

RDP analysis: Measure 16 ‘Cooperation’

M16.1

EIP Operational Groups

In 2015, the Contact Point of the European Network for Rural Development (ENRD CP) carried out a broad analysis of the 2014-2020 Rural Development Programmes (RDPs). The following text forms part of a series of summaries outlining the information gathered on specific Measures (M) and sub-Measures. The summaries aim to provide an overview of the common trends and main differences in the programming decisions taken across the range of RDPs. If you believe that any of the information presented does not accurately reflect the content of one of the RDPs, please communicate your concerns to info@enrd.eu.

Where specific RDPs are referenced in the analysis, they are indicated with the official EU country codes (e.g. EE for Estonia). In the case of regional RDPs, the name of the region is given after the country code (e.g. IT-Lazio).

1. Regulation background

1.1 Measure 16 cooperation¹

Supported actions under Measure 16 (M16) and its sub-Measures are implemented by groups of at least two cooperating entities (except in very specific cases of pilot projects). In this report we will refer to these cooperating entities, which includes networks, clusters, EIP Operational Groups and others, using the term ‘cooperation group’.

According to the Rural Development regulation (EC 1305/2013), cooperation groups supported by M16 are expected to implement projects fostering, *“cooperation approaches among different actors in the Union agriculture sector, forestry sector and food chain and other actors that contribute to achieving the objectives and priorities of rural development policy...”*

M16 sub-Measures offer potential support for:

- the establishment and running of cooperation activities, covering the cooperation groups’ and the projects’ coordination and organisation costs, and
- the carrying out of projects, covering the direct costs that arise from the activities of the project.

However, RDP Managing Authorities may decide to support only the creation and running cost of the cooperation group under Measure 16 and fund the direct project costs (such as investments) under other RDP Measures.²

¹ Reg. 1305/2013 Art.35

² *“Where support is paid as a global amount and the project implemented is of a type covered under another measure of this Regulation, the relevant maximum amount or rate of support shall apply.”* Reg. 1305/2013 Art.35.6

1.2 Sub-Measure 16.1

Sub-Measure 16.1 (M16.1) provides support for:

- **establishing and managing the European Innovation Partnership (EIP) Operational Groups (OGs),**
- **planning and realising projects implemented by the OGs,**
- **disseminating the experience and the knowledge gathered as well as the results achieved by the projects supported.**

According to Art. 56 (1) Reg. (EU) 1305-2013, Operational Groups are expected to consist of partnerships involving a wide variety of stakeholders but most importantly, “interested actors such as farmers, researchers, advisors and businesses *involved in the agriculture and food sector.*” The regulation provides few prescriptions about the form EIP OGs should take. As the EU guidance document on Art. 35 states, in fact, “*what these groups ‘do’ is much more important than what they ‘are’.*” OGs are meant to be bottom-up instruments providing the space for testing innovative ideas and finding solutions for specific issues.

Reg. (EU) 1305-2013 states that OGs must:

- be composed of **at least two entities;**
- “**establish internal procedures** to ensure transparency in their operation and decision-making, and avoid conflicts of interest”;
- draw up a plan containing a **description of the project** and its **expected results;** and
- **disseminate the results** of their project.

The regulation notes that for both the establishment and for the dissemination of an OG’s achievements, some networking support might be needed. For this reason, the guidance document suggests the use of innovation brokers and indicates that National Rural Networks (NRNs) are potentially key actors to facilitate the implementation of M16.1.

Where the creation of OGs is particularly challenging the guidance document suggests that the Managing Authorities (MAs) could pay innovation brokers to find partners interested in creating OGs. MAs could use funds set under the Technical Assistance money (M20) or under the Advisory services Measure (M02) to do this.

Objectives of the EIP for agricultural productivity and sustainability

The EIP for agricultural productivity and sustainability should contribute to the achievement of the Europe 2020 objectives ... it brings together all relevant actors at Union, national and regional levels, presenting new ideas to Member States on how to streamline, simplify and better coordinate existing instruments and initiatives and complement them with new actions where necessary.

