

## 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 Lithuania 2007–2013

2. Number of Local Action Groups (LAGs):

51

3. Axes covered by LAGs:

All four measures implemented under axis 3 of the RDP: 311, 312, 313 and 322.

4. Axes and measures covered by TNC projects:

Axes 3 and 4.

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

2,260,194,625 EUR (7,804,000,000 LTL)

Total budget for axis 4:

136,990,000 EUR (472,999,072 LTL)

Of which:

- a. EU Funding: 109,529,000 EUR (378,399,258 LTL)
- b. Public funding: 27,398,000 EUR (94,599,814 LTL)
- c. Private funding: 17,397,730 EUR (60,070,882 LTL)

## 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 public budget allocated for the implementation of axis 4 measure 421 of the RDP is 4,170,000 EUR (14,398,176 LTL). This contains 3,04% of the public budget allocated for the implementation of all axis 4 measures and 0,18% of the total public budget allocated for the implementation of RDP. The amount includes funding both for inter-territorial and transnational cooperation projects; no pre-division of funding has been made between the two types of cooperation.</p> <p>The financial support for cooperation projects is allocated according to the principle of the common financial purse, designed for each LAG, which amounts to 52,803 EUR (181,317 LTL). It may be used by each LAG for the initiation of the cooperation project (if the Lithuanian LAG acts as the coordinator of the project) or just for the participation in the cooperation project.</p> <p>The minimum amount of support allocated for each LAG per project shall not be less than 5,792 EUR (20,000 LTL), however the total amount of the support per TNC project depends on the number of partners – it expands with each partner by 5,792 EUR (20,000 LTL). The maximum amount of support per TNC project shall not exceed 52,803 EUR (181,317 LTL).</p>
<p>Responsibility for the management of the Budget (MAs or LAGs)</p>	<p>The MA grants the common financial purse, designed for each LAG, which amounts to 52,803 EUR (181,317 LTL). It maybe used during the programming period (2007–2013) for the implementation of cooperation projects. Then, according to the financial purse granted, each LAG allocates a budget to each cooperation 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 projects is foreseen. The preparatory support may cover up to 100% of the total eligible expenditures of the project, however the maximum amount of the preparatory support per project shall not exceed 4,344 EUR (15,000 LTL).</p> <p>The main requirement for the preparatory support – the applicant should start the implementation of the preparatory project within 3 months after the support agreement has been signed, otherwise the support funds should be returned.</p> <p>Other requirements concerning the application for preparatory support are settled in the measure's implementation rules.</p>

### 2. PROGRAMMING ASPECTS

<p>Local Development Strategies and TNC</p>	<p>LAGs do not have to specify in their LDS their project ideas in relation to TNC. However, LAGs may voluntarily decide to specify in the LDS the concrete partners or cooperation projects they are sure to implement during the programming period. This would be considered as an advantage during the evaluation of the LDS prepared, in terms of the preparedness of the LAG to implement cooperation projects (during the LDS's evaluation process more points could be scored).</p> <p>Each LAG may apply for preparatory support even without knowing concrete partners or project ideas yet. However, when applying for support for the implementation of cooperation projects, all partners and the concrete project idea should be known.</p>
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Way of selecting cooperation projects	<p>TNC project ideas should be discussed and the projects selected within each LAG. Thereafter, TNC projects should undergo additional evaluation by the National Paying Agency under the Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Lithuania, followed by confirmation by the Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Lithuania. Only after completion of these procedures the coordinator of the TNC project and the project partners have the right to start implementing the TNC project.</p> <p>Extremely important: Each LAG may prepare several cooperation projects at the same time. However, they should be implemented in sequence (one by one).</p>
Main topics of TNC proposed for the 2007-2013 programming period	LAGs do not have to specify their cooperation project ideas in their LDSs. Consequently, the main themes proposed for TNC projects cannot be indicated. However, the cooperation projects implemented by LAGs should correspond to the aims of the axis 3 measures of the RDP.
Cooperation with third countries	The cooperation with partners from third countries is eligible, provided the third territories in question are connected with the work of the European Community and their local actors are similar to LAGs active within the territories of the EU Member States.
Maximum/minimum number of TNC projects per LAG	According to verbal contract each LAG should implement at least one inter-territorial cooperation projects and at least one transnational cooperation project (at the moment not all Lithuanian LAGs have envisaged transnational cooperation projects).

