

## PROGRAMMING PERIOD 2007-2013

### ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLEMENTATION PROCEDURE OF TRANSNATIONAL COOPERATION (TNC) UNDER LEADER AXIS

#### SECTION A: COUNTRY SPECIFIC DETAILS

1. Name of the programme:

Rural Development Programme for Mainland Finland

2. Number of Local Action Groups (LAGs):

55

3. Axes covered by LAGs:

LAGs cover 12 measures over Axis 1, 2 and 3. They define the axes and measures applied for their territory in their local rural development plans:

Axis 1 – Measures 111, 123, 124

Axis 2 – Measures 214, 216

Axis 3 – all measures implemented under axis 3 of this programme: 311, 312, 313, 321, 322, 323, 331

4. Axes covered by Transnational Cooperation (TNC) projects:

Axis 1-4

5. Total RDP budget for all the four axes (including EU+ public+ private expenditure):

EUR 7,817,764,215

Total budget for Leader axis:

EUR 370,329,889

Of which:

a. EU Funding: EUR 111,100,000

b. Public funding: EUR 134,788,889

c. Private funding: EUR 123,441,000

## SECTION B: PROGRAMMING AND IMPLEMENTATION OF TRANSNATIONAL COOPERATION PROJECTS

### 1. FINANCIAL ASPECTS

<p>Budget for TNC projects</p> <p>(Total public funding: EU + public)</p>	<p>The total budget allocated for measure 421 is EUR 24,000,000 (the total budget including private funding is EUR 30,000,000). This is 9.72% of the axis 4 public funding and 0.36% of the total public RDP budget. This amount includes funding both for inter-territorial and transnational cooperation; there is no pre-division of this funding between the two types of cooperation.</p> <p>The budget per LAG differs and depends on local plans, the activities of the LAG and their needs. It can be within a range of a minimum of EUR 5,000 (public funding) and a maximum of EUR 150,000 (public funding). If several Finnish LAGs participate in the same project their maximum budget may reach a cumulative total (and not per LAG) of EUR 150,000.</p>
<p>Responsibility for the management of the Budget (MAs or LAGs)</p>	<p>The Managing Authority (MA) grants a financial framework for cooperation projects to each LAG annually. The LAG then allocates a budget to each project it decides to support.</p>
<p>Special budget for the preparatory technical support of TNC projects</p>	<p>A special budget for the preparation of TNC project has not been foreseen. Preparatory projects for TNC are treated in the same way as regular TNC projects, i.e. there is no specific quota foreseen as part of the TNC budget.</p>

### 2. PROGRAMMING ASPECTS

<p>Local Development Strategies and TNC</p>	<p>LAGs do not have to specify their TNC project ideas in their Local Development Strategies (LDS). It is always possible for LAGs to apply for a TNC project, even if it has not been included in the LDS.</p>
<p>Way of selecting cooperation projects</p>	<p>The local plan of LAGs includes the selection criteria and selection procedures for cooperation projects. After applicants have submitted their applications to the LAG, the board of the LAG processes the applications and gives its statement on them. The main criterion for selecting the projects to be funded is how well they meet the conditions of the LDS drawn up by the LAG, the Leader principle and the RDP. Once the LAG's Board has decided which projects are to obtain funding, the <b>ELY Centre</b><sup>1</sup> issues the official approval and checks the administrative compliance of the project.</p>
<p>Main topics of TNC proposed for the 2007-2013 programming period</p>	<p>LAGs did not have to specify their project ideas in their LDS and consequently the main themes proposed cannot be indicated.</p>
<p>Cooperation with third countries</p>	<p>Eligible third countries: Territories connected with the work of the European Community and which are represented by local actors similar to those in charge of Leader activities in EU MS.</p>
<p>Maximum/minimum number of TNC projects per LAG</p>	<p>-</p>

### 3.COMMON PROVISIONS FOR TNC PROJECT APPROVAL

Information about procedures of approval and implementation of TNC projects	Full procedures for approval and implementation of TNC projects have already been developed. A summary presentation is available at <a href="http://www.maaseutu.fi/attachments/newfolder_25/5sDjYe75D/KV_esityys_Sari_Parviainen.pdf">http://www.maaseutu.fi/attachments/newfolder_25/5sDjYe75D/KV_esityys_Sari_Parviainen.pdf</a> (in Finnish; English translation is under preparation and will be made available via <a href="http://www.rural.fi">www.rural.fi</a> ).
Eligibility criteria for cooperation projects	<p>The eligibility criteria are the same as for local projects under the LEADER measures.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Actions of applicants originating from the territory of several action groups will be financed.</li> <li>• The actions to be financed shall be consistent with the strategy of the local rural development plan and the actions shall support the objectives of programme axes 1–4.</li> <li>• In addition, at least one partner must originate from another EU member state MS and/ or in a third country. In the case of third country participation, only so-called “leader-like” applicants can become partners .</li> <li>• At least one partner should receive funding under axis 4, from another RDP within the EU.</li> </ul>
Selection criteria for cooperation projects	Selection criteria and procedures for TNC projects are defined in the development strategy of each LAG. Based on these, the selection of projects is carried out by the board of the LAG. The projects also have to be consistent with the Rural Development Programme, both axis 4 and the respective measure of axis 1 or 3 to which the project belongs.
Eligible activities of measure 421 Cooperation	<p>Eligible project activities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• International projects exchanging information on rural development, including environmental management, improving the living conditions of young people or developing the rural economy;</li> <li>• Entrepreneurs of two Leader areas exchanging information and skills;</li> <li>• Entrepreneurs of two Leader areas planning joint marketing;</li> <li>• Development projects preparing for international projects and looking for international partners; and</li> <li>• Projects facilitating the work of international rural actors and coordinators.</li> </ul> <p>Actions financed should have the objective of finding new ideas and solutions to problems encountered when developing the territory of the LAG. They should establish new and innovative cooperation activities between rural areas, as well as increase the international skills and competences of rural people and entrepreneurs.</p>
Typical examples of eligible costs for TNC projects	The eligibility of costs for all types of projects is defined in the Finnish national legislation. The same rules apply also to TNC projects. In addition, the national legislation includes specific rules regarding eligibility of travelling and catering costs for transnational projects.
Specific documents concerning the cooperation partners required from LAGs	The lead LAG needs to establish an agreement between all project partners. No additional documents are required beyond those mentioned in the Guide for the implementation of the measure Cooperation under the Leader axis of rural development programmes 2007-2013 (RD12/10/2008 rev. 3).



The approval process of TNC applications

For cooperation projects, LAGs decide whether to carry out a continuous or periodical application process (at least one open application process every year).

Once the LAG's board has decided about the projects to be funded, the regional administration (ELY Centre) checks the administrative compliance of the project and officially approves it. Theoretically, it is possible for LAGs to send applications at any time to the ELY Centre. The regional authority then feeds the information about the project and its approval in the programme database. The Managing Authority informs the Commission via SFC about the approval of the TNC project.

There is no specified maximum time limit for the duration of the application/approval process.

### List of abbreviations:

- EU: European Union
- LAG: Local Action Group
- LDS: Local Development Strategy
- MA: Managing Authority
- MS: Member State
- PA: Paying Authority
- TNC: Transnational Cooperation
- RDP: Rural Development Programme