

# R U R @ L N E W S 9

NEWSLETTER FOR THE ENRD July 2010



## SUMMARY



### Public Debate on the Future of the Common Agriculture Policy (CAP)

The EU Common Agriculture Policy (CAP) is due to be reformed by 2013 and a formal public consultation will be undertaken later this year, when the Commission intends to publish a policy paper setting out different options for the future CAP, for consideration. In this regard, the European Commissioner for Agriculture and Rural Development, Dacian Cioloş, launched a public debate on the future of the CAP on the 12th April 2010. As a precursor to the formal public consultation, Mr. Cioloş invited all interested EU citizens and organisations to participate. On April 14th, an extraordinary meeting of the EN RD Coordination committee was held, at which the members of the committee were invited to launch the public debate on the CAP after 2013 in their own country/organisation. With rural development identified as the 'second pillar' of CAP, this public consultation will serve as an important contribution in terms of identifying requirements for CAP after 2013.

The following rural development questions have been proposed by DG AGRI:

- A. What should be the objectives of any future rural development policy?
- B. How can the policy instruments be made more effective?
- C. How can the management of the policy be improved?

Individuals and organisations interested in rural development are invited to join the debate, either through their National Rural Networks (NRNs) or the other organisations represented in the EN



RD Coordination Committee. The members of the Coordination Committee were requested to submit their contributions by June 3rd. These contributions are posted on the website: [http://enrd.ec.europa.eu/cap-consultation-process\\_home\\_en/en/debate-contributions\\_en.cfm](http://enrd.ec.europa.eu/cap-consultation-process_home_en/en/debate-contributions_en.cfm)

All contributions will be brought together in a single synthesis report which will be presented at a conference to be held on 19-20 July in Brussels: ([http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/cap-post-2013/conference/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/cap-post-2013/conference/index_en.htm))

Commissioner Cioloş participated in the Enlarged Advisory Group on the CAP post 2013, on June 3rd. To read his speech or for further information: [http://ec.europa.eu/commission\\_2010-2014/ciolos/headlines/speeches/2010/06/20100603\\_fr.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/commission_2010-2014/ciolos/headlines/speeches/2010/06/20100603_fr.htm) or [http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/cap-post-2013/speeches/adgroup20100603\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/cap-post-2013/speeches/adgroup20100603_en.pdf)

Additional information on the wider CAP debate can be found at the following link: <http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/cap-debate> where more than 5000 contributions have already been posted.

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## Enhanced EN RD Website Now Live!

The European Network for Rural Development (EN RD) is delighted to announce the launch of an enhanced EN RD website on April 28th. The site has been re-configured to improve access to a range of information on rural development within the European Union. The aim is to establish a site which better reflects the dynamic and pan-European aspects of the EN RD. It will also promote the wide range of activities taking place both within and between Member States.

"This certainly is an important step in improving the services and visibility of the EN RD," says Rob Peters, Head of Unit, DG AGRI-G3, "and a recognition of the growing importance of the EN RD as a mechanism intended to improve the flow of information, knowledge, cooperation and effectiveness of rural development networks throughout Europe". Mr. Peters also acknowledged "the need to continue to extend communication services and the flow of knowledge and information between the European Commission and members of the EN RD, recognising that the website and other services will need to continue to expand and improve as a source of rural development information and exchange of experience. Our long-term aim is to establish the EN RD website as the definitive source of rural development information in Europe. It's an ambitious target but one that we believe we can achieve, given the growing level of support provided by the Member State rural networks and the ever-increasing importance of rural development within the EU".

Some of the new features of the enhanced site now available include:

- Inter-active maps which allow access to a range of rural development information by country;
- The launch of a dedicated page on the public debate on the CAP, post-2013;
- An expanding thematic library of information on various rural development topics and new challenges;
- A fast access gateway to more detailed information on all EU National Rural Networks;
- A partner search facility for Leader cooperation projects;
- More up to date information and news on rural development events and activities;

Haris Martinos of the EN RD Contact Point says "We are very pleased with the progress made with the EN RD website and of course we hope that further progress can be made in the coming months, as more people learn about and begin to use the web services. In this respect, we would welcome feedback from all users on ways in which the new website can be further enhanced."

