

PROGRAMMING PERIOD 2007-2013

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

SECTION A: COUNTRY SPECIFIC DETAILS

1. Name of the programme:

National Rural Development Programme 2007-2013, Romania

2. Number of Local Action Groups (LAGs):

Nowadays, there are 81 LAG approved. Actually the Management Authority is evaluating new local development strategies and around 40 up to 60 new local action groups are expected to be approved until the end of 2012 (within the second selection process).

3. Axes covered by LAGs:

All RDP axes will be covered:
Axis 1- 111, 112, 121, 122, 123, 125, 141, 142, 143
Axis 2- 211, 212, 214, 221
Axis 3- 312, 313, 322

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

LAGs may engage in TNC projects under all the measures of the RDP, according to the cooperation needs that they have identified at their approved strategy

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

EUR 13,439,342,326

6. Total budget for Leader axis:

EUR 588,333,022.00
Of which:

- | | |
|---------------------|--------------------|
| a. EU Funding: | EUR 346,590,603.00 |
| b. Public funding: | EUR 86,647,651.00 |
| c. Private funding: | EUR 155,094,768.00 |

SECTION B: PROGRAMMING AND IMPLEMENTATION OF TRANSNATIONAL COOPERATION PROJECTS

1. FINANCIAL ASPECTS

<p>Budget for TNC projects (Total public funding: EU + public)</p>	<p>The total budget allocated for measure 421 is EUR 4,701,496 (the total budget -including private funding- is EUR 5,498,826). This is 2% of the axis 4 public funding and 0.047% 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>No limitation will be imposed on LAGs in respect of the budget allocated for cooperation. Each LAG will elaborate its strategy taking into account its own budgetary needs for TNC (within the available total public funding for LAGs of max. EUR 2,856,792).</p> <p>The value of a project must respect / not exceed the maximum financial allocation established: EUR 200,000 public co-financing and EUR 400,000 total value of the investment.</p>
<p>Responsibility for the management of the Budget (MAs or LAGs)</p>	<p>The budget will be managed by the LAGs, but the Managing Authority and the Paying Agency for Agriculture and Rural Development will monitor all the activities implemented by the LAGs.</p>
<p>Special budget for the preparatory technical support of TNC projects</p>	<p>A budget is made available for the preparation phase of TNC projects. The specific budget allocation is communicated once it has been established.</p>

2. PROGRAMMING ASPECTS

<p>Local Development Strategies and TNC</p>	<p>LAGs do not have to specify in their Local Development Strategies (LDS) their project ideas in relation to TNC. 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>Cooperation projects will be selected by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The LAGs, if their development strategy includes cooperation actions. In this case, the eligibility and selection criteria will be set and applied by the LAG, as included in the LDS. • The Managing Authority for those LAGs, which have not included these actions in the LDS. In this case, the selection criteria will be set by the Managing Authority. <p>The selection and approval of cooperation projects shall be performed in the same way as for other projects, i.e. by a Selection Committee organised either within the LAG or within the Managing Authority.</p> <p>If the selection of cooperation projects is carried out by the LAG, the responsibility for establishing the selection calendar lies also with the LAG. Otherwise, the selection of the cooperation projects will be performed twice every year within the Managing Authority, in principle during the first and the last semester of the year, so that the selection of the last project takes place before 31 December 2013.</p>
<p>Main topics of TNC proposed for the 2007-2013 programming period</p>	<p>The main topics identified to the date by those LAG that have included cooperation into their strategies are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local products enhancement. • Integration of environmental aspects into local diversification activities. • Traditional culture and heritage preservation. • Local producers integration. • Integrated promotion of local territories and products. • Enhancing local management capabilities. • Transnational best practices identification and adaptation to the Romanian domain.

Cooperation with third countries	There will be no restrictions regarding cooperation with third countries.
Maximum/minimum number of TNC projects per LAG	There will be no restrictions concerning the total number of TNC projects. It is not mandatory for LAGs to include cooperation projects in their strategies, but if they choose to do so, neither minimum or maximum numbers of projects are foreseen.

