



LEADER 2013 event: Building bridges for the future

Brussels, 17-18th April 2013

SHOWCASING LEADER SESSION:
Lessons learnt from transnational cooperation
SUMMARY



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I. Background:

The showcasing session on Transnational Cooperation (TNC) was conducted during Day 1 from 17:30 to 18:30, April, 17th at the LEADER event 2013. It was built upon examples and cases proposed by participants and prepared prior to the event on the theme.

The session comprised of four presentations of TNC projects from Estonia, Germany, Italy and Slovakia and a presentation from the France on the activity undertaken at national level in support of promoting transnational cooperation.

1. Awareness of healthy eating and short supply chains “Growing Gastronomists”, **LAG Hiiumaa Cooperation Network, Estonia, presented by Reet Kokovkin**
2. Leader transnational cooperation project “bees and biodiversity”, **LAG Dübener Heide, Germany, presented by Axel Mitzka**
3. Green Line – a cooperation project for the integration among tourism, natural resources and local products, **LAG Gardavalsabbia, Italy, presented by Nicola Gallinaro**
4. The Cooperation Technical Assistance network Presented **by Julia Manaquin from the National Rural Network Support Unit, France**
5. Together against neo-Nazism, **LAG MAS Podhoran, Slovakia, presented by Peter Švaral**

II. Key points made from the hosts of the cases presented in relation to how TNC has added value to the Local development Strategy implementation LDS

1. Awareness of healthy eating and short supply chains “Growing Gastronomists”, Estonia

- A TNC project about promoting local products and culinary know-how, local food to local schools, etc.

- The cooperation project contributed to unlock local potential in terms of skills and capacity by promoting exchanges and peer-to-peer training (e.g. training session from cooks coming from different countries).
- The project also contributed to create more value out of the local organic products (creation of short food supply-chains).
- The TNC experience contributed also to the development of additional projects in the LAG territory.
- For more information on: <http://esto-growinggastronauts.webnode.com/>
- Contact details: **Ms Reet Kokovkin**, reet@kogu.hiiumaa.ee

2. LEADER transnational cooperation project “bees and biodiversity” , Germany

- This TNC project brings together seven LEADER areas located in seven European countries (Germany, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Great Britain and Slovakia) aiming to preserve bees and thus contribute to biodiversity
- The benefits of transnational cooperation included: i) the possibility of tackling a major ecological problem at a larger scale and; ii) benefiting from external knowledge and new ways of “doing things” (i.e. importing new working methods) for addressing the same issue.
- Examples were made about the transfer of practical solutions adopted in one local context to another (e.g. in the context of how to set up bee-hives for demonstration activities avoiding danger for the visitors)
- The project resulted also in direct involvement of farmers in the cooperation partnership.
- For more information on the project see http://enrd.ec.europa.eu/app_templates/enrd_assets/pdf/leader-event-2013/leader-event-showcasing/2_DE%20Bees%20and%20Biodiversity.pdf
- Contact person: Ms Anke Wehmeyer, anke.wehmeyer@ble.de



3. Project “Green Line” , Italy

- The main added value mentioned was the possibility given by the TNC project to look at the own development strategy with new eyes and from a different perspective (“mind-opening” factor).
- Also –linked to a concrete result – the transnational cooperation project had a knock-on effect at the national level (in Italy), generating the interest of other bordering LAGs and eventually inter-territorial cooperation projects.
- The TNC project also created the basis for the creation of a permanent exchange platform within the two LAGs involved, beyond the lifetime of the project itself. Crucially this has led the two LAGs in cooperating also for the conception and design of their respective local development strategies for the next programming period.
- *“It is not just a cooperation, but we are working together, even on the future plans!”*
- More information on the project see

http://enrd.ec.europa.eu/app_templates/enrd_assets/pdf/leader-event-2013/leader-event-showcasing/3_IT%20Green%20Line%20Presentation.pdf

4. Together against neo-Nazism , Slovakia

- This TNC cooperation is at the same time an example of cross-border cooperation project . The main added value mentioned with respect the wider local strategy(ies) links to the possibility to tackle a common issue rooted in the specific geographical and historical context of the two bordering LAGs’ territories.

5. The cooperation technical assistance Network , France



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- The presentation focused on the role of the FR NSU with respect to supporting cooperation projects including available tools, promotion and information activities.
- The objective of the cooperation support unit is to provide tailor-made support for LAGs at each level of the cooperation projects and promote the exchange of information.
- Support is offered at national level (training, collect and exchange information on on-going cooperation projects) and at regional level through a cooperation responsible in every regional network.
- In each French region on a regional network level, there are one or two persons dedicated at cooperation assistance for their LAGs to help them to implement cooperation projects. The NSU organizes every 3 or 4 months a meeting to share best practices and tools, to follow-up the cooperation in France.
- The tools and support activities offered range from the collection of information on the ongoing projects (project database) to the organization of regular meetings and direct assistance to LAGs (identification of partners, support on methodology, help with translation, prepare participation to events). The support unit also provides regular information in the form of targeted newsletters.
- More information see at:
 - http://www.reseaurural.fr/files/faq_maaf_cell_nationale_dec_2012_1.pdf
 - <http://www.reseaurural.fr/territoires-leader/cooperation/faq>
- Contact person: Julia Manaquin, j.manaquin@rct-territoires.com

III. General lessons learnt from the TNC projects ('practical tips') identified during the showcasing session

- Cooperation takes time and dedication. TNC projects should be kicked-off **as soon as possible in the implementation of the local development strategy**. Crucially, cooperation activities should be planned alongside with the design of the LDS.
- Cooperation requires **'patience'** and some time before first activities are realized and outcomes produced. Nevertheless it demands for responsiveness of the partners and to take quick actions when required.
- It is crucial that a **clear common agreement** is reached by all the parties involved. The right motivation of all participants is also key to bring the process forward.
- It is important to involve a range of different partners in order **to maximize the exchange** of experience and the peer-to-peer learning.
- It is beneficial to try to **learn from past projects**, experiences happened also in other countries, regardless the different administrative rules.
- LAGs should take advantage of the support tool made available **by the technical assistance (NRNs) at national level¹**. Language should not be a barrier.
- NRNs and their NSUs can bring a lot of added value to promotion and facilitation of TNC **when organized, structured and targeted support is planned and offered**.

¹ Interestingly, during the showcasing discussion it appeared that not all LAGs might be fully aware of the support offered by the technical assistance budget / activities carried out by the NRN in support to cooperation (e.g. it was clearly the case for a Danish LAG).