

Progress of the EIP IMPLEMENTATION in Italy

Anna Vagnozzi, Ines Di Paolo

Progress in EIP implementation(1)

- **Situation autumn 2014**

- *Regional planning* of 21 RDPs and negotiation with UE: cooperation measure with EIP sub-measures planned by all Regions, except Valle D'Aosta (very small Region)
- *National planning* of 1 Rural Network Program (with a priority on the innovation promotion) and 1 National RDP (with the proposal of measure for funding interregional OGs)
- Strong coordination activities between Regions, as well as between Regions and Ministry
- Ongoing dialogue with sectorial representative organizations on innovation needs and related programming choices

- **Changes during the last year**

- Up to now, approval of 11 Regional RDPs and 1 National Rural Network Program (July 2015)
- National RDP is not approved yet, but the Ministry and the Regions agreed to take out the measure for funding interregional OGs
- Instead of EIP national measure, every regional RDP considers the possibility to co-fund the interregional OGs according to the European Guidelines on EIP (4.5 Cross-border operational groups) with the National Rural Network coordination

Progress in EIP implementation (2)

- **Successes**

- Very strong coordination and fruitful debate between Regions, helped by the NRN: last June NRN organized a workshop to collect the regional ideas on implementation of a national EIP network (as part of NRN), as well as the main issues related to the first application of the expected activities.
- The EIP implementation has pushed to the merger of the two previous regional networks (on research and on services) that is currently in progress.

- **Problems**

- In general the Italian Regions have legal and/or administrative problems:
 - the financial and procedural factors (uncertainty of the EIP measure appeal or the lack of codified procedures), that in some case have led to the use of funds from more measures,
 - the connection between Sub-measure 16.1 and Measure 2 in terms of the advisor participation to the OGs (if the Regions select the advisors with rules of public procurement law, it is difficult to integrate in OG partnership the more adequate technicians),
 - the lack of funding anticipation could be a problem for the EIP sub-measure starting,
 - the implications of the Measure 16.1 in terms of State aid (rules from Reg. 1305/2013, Reg. 702/2014 and EC Guidelines 214/C 204/01)

- **Plans for the future**

- Operating speed of the National Rural Network Program: information, actions to connect OGs, connection to European EIP Network, standard solutions for emerging problems, promotion of the interregional OGs
- Deepening of issues on monitoring and evaluation

Call for Operational groups

- The first calls are foreseen by the end of year (Emilia Romagna, Toscana) or the first months of the next year (Veneto, Friuli, etc)
- The Italian Regions are now engaged in animation activities:
 - itinerant presentation of EIP opportunity (Veneto),
 - analysis of innovation needs (Puglia),
 - public call for the collection of expressions of interest on OG projects (Toscana)
- Most Regions have chosen two steps for the OG selection
- Most Regions will indicate some preferred topics
- Proposal to create national list of experts to evaluate the OG-projects
- Only the Regions with approved RDPs are defining the OG selection criteria (*like coherence with EIP and/or RDP goals, role of enterprises in the projects, coherence between activities and project goals, result applicability, partnership suitability, quality of extension and innovation diffusion, pertinence of budget amount*)

Linking the OGs to the broader EIP framework

- The link between OGs, as well as between OGs with the European EIP Network and Horizon 2020 are issues being developed by NRN
- About the tools collecting OG outcomes, in Italy the reflection is quite advanced, also thanks to a relevant experience, i.e. the “Information system on the regional agricultural research” (see Italian presentation on 26th May 2014 at the SCAR AKIS group meeting in Brussel)
- In July 2015 was approved the Italian Strategic Plan on *Innovation* and Research in Agriculture, Food and Forestry Sectors, that is structured to support the implementation of EIP, providing available innovations, not only research needs.

Brokering, networking and monitoring

- Brokering

Only half of the Regions have provided for the innovation broker and its funding. The innovation brokerage in the OGs will be performed by different bodies, already existing in the Italian AKIS, according to their role and skills

- Networking

Some Regions have started networking activities targeted towards potential OG-members, sometimes with the support of the NRN

- Monitoring and evaluation

These activities have been expected in NRN Program, but currently they have still to be undertaken