Reg. (EU) 1305-2013 (41)

The EIP for agricultural productivity and sustainability shall:

- (a) promote a resource efficient, economically viable, productive, competitive, low emission, climate friendly and resilient agricultural and forestry sector...;*
- (b) help deliver a steady and sustainable supply of food, feed and biomaterials, including existing and new types;*
- (c) improve processes to preserve the environment, adapt to climate change and mitigate it;*
- (d) build bridges between cutting-edge research knowledge and technology and farmers, forest managers, rural communities, businesses, NGOs and advisory services.*

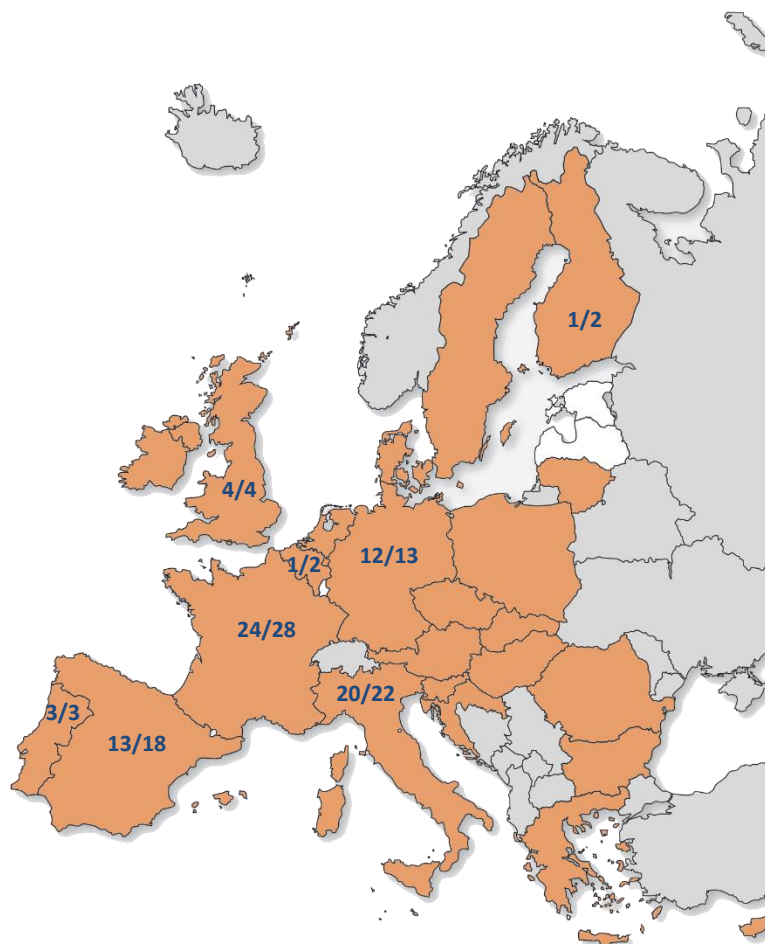
Reg. (EU) 1305-2013 Art. 55 (1)

2. RDPs programming the sub-Measure

M16.1 is programmed in 96 RDPs across 26 Member States (MS).