### 3. COMMON PROVISIONS FOR TNC PROJECT APPROVAL

Information about procedures of approval and implementation of TNC projects	<p>Full procedures governing the approval and implementation of TNC projects have been developed. They are available through the website of the Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Lithuania:</p> <p><a href="http://www.zum.lt/lt/zemes-ukio-ministerija/kaimo-pletra/parama-pagal-2007-2013-m--programos-priemones/parama-pagal-2007---2013-metu-kpp-priemones/tarptorinis-ir-tarptautinis-bendradarbiavimas/">http://www.zum.lt/lt/zemes-ukio-ministerija/kaimo-pletra/parama-pagal-2007-2013-m--programos-priemones/parama-pagal-2007---2013-metu-kpp-priemones/tarptorinis-ir-tarptautinis-bendradarbiavimas/</a></p>
Eligibility criteria for cooperation projects	<p>The eligibility criteria for TNC projects partially agree with those established for the implementation of local projects implemented according to the <i>LEADER</i> method:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Actions of applicants originating from the territories of the several LAGs will be financed;</li> <li>• Actions to be financed shall be consistent with the LDS and the projects should correspond to the aims of the axis 3 measures of the RDP;</li> <li>• TNC projects should be implemented with partners, of which at least one should originate from another EU Member State and (or) from a third country. Only those local actors (partners) from third countries' territories may be involved in TNC projects, which represent a structure similar to LAGs active in the territories of the EU Member States;</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	Each LAG should decide by itself if it plans to implement one or several TNC projects. Thereafter, all TNC projects should undergo additional evaluation by the National Paying Agency under the Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Lithuania, followed by confirmation by the Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Lithuania. All TNC projects should fulfil the provisions of the Axis 4 "Implementation of LEADER method" and the aims of the Axis III measures of the RDP.

<p>Eligible activities of measure 421 Cooperation</p>	<p>Eligible activities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• International projects exchanging information on rural development, including environmental management, improving living conditions of young people or developing the rural economy;</li> <li>• Entrepreneurs of two LEADER (LAGs) areas exchange information and skills;</li> <li>• Entrepreneurs of two LEADER (LAGs) areas plan joint marketing;</li> <li>• TNC investment projects, initiated by two or more sides, corresponding to the aims of the Axis 3 measures of the RDP (e.g. the establishment of tourist routes, the production of national heritage products and information exchange, related to national or regional traditions);</li> <li>• The creation of common organisational structures.</li> </ul> <p>Actions should have the objective to establish new ideas and solutions to problems encountered in developing the territory of LAGs. Furthermore, concrete actions should be envisaged in order to reach an appreciable result. Throughout the life of the TNC project the establishment of new and innovative cooperation activities between rural areas should be encouraged. International skills, competences and the adaptability of rural people and entrepreneurs should be increased.</p>
<p>Typical examples of eligible costs for TNC projects</p>	<p>Eligible costs for TNC projects and the requirements to be applied are still under consideration. However, the main eligible costs are envisaged in the RDP and in the administration rules of the RDP measures, which are common for all applicants under all measures of RDP:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preliminary types of common costs (eligible expenditures) for the preparatory stage are envisaged:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Expenditure for project implementation: preparation of a study, consulting, travelling and lodging, telecommunications and postal services, translation services, the preparation and signing of partnership agreements, etc (for Lithuanian LAGs);</li> <li>» Publicity arrangements of the project (for Lithuanian LAGs);</li> <li>» Obligatory publicity arrangements of foreign partners should be settled by the respective managing authority.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Preliminary types of common costs (eligible expenditures) for the project implementation stage are envisaged:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Coordination expenditure: implementation of the coordination functions – monitoring, control, supervision of the implementation processes, the presentation of the intermediate results to the partners or the managing authority etc, travelling and lodging, telecommunications and postal services, translation services, office expenses, etc (for Lithuanian LAGs);</li> <li>» Publicity arrangements of the project (for Lithuanian LAGs);</li> <li>» Expenditure for the implementation of common actions: rent of accommodation or a place, the purchase of services, equipment, the purchase or rent of machinery including computer hardware and software, travelling and lodging (according to the project's specification, etc (for Lithuanian LAGs), or</li> <li>» Expenditure for the action and operation of a newly established common organisational structure (legal person): costs of the establishment and registration of a new common legal personality, rent of accommodation or a place and of public utilities, rent of machinery, office equipment, including computer hardware and software, purchase of services and equipment, telecommunications and postal services, office expenses, etc (for Lithuanian LAGs);</li> <li>» Expenditure shall not be considered eligible if incurred outside EU territory, except expenditure for the coordination of the project and for public arrangements.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>All expenditure should be directly connected with the TNC project and necessary for the achievement of the aims of the project.</p>



Specific documents concerning the cooperation partners required from LAGs	The leading LAG should submit a cooperation agreement between all partners of the TNC project, underpinned by documentation of the partners' legal background (a registration certificate or similar).
The approval process of TNC applications	<p>A continuous application process is envisaged for TNC project submissions. The main stages of the application process are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The evaluation if applications for support fulfill the criteria of administrative compliance (within 10 working days);</li> <li>2. The examination if the application for support is eligible (within 45 working days). The duration of the examination of applications shall not include the time lapsing while enquiries are made to the applicant;</li> <li>3. The confirmation of the decision within the Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Lithuania (organised according to demand);</li> <li>4. The confirmation of the decision approved by the order of the Minister of Agriculture of the Republic of Lithuania (within 5 working days from the confirmation of the decision within the Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Lithuania);</li> <li>5. Furthermore, TNC projects should be implemented according to the terms and stages envisaged by the coordinating LAG. These may be adjusted according actual implementation conditions of the TNC project in question (e.g. delays incurred during different stages of project implementation).</li> </ol>

### 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