



Minutes of the Civil Dialogue Group on Rural Development meeting 15th February 2017, Brussels

Attended by Kirsten Birke Lund

Agenda of the CDG meeting included (among others) the following themes:

- Reflection post 2020
- State of play of the absorption of EAFRD funds for the different RDP
- CoR study on budget for rural areas presented by Rossella Soldi
- Preparatory Study of the Andrieu report on jobs and growth
- Areas facing natural constraints: state of play (how the different biophysical criteria are used in different countries)
- Feedback on activities of the Rural Networks:
- Cork Declaration
- ENRD activity.
- European Solidarity Corps

Reflection post 2020: The Commission gave a presentation including information on the Open Public Consultation of the CAP, launched on 2nd February and open until 2nd May.2017. Result expected to be presented at a conference 7th July 2017. They are preparing for handling the huge number of answers to be expected (now already more than 40,000 responses!

Also included in the presentation was the future focus on a result-based monitoring and evaluation.

WWF asked for a closer cooperation between the Regional and the Rural Development fund

The Commission wants to hold on to the cooperation CAP/Rural Development but invites other funds to also invest in rural areas.

COPA and others asked for simplification

ELARD supported the request for simplification. Also supported the idea of result-based evaluation, but pointed out, that the results achieved by use of the LEADER methodology might not always be easily presented quantitative – but more qualitative. The methodology need indicators to enable a result-oriented evaluation. The Commission appreciates the request for simplification. Regarding the result-based evaluation the Commission suggest also for LEADER to find a qualitative method for proving the results.

The Commission informed that we should not expect the discussion regarding the future CAP to be more open.

The Chair concluded that the support needed for rural areas most probably must come from a combination of funds – not just RDP.

State of play of the absorption of EAFRD funds for the different RDP: The Commission gave a presentation indicating the state of play for different MS/regions



for this Programming Period. For now 64 RDP's have been closed (out of 95). Budget transfer to Pillar 2 can be increase until August 2017 – this requires a request sent from the MS/Region to the Commission. Measure 6 seems to be lacking behind – consumed only 3 %.

CoR study on budget for rural areas: Rossella Soldi presented a study indicating the trends of funds used in rural areas. The contribution from EAFRD has been fluctuating. The contribution from Regional fund has been decreasing from more than 20 % in previous programme period to 11 % in this programme period. Social fund is expected to contribute more during this programme period.

Preparatory Study of the Andrieu report on jobs and growth: Experts were presenting the outcome of a study on job-creation within the CAP – and if they were created in Pillar 1 or 2.

Interesting study (but on a poor base!) showed that the jobs were created within Pillar 2 – but not necessary within farming. Pillar 1 has had the aim to create efficient farming – and never had the aim to create jobs. They do not see tourism as permanent jobs – due to seasons!!

They were asked for more details of the type of jobs they've found in Pillar 2, but this was not answered.

Areas facing natural constraints: state of play (how the different biophysical criteria are used in different countries) Interesting study showing how the criteria can be finetuned to make a better hit when it comes to “constraints area”

Feedback on activities of the Rural Networks:

Cork Declaration: The Commission presented the current plans for implementing the Cork Declaration. For now the Website has not yet been made operational, but very soon. The Website is to be the platform where all activities related to the Cork Declaration should be monitored.

Not sure of the differences between the information already given on ENRD-website – compared to this new Website.

ENRD: ENRD gave a presentation on their future activities, and reported good progress with very active involvements from stakeholders. They want to follow this up with shared events – arranged with MS – to be placed outside Bruxelles.

European Solidarity Corps: The Commission presented a new initiative. The aim is to connect youngsters across Europe.

ELARD asked if it would be possible to combine this initiative with RDP-funding (for LAG's)

The Commission answered, that this will be possible, but the LAG's will have to register in the Solidarity Database.