Table 1 - List of RDPs programming M16.1

| N | RDPs ³ |
|----|---------------------------|
| 1 | AT |
| 2 | BE-Flanders |
| 3 | BG |
| 4 | CY |
| 5 | CZ |
| 6 | DE-Baden Wurttemberg |
| 7 | DE-Bayern |
| 8 | DE-Brandenburg Berlin |
| 9 | DE-Hessen |
| 10 | DE-Mecklenburg Vorpommern |
| 11 | DE-Niedersach. Bremen |
| 12 | DE-Nordrhein-Westfalen |
| 13 | DE-Rheinland-Pfalz |
| 14 | DE-Sachsen |
| 15 | DE-Sachsen-Anhalt |
| 16 | DE-Schleswig Holstein |
| 17 | DE-Thuringen |
| 18 | DK |
| 19 | ES-Andalucia |
| 20 | ES-Aragon |
| 21 | ES-Asturias |
| 22 | ES-Castilla- Leon |
| 23 | ES-Cataluna |
| 24 | ES-National Programme |
| 25 | ES-Extremadura |
| 26 | ES-Galicia |
| 27 | ES-I Canarias |
| 28 | ES-La Rioja |
| 29 | ES-Madrid |
| 30 | ES-Murcia |
| 31 | ES-Pais Vasco |
| 32 | FI-Mainland |
| 33 | FR-Aquitaine |
| 34 | FR-Auvergne |
| 35 | FR-Basse-Normandie |
| 36 | FR-Bourgogne |
| 37 | FR-Bretagne |



Map 1 - RDPs programming M16.1

For MS having regional RDPs, the map indicates the number of RDPs that programmed M16.1 out of the national total.

³ Belgium (BE); Germany (DE); Spain (ES); Finland (FI); Italy (IT); United Kingdom (UK).

| N | RDPs⁴ | N | RDPs | N | RDPs |
|----------|-------------------------|----------|--------------------------|----------|---------------------|
| 38 | FR-Centre | 58 | HR | 78 | IT-Toscana |
| 39 | FR-Champagne-Ardenne | 59 | HU | 79 | IT-Umbria |
| 40 | FR-Corse | 60 | IE | 80 | IT-Veneto |
| 41 | FR-Guadeloupe | 61 | IT-Abruzzo | 81 | LT |
| 42 | FR-Guyane | 62 | IT-Basilicata | 82 | MT |
| 43 | FR-Haute-Normandie | 63 | IT-Calabria | 83 | NL |
| 44 | FR-Ile-De-France | 64 | IT-Campania | 84 | PL |
| 45 | FR-Languedoc-Roussillon | 65 | IT-Emilia Romagna | 85 | PT-Acores |
| 46 | FR-Limousin | 66 | IT-Friuli Venezia Giulia | 86 | PT-Madeira |
| 47 | FR-Lorraine | 67 | IT-Lazio | 87 | PT-Mainland |
| 48 | FR-Martinique | 68 | IT-Liguria | 88 | RO |
| 49 | FR-Mayotte | 69 | IT-Lombardia | 89 | SE |
| 50 | FR-Midi-Pyrenees | 70 | IT-Marche | 90 | SI |
| 51 | FR-Paca | 71 | IT-Molise | 91 | SK |
| 52 | FR-Pays De La Loire | 72 | IT-Piemonte | 92 | UK-England |
| 53 | FR-Picardie | 73 | IT-Bolzano | 93 | UK-Northern Ireland |
| 54 | FR-Poitou-Charentes | 74 | IT-Trento | 94 | UK-Scotland |
| 55 | FR-Reunion | 75 | IT-Puglia | 95 | UK-Wales |
| 56 | FR-Rhone-Alpes | 76 | IT-Sardegna | | |
| 57 | GR | 77 | IT-Sicilia | | |

⁴ Belgium (BE); Germany (DE); Spain (ES); Finland (FI); Italy (IT); United Kingdom (UK).

3. Scope of programmed RDP activities

Two phases Most RDPs clearly divide M16.1 implementation into **two distinctly timed phases**:

- 1) **creation of the OGs**; and
- 2) **implementation of the projects**.

Since successful implementation of M16.1 deeply depends on the quality of these two phases, most of the RDPs foresee two distinct selection processes⁵.

Practical innovative projects

Projects funded under M16.1 are expected to have a strong innovative character. All M16 sub-Measures are expected to contribute to the Rural Development Programmes' cross-cutting objectives of increasing innovation in agriculture and forestry-related activities. M16.1 together with M16.2, however, are expected to be the most experimental ones.

