



Published on *The European Network for Rural Development (ENRD)* (<https://enrd.ec.europa.eu>)

ENRD Newsletter - November 2015

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Latest edition of 'Rural Connections' now online

The Autumn 2015 edition of the ENRD networking magazine 'Rural Connections' is now available on the [website](#).

As well as the latest rural development news and updates from Europe, this edition brings you stakeholder perspectives on issues ranging from rural broadband to rural culture and from agricultural cooperation to remote islands' opportunities. The thematic section presents four national approaches to 'Communicating the RDN'.

If you wish to receive paper copies of future editions, please write to enrd@ec.europa.eu. See previous editions in the publications section of the ENRD website.

Please send suggestions for topics and articles to enrd@ec.europa.eu.



Call for Thematic Group members

The ENRD Contact Point is looking for individuals interested in participating in and contributing to its thematic work on "Smart and competitive rural areas" and "Promoting the transition to a green economy" between November 2015 and July 2016.

Thematic Group members are expected to attend three group meetings in Brussels and make a contribution of practical examples from their own background, region or country. Each group will produce a Final report and feed into a European Seminar and an edition of the EU Rural Review. For more information, contact enrd@ec.europa.eu (1) for the link topic and enrd@ec.europa.eu (1) for the second.

Assessing the rural networks

An [ENRD workshop on self-assessment](#) (14) developed and discussed Frameworks, methods and indicators for ongoing monitoring and self-assessment of the results of rural networking activities.

Participants - including MNS, ENRD Contact Point, Evaluation Methods and ENRD-ACR Service Point - shared good practices in assessing network activities such as the [public-MLM survey](#) (14) measuring the success of the network's communication and events in the period 2008-2011.

The ENRD Contact Point will support further guidance and exchange on networks' self-assessment in the coming months.

Refugees: rural responses

The variety of impacts and responses in rural areas to Europe's unfolding refugee crisis has been recently highlighted within the ENRD network.

[Workshop \(15\)](#) to find out how small communities in Sweden and Greece are coping for ways to accommodate refugees, using LEADER as an enabler. [Belgium \(16\)](#) local people and associations". Read also an [analysis](#) (16) on local people's reactions to and initiatives related to the massive inflow of refugees on the Greek island of Lesbos. These initiatives show the challenges presented, but also the opportunities in certain cases for Community-led Local Development (CLLD) to be part of the solution to migrant integration.

New good practices online

A new set of [good ERDF projects and ERDF practices are now available on the ENRD website](#) (17). The examples range from effective approaches to ERDF delivery to innovative marketing and awareness-raising strategies.

Should you wish to propose a good practice in rural development, contact us at enrd@ec.europa.eu (18).

CAP communication funding available

DG AGRI has launched a [new call for proposals](#) (19) for information campaigns aimed at the public, implementation and developing the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) and to raise public awareness of its content and objectives.

The deadline for funding applications is 30 November 2015. Visit the [website](#) (19) for more information on this year's call and previous years.

Infographic: "How much greener is the new CAP?"

A new [infographic](#) (20) by [Ruralists](#) (20) illustrates the European Commission's legislative commitments for green policies in the CAP in the 2014-2020 period.

The infographic covers both direct payments (Pillar 1) and rural development (Pillar 2).

Implementing LEADER outside the EU

Local Action Groups (LAGs) are being established in Georgia, empowering local people to develop their own regions by taking up and implementing the LEADER approach.

Watch this [video](#) (21) to find out more.

Erasmus+ calls now open

The [Erasmus+ Programme](#) (22) has recently launched calls for proposals in support of education, training, youth and sport objectives, which can be used to support projects in rural areas.

See the [proposal call to 2014](#) (24) and a [proposal call](#) (25) aimed at building the capacity of organisations to support SMEs in offering apprenticeships.

Third Steering Group meeting

The [third meeting](#) (26) of the EU Rural Networks' Steering Group (SG) discussed the priorities of the ENRD and ERDF-ACR for 2015-2016 and opportunities for more active involvement in their activities.

SG members exchanged on current and planned actions around the themes of Smart and Competitive Rural Areas, Greening the Rural Economy, Quality Building for LEADERCLDs, and Smaller Programmes Implementation. They also discussed preparations for the second Rural Networks' Assembly to be held on 26 November 2015.

The ENRD Contact Point will support further guidance and exchange on networks' self-assessment in the coming months.

Networking and cooperating for innovation

A joint [ERDF-LEADER ERDF workshop](#) (27) supported networks to research innovative actions under the Cooperative measure in Rural Development Programmes (RDPs). Particularly, it explored ways in which Operational Groups (OGs) link to the rest of the cooperative measure and possibilities to create a network between ERDF actions across Europe.

The workshop further provided an understanding of the state of play in creating OGs and a view of how they are mapped out across different Member States.

How to Implement Financial Instruments?

A [collection of guidelines, good practices and peer advice](#) (28) on setting up ERDF Financial Instruments (FIs) is now available on the ENRD website (28). These include investment through FIs, programming and implementation of FIs, as well as available ERDF guidance and support.

The resources were pulled together for a dedicated business event in Vienna on 1 October 2015 which aimed to promote the use of FIs in agriculture and rural development.

What works in tackling rural poverty?

The [Public-Private Initiative for Jobs](#) (29) is looking for examples of what works in tackling rural poverty as part of a research project. If you are aware of any creative examples of projects or interventions in this area then please support the assessment of good practice in Europe by sharing them with [Emp.Williams](mailto:Emp.Williams@ec.europa.eu) (30).