Visit the new enhanced EN RD website at: <http://enrd.ec.europa.eu/>

## 4th Leader Subcommittee Meeting

The fourth Leader subcommittee (LSC) meeting took place in Brussels on the 20th May, 2010. Discussions centred on the presentations of the initial work of three Focus Groups. Focus Group 1 is examining the implementation of the 'bottom up principle' in terms of decision making processes and mainstreaming issues. The second group is focusing on issues relating to preserving the innovation/experimental character of Leader, and the third group presented its findings on work related to the implementation of the cooperation measure.

An overview was also given of the intermediary findings of the European Evaluation Network Thematic Working Group (TWG) on the assessment of the impacts of Leader and Quality of Life related measures. The meeting was chaired by Rob Peters, head of unit G3, DG Agri.

The meeting proved both interesting and insightful. It provided an opportunity to draw attention to some ongoing issues in terms of Leader implementation and discuss possible improvements. For further information: [http://enrd.ec.europa.eu/events-and-meetings/committees/leader-subcommittee/en/4th-leader-subcommittee\\_en.cfm](http://enrd.ec.europa.eu/events-and-meetings/committees/leader-subcommittee/en/4th-leader-subcommittee_en.cfm)

## National Rural Networks Meet

Rome was the location for the 8<sup>th</sup> meeting of the National Rural Networks (NRNs), which took place in late March. The meeting provided an opportunity to update NRNs on progress on the three on-going NRN thematic initiatives and to kick-off a fourth specific thematic initiative on rural entrepreneurship.



The NRN thematic group scrutinising forestry issues has been identifying differences between and within Member States, in support of the forestry sector, the types of forestry measures used and the levels of funding and other support currently available. Focus points for further analysis include: competition or conflicting interests among farmers and foresters aiming to access RDP forestry support; administrative efforts required to access forestry support; bio-energy production; and possible forms of common actions or cooperation.

Initial findings from the NRN's on-going thematic work on Social Farming (or 'care farming') i.e. practices aimed at promoting social welfare (i.e. social inclusion, rehabilitation, employment, education and therapy) are the result of information gathered from nine Member States. The review illustrates the wide range of support currently provided for Social Farming, the role of the RDPs and the growing visibility of an EU Social Farming sector. The review also highlighted significant variances in Social Farming support systems and legislative or regulatory frameworks throughout the EU. Benefits have already been gained from this analysis, which allows comparisons of differences in approaches and methods used, as well as the guidelines that exist, best practices that have been adopted and the quality standards established for specific beneficiaries. Follow-up activities by the NRNs aim



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to further develop case study examples for inclusion in the EN RD's Project Information and Knowledge Sharing Exchange (PIKSE) database and develop practical projects between participating countries/organisations.

The concept of 'joint working' underlies the aims of a new NRN thematic initiative, launched at the NRN forum dealing with the question of NRN roles in 'strengthening rural entrepreneurship'. Objectives for this NRN collaboration involve appraising how NRNs can add value to rural entrepreneurship activity through improvements in the implementation of EAFRD. Case studies will be collected of practical examples of innovative projects. Targeted research will also be undertaken, to better understand the potential synergies and complementarities that can be achieved, in conjunction

with other public and private rural development support instruments, in the forestry sector.

In addition to the above points, a number of other useful development matters were discussed during the NRN's 8th meeting. Visit: [http://enrd.ec.europa.eu/events-and-meetings/nrn-meetings/en/9th-nrn-meeting\\_en.cfm](http://enrd.ec.europa.eu/events-and-meetings/nrn-meetings/en/9th-nrn-meeting_en.cfm) for a detailed account of the full meeting outcomes.

## Thematic Working Group - Joint Meeting

A joint meeting of the EN RD Thematic Working Groups (TWGs) 1, 2 and 3 was held on the 23<sup>rd</sup> March to share the current outcomes of their analyses. Following progress reports from each of the TWGs, discussion focused on possible future joint analyses. Issues raised included questions regarding:

how rural areas are defined and the territorial specificities targeted for rural development purposes; the different economic links between agriculture and other rural activities; and the importance of both environmental and social public goods in rural areas.

