

Summary of the LEADER/CLLD sub-group meeting 8th of March 2018, Brussels

Summary compiled by Kristiina Tammets

The 5th LEADER/CLLD Subgroup meeting had the following topics:

- The state of play of implementation of LEADER and LEADER cooperation activities;
- Future developments related to the European Commission's Communication on the Future of Food and Farming;
- CLLD implementation under the European Regional Development (ERDF) and Social (ESF) Funds;
- The latest ENRD activities and initiatives on improving LEADER/CLLD delivery;
- To put forward recommendations and priority actions on key themes related to improving LEADER/CLLD implementation in the current programming period.

Presentations of the LEADER/CLLD Subgroup are available here:

https://enrd.ec.europa.eu/news-events/events/5th-leaderclld-sub-group-meeting_en

ELARD Vice-President Kristiina Tammets introduced the European Economic and Social Committee opinion on CLLD “**Advantages of the Community-led Local Development (CLLD) approach for integrated local and rural development**”

The presentation of Kristiina Tammets is available here:

https://enrd.ec.europa.eu/sites/enrd/files/leader-sub-group5_eesc-opinion_tammets.pdf

Main reflections from the meeting:

1. LAGs selection process is finished in all Member States. LEADER state of play refers to 2346 LAGs (in March 2018), expected number of LAGs in EU was 2536 according to RDPs (Rural Development Plan). Probably this number is still changing. 3300 projects submitted by different beneficiaries have been already supported (according to annual implementation report, 2016);
2. Transnational cooperation (TNC) seems to be rather difficult for LAGs, because of only 32 TNC projects across Europe were accepted by the end of 2016. Rules and calls are different in different Member States;
3. Simplification is the main target for DG Agri at the moment. Omnibus regulation is good possibility for that; it regulates the possibilities to propose simplification for costs and for processes by LAGs for LAG costs but also for project beneficiaries. Umbrella projects implementation gives good chances to simplify. Simplified Cost Option (SCO) possibilities were promoted widely (flat rate, lump sum); DG Agri puts a lot of effort to promote SCO among Member States. There were many good examples across Europe. **For example, in Poland they use SCO for all LAG administrative and animation costs;**

4. DG Agri (Guido Castellano) presented new CAP Communication (Common Agricultural Policy) and its' general architecture. Main messages – result based management of CAP and giving more freedom to national level to decide about eligibility. As the new CAP will be very result oriented while planning and implementing LEADER/CLLD activities we need to think about questions - what do we steer directly? What do we influence directly? What do we influence indirectly?

5. Guido Castellano marked in his presentation that **synergy and coherence is very important for future CAP** and as LEADER/CLLD has integrative nature then you can find everywhere a bit of LEADER all through the CAP Communication. He also mentioned that **in the future the networking will have much bigger role.**

6. In order to improve in the future it is now very important that **LEADER Networks across Europe promote LEADER/CLLD values and results, advantages of integrated local development and simplification at national level.**

7. **LAG survey organized by ENRD** is very good and comprehensive material with lots of good input for policy work at EU and national level. Please certainly read this presentation: https://enrd.ec.europa.eu/sites/enrd/files/leader-sub-group5_lag-survey_grieve-toth.pdf

8. DG Regio has ordered very interesting research “CLLD implementation under ERDF and ESF”. It refers to many interesting conclusions: CLLD is the most prominent instrument of ERDF and ESF implementation; 75% of Member States decided to use CLLD (in 11 countries all 4 funds are available); **LAGs without multi-funding having lack of capacity to tackle with big challenges**, etc. Implementing multi-funds the important question is how to make the processes simpler, more efficient and beneficiary oriented?

Please read more here: https://enrd.ec.europa.eu/sites/enrd/files/leader-sub-group5_clld_erdf-esf_servillo.pdf.

9. Update of the ENRD calendar is available here: https://enrd.ec.europa.eu/news-events/events/upcoming_en