The study is particularly exploring interventions that have addressed food by themes: transport and access to services, the rural economy, employment and income, housing and homelessness, and the rural poverty process (where things could move for people in poverty in rural areas by housing and food costs).

EU consultation on internet needs

In the context of the [Digital Agenda for Europe](#) (31), the European Commission is running a [public consultation](#) (31) on European citizens' needs for internet speed and quality beyond 2020.

The consultation, which closes on 7 December 2015, provides an opportunity to raise the specific concerns of rural communities in this regard.

Rural environment prize

The [deadline for applications for the 2015 edition of the Andros-Wall Award](#) (32) is 31 December 2015.

The award recognises innovative enterprises that have contributed to improving the environment at the local, national and/or European level through the use of quality instruments and management practices.

LEADER - The Way Forward (14)

Participants, businesses, farmers and SMEs social business opportunities in rural areas, relationships between agriculture and businesses, as well as cooperation opportunities under the LEADER approach in the 2014-2020 programming period.

12 November 2015

[LEADER Barbell](#)
Participants will focus on their LEADER Rural Development Programmes (RDP) for 2014-2020, including planned MNS initiatives to implement it in the context of 2017-2018 RDP and MNS achievements.

17 November 2015

[Delivering on EU Food Safety: Promoting a Safe and Sustainable Agri-Food Chain](#) (33)
The symposium will bring together experts, policy-makers and NGO representatives to discuss the latest European regulatory policies on food safety and food labelling that aim to promote a sustainable agri-food chain.

24 November 2015

[2nd Innovation Sub-group Meeting](#) (34)
The meeting will discuss the state of play of ERDF-ACR in Rural Development Programmes and ERDF priority work themes for 2014. It will further aim to facilitate ideas and information flows among partners and prepare for the European Rural Networks' Assembly.

A Practical Guide to the Common Agricultural Policy (35)

[Booklet \(35\)](#) - Member will provide valuable insights into various aspects of the new CAP, including the new rural development regulation and how it impacts on the EU agri-environmental policy and the rural economy.

18 November 2015

[Barbell Barbell](#)
Participants will look at how to increase market access for rural producers, how to market rural areas competitively, and the links required to support this, including ICT and advisory services.

18 November 2015

[Barbell Barbell](#)
The Barbell will bring together members of the National Rural Network (NRR), Managing Authority (MA) and Network Support Unit (NSU) to discuss ways to improve the coordination between European, National, Regional and Local Stakeholders.

18 November 2015

[Agriculture of the Future, the Future of Agriculture](#) (36)
This conference will discuss the evolution of agriculture in the context of globalisation, possibilities for economic, social and sustainable innovation with agribusiness, and the integration of agriculture within the circular economy.

28 November 2015

[Rural Development 2015: Towards the Transfer of Knowledge, Innovations and Social Progress](#) (37)
[Action Plan \(37\)](#) - This conference is the annual platform for international scientific, interdisciplinary discussion on rural development and innovation.

28 November 2015

[European Conference "Unlocking the Potential of RDPs"](#) (38)
[Action Plan \(38\)](#) - The conference will present an overview of Rural Development Programmes (RDPs) across the EU and discuss questions relating to implementation, benchmarks, scope for innovations and good practice on programming and award-winning, including the role of networks.

24-27 November 2015

[Info Week on Horizon 2020 Work Programme 2014-2017](#) (39)
This week-long event will focus on the 2014-2017 Call for Proposals (CfP) for projects under "Societal Challenge 2: Food security, sustainable agriculture and forestry, marine and maritime and inland water research and innovation".

26 November 2015

[2nd European Rural Networks' Assembly Meeting](#) (40)
The Assembly will take stock of members' activities in the context of the strategic framework it set at its first meeting in January 2015, and make progress for the Rural Networks' priority activities in 2015.

Does Europe Need a Food Policy? (41)

This seminar will bring together the scientific, community and decision makers in business, politics and NGOs to discuss whether agricultural policy should deliver the food policy and how such a policy should regulate the retail and food industry and its increasing control over agriculture.

1-2 December 2015

[EU Agricultural Outlook Conference](#) (42)
The event will discuss challenges facing the farm sector, including sustainable agriculture addressing mitigating the effects of climate change, the functioning of the food supply chain, and the latest provisions on the reform for 2014/2017, trade and energy crop markets.

1-2 December 2015

[Outlook Symposium Dairy](#) (43)
Participants will discuss the evolution potential of the organic food and farming sector. It will also explore opportunities and potential risks of innovations developed outside the organic sector. The results will be discussed with policy-makers to contribute to the implementation of the CAP and Horizon 2020.

2-3 December 2015

[ETHINK Project Final Conference](#) (44)
Participants will discuss the links between Farm Modernisation, Rural Development and Resilience in a World of Increasing Uncertainty and Risk Factors.

14 November 2015

[1st Meeting of ENRD Thematic Group "Promoting the Transition to a Green Economy"](#)
Participants will aim to identify practical and positive ways of supporting the transition to a more sustainable green rural economy using rural development tools and supporting the use of energy and resource efficient investments to stimulate jobs and growth.

15-16 November 2015

[International Green Week](#) (45)
The ERDF edition of IGW will feature multiple exhibitions of the local, agricultural and horticultural industries, as well as events addressing topics such as organic agriculture, rural development and innovative resources.

17-18 November 2015

[Organic Producers' Conference](#) (46)
The 2015 edition of the conference will bring together producers interested in ecological approaches to sustainable food production with researchers and advisors to share ideas on making agriculture perform better for their business and society.

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