3.COMMON PROVISIONS FOR TNC PROJECT APPROVAL

Information about procedures of approval and implementation of TNC projects	<p>Each LAG is going to elaborate its own TNC-specific selection procedure. The basic principles regarding the approval and implementation of TNC projects are available in the technical fiche of measure 421 of the RDP which can be obtained from the Ministry's website at:</p> <p>http://www.mapam.ro/pages/page.php?self=03&sub=0302&tz=030202</p>
Eligibility criteria for cooperation projects	<p>In accordance with the technical fiche of measure 421 cooperation activities are eligible if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the partnerships are LAGs or organized in accordance with the LEADER approach • the projects will be drawn up and implemented in common • the coordinator is a LAG financed under the LEADER Axis • the activities / projects will correspond to one or several measures of the EAFRD; • the value of the project (the requested amount) respects / does not exceed the maximum financial allocation established (200,000 Euro public co-financing and 400,000 Euro the total value of the investment).
Selection criteria for cooperation projects	<p>In case the LAG's LDS includes cooperation actions, the eligibility and selection criteria - which have to be in accordance with the priorities of the LDS – will be set and applied by the LAG, and included in the LDS. For other LAGs, which have not included these actions, the selection criteria will be set by the Managing Authority. In general, priority will be given to cooperation projects which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • are in line with the objectives of the strategy of the LAG; • have a pilot character; • involve more than two Romanian LAGs; • involve a LAG from another Member State with LEADER + experience; • include innovation; • combine the objectives of different axes from the RDP; • address semi-subsistence farmers; • address young people in rural areas; • integrate environmental concerns; • aim at facilitating the implementation of those measures of the RDP which benefit the producers groups, associations, partnerships, etc. <p>The list above is not necessarily exhaustive. The Managing Authority and the Local Action Groups may improve the criteria mentioned above or introduce new selection criteria.</p>
Eligible activities of measure 421 Cooperation	<p>To obtain financing actions must comprise concrete common activities going beyond intentions and/ot the mere exchange of experience and good practices of local development; e.g. through: common publications, organisation of events, twinning projects (exchange of programme managers and staff) or through common or joint coordinated development work.</p>

<p>Typical examples of eligible costs for TNC projects</p>	<p>The main eligible expenditures are the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expenditure related to the preparation of cooperation projects – organisation of technical missions, meetings, workshops, translation and interpretation activities, multiplication of documents; • Investment expenditures related to the implementation of common projects; • Expenditure related to common training projects. <p>Non-eligible expenditure includes the mere exchange of experience, which is not materialized by a common action (because it can be financed by the national network of rural development). Expenses related to the territories outside EU are also non-eligible expenditures.</p>
<p>Specific documents concerning the cooperation partners required from LAGs</p> <p>The approval process of TNC applications</p>	<p>At this moment, no documents are needed in addition to 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). However, once TNC activities will be launched in Romania, there is a possibility that additional documentation will be requested.</p> <p>TNC projects are selected either by the LAG or by the MA:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The LAGs are going to launch calls for proposals in accordance with their own LDS. During the first phase the LAG selects the project proposals. Proposals preliminary selected by the LAG are submitted to the Payment Regional Centre for Rural Development and Fisheries (PRCRDF). The PRCRDF checks the eligibility of projects, then sends a notification to the beneficiary and to the LAG regarding the approval or rejection of the project. The LAG may send the application to the MA (PRCRDF) for approval at any time. Applications will not be subject to any fixed periods for the submission of applications. • The MA is going to launch calls for proposals twice a year for those LAGs, which have not included TNC in their LDS, during the first and the second semester. TNC project selection will close by the end of 2013. <p>There is no maximum time limit specified yet for the duration of the application/approval procedure. A maximum delay for the approval by the Member States' authorities of the TNC partners has not been set yet.</p>

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
PRCRDF:	Payment Regional Centre for Rural Development and Fisheries