Some RDPs try to define 'innovation'. The DE-Niedersach. Bremen RDP, for example, establishes that one of the main project selection criteria is the 'innovation potential' and defines this as the extent to which the proposed project goes **beyond the already known standards in products and processes**. Other RDPs, like DE-Brandenburg Berlin, are more cautious in their definition of innovation because they are conscious that, **"innovation can only be recognised as an innovation ex post."**

Many RDPs consider the practical utility of the projects being funded. M16.1 projects in fact are expected to work on **new solutions** to problems, new techniques, processes, products, practices, technologies etc. Some RDPs clearly specify that **support is not provided for pure research only** (e.g. BE-Flanders, ES-Pais-Vasco, SE) but that 'discussions' and research should lead to **practical results possible to be shared with other practitioners**. In Germany, the RDPs require the projects to be **problem-oriented and to deliver innovation in a practical way**.

A network

M16.1 projects are expected to fill the counterproductive **gap existing in Europe between researchers and practitioners** in the field of agriculture and forestry. This is done in two ways: by creating OGs that involve actors from both groups and by ensuring the dissemination of the results achieved by the projects.

With the creation of the OGs, RDPs aim at fostering cooperation among actors that rarely meet and exchange, such as farmers, scientists, consultants, NGOs and other players operating in agricultural, forestry and food sectors. With M16.1, RDPs pursue **innovation through aggregation, integration and networking**. By bringing together different actors and building up existing knowledge, OGs are expected to be better able to respond to **challenges requiring multidisciplinary solutions** or to identify **new opportunities for improvement**.

Taking advantage of the network created by the OGs and the networking support established at national and European level⁶, the results dissemination activity

⁵ See section 5.

⁶ According to Art. 53 of the Reg. (EU) 1305-2013 "A EIP network shall be put in place... - enabling - ...networking of operational groups, advisory services and researchers". According to Art. 54, furthermore, the

ensures that M16.1 implementation also achieves its **objective of knowledge and technology transfer**.

Scope

In the majority of the RDPs, M16.1 projects focus on **developing agricultural and forestry markets**, supporting the coordination and **integration of supply chains**, increasing **product quality** with particular attention on agricultural and food products, and strengthening the expansion of key sectors like organic farming.

In almost all of the RDPs, projects also focus on improving the competitiveness and productivity of farms in response to specific environmental challenges such as: **resource preservation; improvement of soil and water management; climate mitigation; adaptation to climate change; preservation of biological diversity and ecosystems; reduction of emissions; and animal welfare**.

Finally, in some cases (e.g. IT-Marche, IT-Piemonte, MT, ES-National Programme, FR-Pays de la Loire, SK) projects also focus on **social innovation**, improving the social performance at farm and enterprise level, and introducing diversification of agricultural activities towards activities with social purposes.

While most of the RDPs suggest a number of general areas of intervention such as the ones listed above, other RDPs also provided more **narrow topics for M16.1 projects**.

ES-Andalucia for example focuses on the olive sector, FR-Bretagne on soya production, IT-Liguria on flower production and ES-Asturias on meat and dairy products.

It can be seen therefore that in fact OG can cover (nearly) all the fields of the other M16 sub-Measures. The main differences are that OGs have a more experimental nature and are obliged to disseminate their findings.

Networking support

In several MS, OGs are supported by specific bodies entitled by the RDPs to advise, coordinate and do networking activities for the OGs.

For a number of RDPs this role is covered by **innovation brokers** that support the setting up of the OGs, facilitate the work and internal coordination of the groups and identify potential partners (e.g. CZ, DE-Schleswig Holstein, IE, IT-Molise, UK-Northern Ireland, UK-Wales).