During the meeting it was noted that TWGs have identified examples of relevant practice which can and should be shared with a range of EN RD stakeholders, so as to improve the delivery of rural development programmes. In this way, TWG outcomes can be applied to improve the efficient use of EAFRD during the present programming period, and also in the shaping of programmes for the period starting in 2013. A follow-up workshop of all the TWGs and the Coordination Committee took place on June 7th. Find out more [http://enrd.ec.europa.eu/en-rd-events-and-meetings/committees/en/committees\\_home\\_en.cfm](http://enrd.ec.europa.eu/en-rd-events-and-meetings/committees/en/committees_home_en.cfm)



## LAG Networking

Spring has seen a flurry of Local Action Group (LAG) networking events around the EU. These included the European Leader Expo held in Budapest from 4th to 7th of March which brought together LAG representatives from the Netherlands, Poland, Romania, Estonia and Spain, as well as all LAGs from the host country - Hungary. Transnational cooperation proved to be a common topic of interest among Expo participants, who welcomed the release of the [EN RD on-line guide](http://enrd.ec.europa.eu/leader/2007-2013/tnc-guide/en/tnc-guide_home_en.cfm) ([http://enrd.ec.europa.eu/leader/2007-2013/tnc-guide/en/tnc-guide\\_home\\_en.cfm](http://enrd.ec.europa.eu/leader/2007-2013/tnc-guide/en/tnc-guide_home_en.cfm)) to developing effective cooperation projects.

Other recent events have included the 'Leader Inspired Networking Community' (LINC) conference, which aims to foster networking and the exchange of experience among European Leader areas in an innovative way.

The conference, which took place in Austria from the 15th to 17th March, united LAGs from Austria, Germany, Estonia and Finland. Also the UK national networking conference, held in Belfast on the 10th and 11th of March, provided an opportunity to disseminate findings about EN RD thematic activities to LAG delegates. An interesting [10 key thoughts on](#)

[Rural Development](http://ow.ly/1iqVa) (<http://ow.ly/1iqVa>) was also presented as food for thought to the UK audience of LAG and NRN partners.

## Young Farmers and RDPs

Members from the [European Council of Young Farmers](http://www.ceja.org/english/) (<http://www.ceja.org/english/>) met at a workshop in Hungary from the 11th-13th of March, to discuss young farmers' roles in implementing rural development policy. Examining a comprehensive range of topics, the event shared experiences from around the EU on issues such as young farmers' involvement with NRNs, LAGs, RDP communication strategies and Monitoring Committees. Much of the conference was dedicated to the role of young farmers' organisations in

the execution of national rural development programmes (RDPs) and some 18 different best practice case studies were presented from nine Member States. Overall conclusions from the conference reinforced the fact that Europe's young farmers represent essential stakeholders for the long term development of EU rural areas. [Read more](http://www.ceja.org/english/) <http://www.ceja.org/english/>

## Future Forestry Policy

A new Green Paper has launched a public debate on forestry issues with special attention focused on climate change influences. Released in March, the [Green Paper](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/forests/pdf/green_paper.pdf) ([http://ec.europa.eu/environment/forests/pdf/green\\_paper.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/forests/pdf/green_paper.pdf)) sets out options for an EU approach to forest protection, forest management and information on forests. "The goal is to ensure that EU forests can continue to perform all their social, economic and environmental functions in the future" said Janez Potočnik, European Commissioner for the Environment. [Participate in the public debate](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/consultations/forests_en.htm) ([http://ec.europa.eu/environment/consultations/forests\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/consultations/forests_en.htm)) (open until July 31st).

