

# Added Value of Networking

## Success Story

Success Story title	<i>Communicating Rural Development to Citizens – Successful experiences</i>		
Theme	<i>Network communications, Knowledge exchange</i>		
NRN	<i>Italy</i>	Coordinator	<i>“Communication &amp; Events” Thematic Group</i>
Partners	<i>European Network for Rural Development, Lombardy Region, Italian Regions</i>		
Period	<i>November 17-18, 2011</i>	Resources	<i>About 200,000 Euro</i>
Geo-location	<i>The international conference was held at Palazzo Lombardia, Lombardy regional government’s new seat (Milan)</i>		
Beneficiaries	<i>Carrying out a proper and well-structured communication action means contributing to the effective implementation of the Rural Development Program (RDP) by involving rural and non-rural stakeholders. In this way citizens are allowed to control how public funds are being spent and whether they produce benefits to our society.</i>		

### Background

*The initiative on communicating the targets and results achieved by EU co-financed agricultural policies to citizens has been unique in its genre for at least three reasons: firstly, the purpose of communicating the key role played by the agricultural sector to the public opinion has fit in with the symbolic framework of the historical celebration that is taking place at European level (50th Anniversary of the CAP). In this experience, agriculture laid the foundations for the social and economic unification of the rising EEC. Secondly, looking at present, such an event took place in a crucial phase of the European agriculture future, a phase where a new reform process was being launched: the CAP post-2013. For this reason, communicating purposes and strategies is considered essential as well as explaining to the general public in what way EU public funds, de facto also financed by every single taxpayer, are being spent in favour of farmers and rural areas. The third and last reason is that this initiative, promoted by the NRN and the Region of Lombardy, has involved the European Commission and the European Network for Rural Development thus enhancing the exchange of experiences among all 27 Member States.*

### Main activities

*Many of the Italian and European excellences were able to share experiences, identify the instruments and exchange good practices, as well as explore new and innovative contexts such as the fascinating world of the new media and digital information.*

- *On the occasion of the event, the NRN magazine “Communicating Rural Development to Citizens” was distributed. This magazine is a collection of the best communication experiences of the NRN and Italian Regions.*
- *An impressive ‘outdoor’ multimedia exhibition, which was held in Piazza Città di Lombardia, showcased a dazzling selection of communication tools and campaigns on EU rural development.*



### Main results/benefits

*Over 230 people attended the international conference on 'Communicating Rural Development to Citizens'. A growth-promoting effect on information campaigns which have reached their own scheduled targets by using new and innovative tools as well, such as web communication, social network, cross media and viral marketing, was given. "Communicating Rural development to citizens" has increased the synergy between NRN and stakeholders. This initiative has encouraged de facto the setting up of a new standing network aimed at disseminating knowledge and information concerning the primary sector.*

### Contribution of the NSU

*There were many different steps involved in the above mentioned project, starting from gathering effective communication material both at national and international level up to presenting this material during the related event organized in Milan, 17-18 November 2011.*

### Contribution of the partners

*The ENRD gathered the most effective communication experiences at EU level, while the Region of Lombardy offered the location. The Italian regions participated in the event by sending communication material and providing information on RDPs.*

*Thanks to their contribution, the best communication experiences could be identified, collected and published in the Italian NRN magazine. These successful experiences were also showed in the 360° showroom. All the communication material on RDPs sent by the Italian Regions and Member States is also available on the website.*

### Success factors

*The main success factor was to create a network of communications experts across the NRNs. The initiative has raised awareness and disseminated information on the rural development model, leaving behind the technical language used by the "insiders" to become the common heritage of all European citizens.*

### Additional information

*The Member States and Italian Regions' presentations as well as all the printed and audio-visual material (IT/EN), together with the NRN-Italy magazine (IT/EN), are available under the sections "Presentations" and "Resources":*  
<http://www.reterurale.it/Communication>

*Photo gallery: <https://picasaweb.google.com/reterurale/EventoComunicazioneMilano>*

