



LEADER Cooperation 2014-2020

- Draft Guidance Document -

***(as presented to the Rural Development Committee
on 16 October 2013)***

DG AGRI G1

11th LEADER sub-committee, 11 November 2013

Findings and recommendations of the ENRD LEADER Focus Group on Transnational Cooperation (2010):

- LAGs need time and opportunities to engage, meet possible partners and understand what could be the goal of common learning
 - *Technical support for preparatory work needed*
- Too many differences in requirements and application timing throughout the RDPs; too many differences as regards eligibility of costs
 - *Information on national rules and procedures should be shared; ENRD and NRNs should make available existing models experiences, practices*

LEADER Cooperation 2014-2020

- LEADER as part of CLLD offered by the 4 ESI-Funds: Cooperation is an integral part of CLLD, but only the EAFRD and the EMFF have specific provisions for cooperation
- The support to co-operation is a mandatory element of the LEADER measure in the RDPs (wording of Art. 31 Common Provisions Regulation).

Approach for 2014-2020

(see Draft Guidance document)

- **Interterritorial and transnational cooperation**
- **Wide geographical scope of possible cooperation partners of EAFRD/LEADER LAGs:** *other LAGs or "groups of public and private partners implementing a local development strategy" (Art. 44 (2) RD Reg.)*
 - ***from within the EU: from all types of areas***
 - ***from outside the EU: only from rural areas***

Approach for 2014-2020

(see Draft Guidance document)

- **Preparatory technical support** becomes a mandatory element of the support to cooperation, in order to boost the uptake of cooperation activities of LAGs
 - **Costs related to exchange of experience; project development costs (recommendation in guidance)**
 - **LAG has to demonstrate that it envisages to impement a *concrete** project (legal obligation)**
*(*identification of the objectives/character of a planned project; no obligation to carry out the project)*

Approach for 2014-2020

(see Draft Guidance document)

"What does the cooperation have to consist in?"

- Cooperation project: a concrete activity with clearly identified deliverables producing benefits for the territories
- Projects might also be focused on capacity building and transfer of experience on local development
- Criteria for selection to be set in the LDS or on RDP level (depending on system);

Approach for 2014-2020

(see Draft Guidance document)

Project selection

- Recommendation that LAGs can include cooperation activities in their local development strategies → *This can reach from specific activities to a more comprehensive cooperation strategy, depending on the needs identified in the SWOT analysis*
- Alternatively, selection of cooperation projects may also be undertaken by the Managing Authority (Art. 30 (5) CPR).

Approach for 2014-2020

(see Draft Guidance document)

Recommendations on financing the support to cooperation:

- to reserve a specific amount of the budget for the LEADER measure in each RDP for cooperation activities
 - LAGs need to get assurance as regards the feasibility of their planned projects
- to secure a budget for national co-financing for cooperation throughout the funding period
 - The development of cooperation projects needs time.
- to make "common costs" eligible (if necessary)

Reduction of delays 2014-2020

- Obligation for the MA to establish a **system of ongoing application** in cases where cooperation projects are not selected by the LAG → guarantee of continuous access to funding for cooperation
 - **Calls should be organised often enough to not hinder the implementation of projects (partners are funded by different RDPs / are from different MS): 3-4 calls per year?**

Reduction of delays 2014-2020

- Obligation of Managing Authority to decide on the allocation of funding within 4 months after the date of submission of the project
- Recommended to find ways for giving for instance provisional approval waiting for the approval of other Managing Authorities with a reasonable time frame
- Specifically for TNC: obligation to make public the national or regional administrative procedures concerning the selection of TNC projects and a list of eligible costs at the latest two years after the date of the approval of their RDPs

Ensuring the follow-up of TNC on European level 2014-2020

- Obligation of Member State to communicate the approvals of TNC projects to the Commission (as before)
 - offers at the same time a platform for exchange of information between Member States involved in the same TNC project

It is planned to improve the current notification system....

Role of ENRD and NRNs 2014-2020

- **ENRD:**

- clear mandate to support both transnational initiatives and the national rural networks as regards LEADER cooperation
- to cooperate with the networking and technical support bodies for CLLD set up by the other ESI-Funds, also specially as regards transnational cooperation

Role of ENRD and NRNs 2014-2020

- **National Rural Networks (NRNs):**
 - very specific focus on the provision of technical assistance and facilitation of cooperation activities of LAGs
 - *This can be done through different training and technical tools, but can also include the provision of individual or collective consultancy or mentoring*

Final recommendations

(see Draft Guidance Document)

- to give priority in the LDS selection procedure to LAGs which have integrated cooperation into their local development strategies
- to make efforts to harmonise the procedures and definitions for LEADER cooperation as far as possible, exchanging actively with other MS (or within a MS)
- The use of other tools for territorial cooperation offered by the ESI-Funds, notably the ETC programmes financed by the ERDF (INTERREG), can be a complementary asset and create synergies, always having in mind the different scope and size of projects implemented



**Thank you very much for your
attention !**