## More public Goods from EU farms

A recent report published for DG Agriculture and Rural Development entitled 'Provision of Public Goods through Agriculture in the European Union' identifies a wide range of diverse environmental and social public goods provided by European farmers. The study demonstrates that the European public places a high value on these public goods and yet the evidence suggests that they are not being provided on a sufficient scale. The CAP plays a critical role in helping farmers to deliver environmental goods and services, provided that policies are targeted in the right way. The study concludes that a well targeted policy, with clear objectives and sufficient budgetary resources, will be essential to ensuring the delivery of public goods in line with society's expectations. [Read more](http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/analysis/external/public-goods/index_en.htm) ([http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/analysis/external/public-goods/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/analysis/external/public-goods/index_en.htm))

## Promoting the Development of Green Infrastructure through Rural Development

In order to promote connectivity initiatives, the Commission has started to promote the concept of 'Green Infrastructure' development, aiming to show



that European habitats, species and landscapes are inter-dependent and cannot be sustained in isolation.



Emerging evidence is making it increasingly clear that more needs to be done to build an ecologically coherent 'green infrastructure' for Europe and this has implications for rural development stakeholders. The aim is to build on the foundations, already established through the Natura 2000 EU-

wide network of ecological sites that contain many of Europe's most valuable and threatened species and habitats. Despite the fact that the 'Natura 2000' network of sites is the largest of its kind in the world, covering 17% of EU territory, there is a clear lack of connectivity between many of these areas. Farmers, foresters and all other rural actors associated with Natura 2000 sites need to become more involved in actions that strengthen 'spatial connectivity' between existing nature areas in order to counter fragmentation and increase their ecological coherence. Such activity may include managing hedgerows, providing wildlife strips in fields, preserving small watercourses, creating 'green bridges', 'wildlife corridors' or 'stepping stones' between habitat patches.

Rural development stakeholders not only have a role to play, but much to gain from improvements in this area. Healthy ecosystems not only address the issue of loss of biodiversity across Europe, but many wider rural development priorities, including adaptation to climate change and the maintenance of ecosystem services such as clean water, productive soils and attractive recreational areas. This issue received much coverage as part of EU Green Week from June 1<sup>st</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup>. For further information click here: <http://ec.europa.eu/environment/greenweek/index.html>

## New Report on Rural Development statistics and economy

Recognising that information needs for rural development are constantly evolving, the European Commission's Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development has published a specific report which contains a comprehensive set of information on rural areas and the implementation of the EU's rural development policy.

The 'Rural Development in the European Union – Statistical and Economic Information Report 2009' provides statistical and economic information covering the three objectives of Rural Development policy 2007-2013, as well as an overview of the rural development budget and information on the financial monitoring of RD programmes in the EU-27 and candidate countries.

Although this information is available in a variety of sources, the report, for the first time, compiles all the information in a structured way, integrated in a single document. [http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/agrista/rurdev2009/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/agrista/rurdev2009/index_en.htm)

## SIBIU Conference Re-scheduled

The second seminar of the EN RD 'Semi-subsistence farming: current situation and future prospects', which was due to take place in Sibiu, Romania in April, but was cancelled due to flight disruptions across Europe, has been rescheduled. The conference will now take place in Sibiu on **13th to 15th October 2010**. Up to 150 participants are expected to attend the conference which will assess the current situation regarding policies directed at semi-subsistence farms in the EU-27.

## Rural Review Magazine Now Available!

The Fourth issue of EU Rural Review, the Magazine from the European Network for Rural Development, is now available on-line (English version; other versions to follow). The publication is devoted to the contribution of rural development policy in the fight against climate change. To download your copy [click here: http://enrd.ec.europa.eu/en-rd-library/en-rd-publications/periodicals/en/periodicals\\_home\\_en.cfm](http://enrd.ec.europa.eu/en-rd-library/en-rd-publications/periodicals/en/periodicals_home_en.cfm)



## Estonia



The most northerly of the three Baltic States, Estonia stretches 350 km from west to east and 240 km from north to south. Sea-islands form 10% of Estonia's territory, which covers an area of 45 000 km<sup>2</sup>. The country's population ranks among one of the smallest in the world, at just over 1.34

### Facts and figures about Estonia

- Capital City: Tallinn
- Year of entry to the EU: 2004
- Population: 1.3 million
- Total Area: 45,000 km<sup>2</sup>
- Farming Activities: cereals, cattle, pigs, poultry
- Main foods produced: cereals, dairy products, pig-meat, eggs

million. Approximately 33 % of these live in rural areas. [Find out more \(http://www.estonica.org/\)](http://www.estonica.org/)

### RDP Priority

*Estonia's RDP* (<http://www.agri.ee/?id=11291>) includes a total budget of €935 million. The main objective of the RDP is to improve the competitiveness of agricultural holdings and the agricultural processing industry. However, new elements of the RDP for 2010 also include,

promoting innovation, assisting joint activity between rural businesses and bodies, as well as investments in broadband Internet access.

