

LEADER 'special envelopes' for public co-financing – France *Florence Balké, Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Forestry*

1. Who developed the tool?

Two local authorities, a Regional Council and sub-regional Council, were the institutional partners working with LAGs in their regions.

2. What does the tool do?

The mechanism was needed to manage the lack or absence of public co-financing needed to unlock LEADER funding. The goal was to fully optimise the opportunities available through LEADER. This was generally required for:

- private project managers and associations,
- innovative projects that did not fit within the remit of traditional funding sources.

3. What does the tool do?

The LEADER special envelope from the Alsatian Regional Council provides:

- A subsidy for the four Alsatian LAGs in the form of an endowment,
- €50 000 is paid to the LAGs supporting structure in two tranches - €25 000 and a further €25 000 once the first installment has been used,

- Allocation of the credit is then agreed by the LAGs during meetings of their Boards, taking into account the normal conditions and regulations when allocating LEADER funds.

The LEADER special envelope of the Haut-Rhin sub-regional Council:

- € 50 000 was set aside for each of the two Haut-Rhin LAGs,
- The system works like a traditional grant with the grant application receiving technical support and then being reviewed by a Committee to the sub-regional Council rather than the LAG.

4. What was the main impact on the financing of LEADER and on which level was this impact achieved?

The use of special envelopes for the LEADER Programme enables:

- More projects to access LEADER funding, particularly:
 - Private project managers and associations
 - Innovative projects that do not fit within the remit of traditional funders
- Optimisation of project financing - unlocking the maximum LEADER funding

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- Simplification of the procedures for the LEADER special envelope of the Regional Council

5. What was needed to be able to design and implement the tool?

A system needed to be put in place to request loans from the public funders and a contract was developed for the management of these credits by projects managers.

6. What are the lessons learnt and relevance for LEADER 2014-2020?

The main lessons learnt were that these mechanisms provided:

- Very strong efficiency as there were less problems finding co-financers
- Greater and more diverse use of the resources available

These mechanisms will be utilised again through the 2014-2020 RDP.

7. Contact details for further information

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