga, Latvia. The conference is open to representatives from NRNs, rural and agricultural advisory organisations and other NGOs active in rural areas. For further information, [click here.](#)

Deadline for ELARD Event Approaches

The deadline for application for the 'LAGs Global Networks' seminar, organised by the European Leader Association for Rural Development (ELARD), to take place in Finland on 15-16 June, will close at the end of May. The event will focus on the piloting of Leader outside EU "borders" including regions in Africa, Latin America and Russia. Guest speakers from the OECD, the European Commission, ELARD experts and many more will attend. [Click here](#) to register.

COUNTRY FOCUS



MALTA

Population: 414.000 (situation in 2009)
Area: 316 km²

Malta became an EU member in May 2004 and began using the euro as currency in 2008. Rural Development in Malta is implemented by the Managing Authority which falls under the responsibility of the Ministry for Resources and Rural Affairs. Policy objectives focus on improving competitiveness of the agricultural industry and encouraging innovation, as well as improving human capital by providing training and information, the promotion of sustainable land use and the promotion of cultural heritage in rural areas. Although Malta is primarily a 'services' based economy, with the agricultural sector accounting for just 2.2% of the total GVA, agriculture significantly contributes to maintaining the quality of the rural landscape, which is critical for its tourism economy (1.2 million visitors annually). Agricultural land occupies 47.8% of the total land area and Maltese agricultural production is highly appreciated, with a growing demand for local quality products. [Click here](#) for further information.



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