In some RDPs the supporting role is given to **specific bodies, either already existing or created ad-hoc** (e.g. the 'Innovation Agency' in DE-Brandenburg Berlin, the 'Bavarian Institute for Agriculture' in DE-Bayern, the 'EIP Agricultural Innovation Office' in DE-Schleswig Holstein).

Finally, yet other RDPs entrust this duty to the **Network Support Units (NSUs) of the NRNs** (e.g. CY, IT, LT, MT, RO, UK-Scotland, UK-Wales).

National Rural Networks are expected to "*foster innovation in agriculture, food production, forestry and rural areas*".

Case 1: NRN support to the EIP network

Here follow some examples of NSUs that have an active role in supporting the EIP network:

- In MT the NSU is expected to engage a group of rural animators to mobilise stakeholders, facilitate and coordinate the creation of the OGs.
- In RO the NSU facilitates networking, disseminates and attracts innovative project ideas through information events at national and regional level and through an EIP-dedicated website section.
- In UK-Scotland the NSU fulfils the role of Innovation Broker. It is expected to animate the OGs, do networking activities for them, disseminate their outputs and promote the creation of new groups and projects through multiple media.
- In UK-Wales the Welsh government is setting up the 'EIP Wales' to act as advisory group establishing eligibility and selection criteria for the OGs, and also to identify synergies and joint working opportunities between groups.

Case 2: EIP in BE-Wallonia

In BE-Wallonia, while M16.1 is not included in the Programme, the creation of a cooperation group similar to an OG is a task of the NSU of the Walloon Rural Network. In this way the OG will take advantage of the networking experience of the support unit, will be under its management and will be financed by the Technical Assistance.

Trans-National Cooperation

In most of the RDPs, M16.1 allows for some kind of cooperation activities among OGs funded by different RDPs. Although this possibility is **open in the majority of the RDPs**, they do not explain how such trans-national cooperation should happen (e.g. BE-Flanders, DE-Hessen, DE-Baden Wurttemberg, DE-Schleswig Holstein, FI-Mainland, FR-Paca, IT-Calabria, IT-Basilicata, IT-Emilia Romagna, IT-Friuli Venezia Giulia, IT-Lazio, IT-Marche, IT-Toscana, IT-Veneto, IT-Trento, IT-Sardegna, SE).

4. Contribution to Focus Areas and linkages to other Measures

In light of the variety of EIP-related topics, **M16.1 is expected to contribute to all FAs and Priorities**. Thanks to its very strong innovative character, however, it is expected to strongly contribute to **Priority 1 - Knowledge transfer & innovation**.

Many RDPs (e.g. ES-Castilla Leon, FR-Auvergne, FR-Bourgogne, FR-Bretagne, IT-Liguria, UK-Northern Ireland, UK-Scotland) establish linkages among M16.1 and several investment Measures:

- M04 - Investments in physical assets,
- M06- Farm & business development,
- M07- Basic services & village renewal, and
- M08 - Investments in forest areas

Box 1: Combination of M16.1 and M16.2

In a very high number of cases⁷ M16.1 and M16.2 are combined together. In these cases, the OGs are the beneficiaries of M16.2 and, therefore, the creator and implementers of the pilot projects.

The combination happens mainly in two ways:

1. M16.1 and M16.2 are combined in the same specific operation⁸.
2. M16.1 and M16.2 are not combined in the same specific operation but OGs are among M16.2 eligible beneficiaries.

The RDPs where such a combination was identified are: CY, DE-Bayern, DE-Mecklenburg Vorpommern, DE-Nordrhein Westfalen, DE-Rheinland Pfalz, DE-Sachsen, ES-Cataluna, ES-National Programme, ES-Madrid, FR-Aquitaine, FR-Basse Normandie, FR-Champagne Ardenne, FR-Guadeloupe, FR-Guyane, FR-Haute Normandie, FR-Languedoc Roussillon, FR-Limousin, FR-Lorraine, GR, HR, IT-Friuli Venezia Giulia, IT-Lazio, IT-Puglia, IT-Toscana, IT-Veneto, MT, PT-Acores, PT-Madeira, RO, SI, SK, UK Wales.

