

Name of Rural Network

Rede Rural Nacional



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Mission Statement and Strategic Objectives of the Rural Network

- The network main objectives is to promote the dissemination and sharing of information, experience and knowledge, as well as promoting cooperation and partnership working between rural development agents at local, regional and European level in order to improve their performance, achieve better results and fostering relationships among members of the network.
- The network's specific objectives include:
 - AI1 - Capitalizing experience and knowledge: transfer to rural development agents best practices and new knowledge;
 - AI2 - Facilitating Leader cooperation: encourage cooperation practices between agents and between territories around objectives of rural development;
 - AI3 - Monitoring the rural world and the implementation of rural development policies: adapt the strategy and policy development needs and potential rural development;
 - AI 4 - Facilitating information access: provide relevant information to those involved in the rural development.

Participants in the Rural Network

- The network is characterized by a formal membership. Members have to apply to NSU according to a pre-defined procedure established in these documents:
 - Proceedings: http://www.rederural.pt/images/stories/zira/procedimentos%20para%20membro%20rrn_final.pdf;
 - Application form: http://www.rederural.pt/images/stories/membros/ficha_membro_2011.doc.
- The membership is open to both public sector and stakeholder organizations. The following is a list of NRN members' categories:
 - Central Government (23)
 - Regional Directors (19)
 - Local Government (20)
 - Teaching and research (19)
 - LAG (53)
 - Development Associations (24)
 - Agricultural Associations (56)
 - Forest Associations (29)
 - Irrigators associations (4)
 - Socio-professional associations (2)
 - Associations environment (3)
 - Tourism Associations (6)
 - Enterprise Associations (4)
 - Socio-cultural associations (9)

- Cooperatives (26)
 - Federations (20)
 - NGOs (4)
 - Foundations (3)
- The membership is not open to individuals.
 - On the NRN-Programme it was indicated that a certain group or typology of members might integrate the network in order to cover the different themes connected to a supported rural network: planning and policies, agriculture, forestry, environment and nature conservation, management and spatial planning, research, payment authorities).
 - The NRN is open to the participation of any non-profit rural development agents, public or private, who formalizes their intention integrate the RRN.
 - The NRN operates based on four bodies which are: The National Coordinator of the Rural Network (NCRN); Technical Organisation unit (TOU); Coordinating Council (CC) and Rural Assemblies (RA).
 - The TOU comprises the NSU and seven "focal points" at each Regional Directorate (5 in mainland) or Secretariat for Agriculture (2 in the islands of Madeira and Azores).
 - The NRN activities is based on four priorities:
 - Capitalizing experience and knowledge;
 - Facilitating Leader cooperation;
 - Monitoring the rural world and the implementation of rural development policies;
 - Facilitating information access.
 - NSU Staff include:
 - 1 coordinator
 - 1 assistant/secretary
 - 8 Technicians

Network Structure

- The Network Support Unit (NSU) is not outsourced and it is not established within the Managing Authority. It is delegated to the Ministry of Agriculture, Sea, Environment and Spatial Planning.
- The network includes 7 regional NSUs.

Network Management

- The process of the preparation and approval of the AWP is involved in a formal decision-making process. The NRN members, in a rural assembly, choose the priorities to develop initiatives in the next year. Then the NSU regional focal point receives that information and communicates it to the central NSU that prepares the AWP and, after hearing the Coordination Committee, sends it to MA to approval. In the following year, MA opens callings so that members present applications to projects that are framed in those priorities. In the end of the year, MA promotes annual monitoring and evaluation (execution reports) which gives feedback to NSU about the choices made the previous year and can help the members to adjust the priorities in the rural assemblies.
- The large number of applications in the first callings originated budget constraints and overbooking, and the cycle of decision-making process was modified and simplified. Actually, now the members are executing and finishing their projects, new applications periods are not planned for the moment and there is no need to change the priorities. NSU regional focal points consult members about the continuing of the priorities adopted and central NSU elaborates the AWP in accordance.
- Less formal decision-making processes are involved in the rest of relationships with members when they need to discuss some issue about their specific activities.
- Every issue related to payments and monitoring and evaluation are more formal and depend exclusively from MA.

Network Budget for the period 2007–13

Network budget		Budget breakdown	
	€		€
Total network funds (Public Cost)	11.729.774	Total Network funds (Public Costs)	11.729.774
National co-finance	2.392.227	Work plan resources	9.053.512
EAFRD	9.335.547	Network running costs	2.676.262
EAFRD Co-financing %	80 %	Others (if appropriate)	/

- The NRN Programme (PT vers) can be found here: <http://prn.proder.pt/index.php/content/download/270/1605/file/Programa%20para%20a%20Rede%20Rural%20Nacional.pdf>