Despite the current difficult economic climate for rural areas, by March 2010 some 40% of Estonia's RDP budget had already been approved for projects, and EAFRD expenditure rates exceeded 25%.

Some 26 Leader LAGs operate and these involve the vast majority of rural communities. Ave Bremse from the *Estonian NRN* (<http://www.maainfo.ee/index.php?page=3441>) explains that, "the Managing Authority decided to allocate €85.7 million for LAG development strategies. This demonstrates our relatively small country's big commitment to using Leader methodologies for implementing rural development policy."

Estonia's NRN focuses its support on adding value to the full spectrum of RDP measures and is based at the *Rural Economy Research Centre* (<http://www.maainfo.ee/index.php?page=3413&>), which is a state agency administered by the Ministry of Agriculture. Krista Kõiv works as the head of the department of Fisheries and Rural Network and highlights how the network's principles involve "facilitating flexible, open-minded and gradual development, with bottom-up initiatives based on needs, and developed through cooperative activity among rural actors." She continues "We publish a weekly e-newsletter and work closely with our partners in the network's Cooperation Chamber, as well as with other NRNs around Europe, during delivery

of our integrated support functions. These involve strengthening LAG capacities, encouraging transnational links and providing inputs to national rural policy. For instance, we are progressing thematic initiatives regarding joint marketing and youth involvement in rural development. Leader offers useful opportunities in both cases. We are also collecting and disseminating good practice information for our stakeholders via our website and through special events".

Reve Lambur works as an NRN development officer and explains that "a recent example of such events was the 'Rural Development Day' at Estonia's largest agricultural show - the Maamess Fair. Here, working together with DG Agri and the EN RD Contact Point, we organised a series of good RDP practice presentations for Maamess visitors". Showcased projects included a local food network, a trout fishery, NGO community development facilities and good practice in ostrich farming and a 'sustainable tourism group'.

## Sustainable Tourism Network

Sirje Kuusik is the chairperson of the sustainable tourism network 'Genuine Experiences in Lahemaa' and has extensive experience applying and managing different EU co-financed projects (Phare, Interreg, Leader etc.). Following the success of her family's nature farm at Kuusiku, where they provide B&B with local and 'eco-food'

breakfasts, nature guide services etc. ([www.kuusikunaturefarm.ee](http://www.kuusikunaturefarm.ee)), Sirje started a network with 18 members (one private museum and 17 different family based tourism farms in Lahemaa region). According to Sirje 'Joint development projects are important as a micro rural tourism entrepreneur can't achieve the results they want by working alone. Thanks to our first joint project we have a joint homepage for the network ([www.ehedad.ee](http://www.ehedad.ee)) which we hope to develop with our second project'.

The network has already applied for two Leader co-operation measure projects through the LAG Arenduskoda NGO and is preparing an international Leader project - 'Loving Local Products' - focusing on local food and handcrafts, with 2 LAGs from Finland's Kymenlaakso country. Sirje says "Our experience has shown that networking has helped our members to reach their sustainable development aims faster, as well as finding additional SME support resources".

READ MORE [www.ehedad.ee](http://www.ehedad.ee)



FIND OUT MORE

## WHERE TO FIND OUT MORE

European Network for Rural Development:  
<http://enrd.ec.europa.eu>

EU Rural Development policy 2007-13:  
[http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/rurdev/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/rurdev/index_en.htm)

Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development:  
[http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/index_en.htm)

The European Evaluation Network:  
[http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/rurdev/eval/network/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/rurdev/eval/network/index_en.htm)

## RUR@L NEWS Contributions/Events

Don't forget to keep us informed by telling us about what you are doing in rural development in your area. Please send the comments to: [newsletter@enrd.eu](mailto:newsletter@enrd.eu)

## Subscriptions

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