In a number of RDPs, M16.1 is combined with other M16 sub-Measures:

- FR-Ile de France where M16.1 is used together with M16.3 – Small operators and Rural tourism and M16.5 – Environment and climate change to strengthen cooperation between actors of different sectors or along the same supply chain to enhance economic and environmental development.
- FR-Haute Normandie where, similarly, M16.1 is combined with M16.2 and M16.4 – Short supply chains and local markets.

⁷ For a list of RDPs combining M16.1 and M16.2 see titles highlighted in orange colour in Table 3 in section 5.

⁸ In the RDPs the specific ways the Measures are expected to be used are articulated in the Measures' 'specific operations'. A Measure can have several specific operations and the same operation can use more than one Measure.

5. Eligibility criteria and selection process

One or two phases As introduced in section 3, most of the RDPs⁹ identify for M16.1 have two implementation phases characterised by two different selection processes:

- 1) The first selection process **identifies the OGs and the draft project ideas**.
- 2) The second selection process **identifies the projects** that are funded and implemented.

Only two cases were identified where the selection process is unified and the approval of the OG is subject to the approval of the project plan: DE-Mecklenburg Vorpommern and IT-Emilia Romagna.

Case 2: Selection process in Emilia Romagna

In IT-Emilia Romagna the selection of the OGs and projects **are not separated** procedures: the **selection of a group is related to the project proposed**. Each group can implement only one project and it is set up for its implementation. Even if partners are the same, if the group apply for funding with a new project it will be considered as a new group and as such will have to be selected again in association with the new project proposed.

Phase 1 – The OG Where the selection processes are separated, the support granted under the first phase mainly covers:

- animation activities and operating costs for the organisation of the cooperating scheme;
- creation of a business plan for the project, feasibility studies and other research; and
- consultancy services.

The OGs are selected on the basis of the submission of a joint action plan setting the OGs' goals, actions, members' tasks, calendar and budget¹⁰.

Phase 2 – The project Support granted under the second phase mainly covers:

- investment for development of the projects;
- administrative and running costs of the OG and project management; and
- costs for the promotion of the results.

Eligible beneficiaries for phase 2 are OGs selected in the first phase.

⁹ AT, BG, CY, DE-Baden Wurttemberg, DE-Andalucia, ES-Galicia, ES-Canarias, FR-Champagne Ardenne, FR-Martinique, IT-Basilicata, IT-Abruzzo, IT-Calabria, IT-Friuli Venezia Giulia, IT-Lazio, IT-Liguria, IT-Marche, IT-Piemonte, IT-Sardegna, IT-Sicilia, RO, SE.

¹⁰ Eligible beneficiaries for phase 1 are presented in more detail in the following section 'Operational Group'

Duration Where specified, RDPs define that the cooperation action must last for a **maximum number of between two-to-seven years.**

Table 2 - Examples of maximum project duration

| No of Years | Examples of RDPs |
|-------------|---|
| 7 | CZ, ES-Asturias, ES-Madrid, FR-Bourgogne, FR-Reunion, SE |
| 5 | FI-Mainland, FR-Corse, FR-Limousine, IT-Calabria |
| 4 | DR-Centre, IT-Sicilia |
| 3 | DE-Mecklenburg Vorpommern, ES-Pais Vasco, FR-Auvergne, FR-Guadeloupe, FR-Poitou Charentes, IT-Emilia Romagna, IT-Lazio, IT-Molise, UK-Wales |
| 2 | BE-Flanders, CY |

Some RDPs specify the **maximum duration** of the support granted in **the first phase** of the OG creation and the creation of the project plan:

- being one year for several French RDPs (e.g. FR-Champagne Ardenne, FR-Bourgogne, FR-Guadeloupe, FR-Limousine, FR-Martinique); and
- six months for several Italian RDPs (e.g. IT-Toscana, IT-Sicilia, IT-Lazio, IT-Calabria).

Operational Group In line with the regulations and the Commission guidance document on Art. 35 Reg. (EU) 1305-2013, most RDPs state that the OG must be made of **at least two members.**

Less frequently RDPs set a minimum number of **three members** per OG (e.g. DE-Bayern, DE-Niedersach. Bremen, DE-Schleswig Holstein) and in some cases a minimum of **five members** (e.g. IT-Toscana, SE).

Case 3: Supra-regional OGs in ES-National Programme

In ES-National Programme M16 supports the **creation of supra-regional Operational Groups** working on projects of public interest, not specifically linked to one territory. The OGs funded by the Spanish National Programme must be formed of at least **two stakeholders working in two different Spanish regions.**

Most RDPs state that eligible beneficiaries are:

- farmers and foresters, SME in the food processing sector;
- researchers, research institutes and lab, universities, advisors;
- NGOs in the agriculture, forestry, environment and water conservation sectors; or
- municipalities and public entities¹¹.

¹¹ e.g. BE-Flanders, DE-Hessen, DE-Niedersach. Bremen, FR-Bretagne, FR-Champagne Ardenne, Limousine, FR-Mayotte, FR-Picardie.

Additionally, OGs might involve:

- producers' organisations (e.g. FR-Champagne Ardenne);
- consumer groups (e.g. IT-Toscana);
- independent consultants (e.g. DE-Niedersach. Bremen); and
- cooperatives and inter-branch organisations (e.g. ES-Canarias, FR-Lorraine).

In a high number of RDPs the **participation of farmers from the agriculture or forestry sectors is obligatory** (e.g. BG, DE-Bayern, DE-Brandenburg Berlin, DE-Mecklenburg Vorpommern, DE-Hessen, DE-Schleswig Holstein, DE-Thuringen, ES-Aragon, GR, IT-Abruzzo, IT-Liguria, IT-Lazio, IT-Piemonte, MT, UK-Northern Ireland).

Some RDPs set a list of eligible beneficiaries but **do not specify any obligatory participation** (e.g. DE-Niedersach. Bremen, FI-Mainland, FR-Mayotte, IT-Bolzano).

Finally, only few cases were identified where the participation of a **stakeholder from the research filed is obligatory** (e.g. DE-Bayern, IT-Basilicata, IT-Liguria, MT).

In at least three cases the RDPs state that within the eligible beneficiaries there must be stakeholders able to **implement the OGs' dissemination and information duties** (IT-Toscana), and that among the eligibility criteria of the OG there is the **capacity of partners to act as multipliers for the dissemination of project results** (FR- Lorraine, ES-Galicia). As introduced in section 1, notwithstanding the absence of similar obligations in the other RDPs, all OGs have the obligation to disseminate the results of their achievements and all RDPs take this into consideration.

Case 4: Cooperative dimension of partnerships in FR-Aquitaine

FR-Aquitaine establishes that each OG must have a genuine cooperative dimension. In order to ensure this the RDP requires that none of the partners can cover more than 70% of eligible costs and research entities must cover at least 10% of eligible costs.

Projects selection criteria

The most common **projects selection criteria** identified are:

- coherence with and contribution to the EIP objectives¹²;
- innovation potential of the project to improve existing methods, techniques, products etc.¹³;
- feasibility of the project;
- territorial relevance and expected territorial impact of the project; and
- scope of the results and importance of their impact.

A number of RDPs specify that project selection as well as the selection of the OGs is performed by a **special jury set up for this purpose** (e.g. BE-Flanders, DE-Baden Wurttemberg, DE-Niedersach. Bremen, FR-Lorraine, FR-Bretagne).

¹² See section 1, Objectives the EIP for agricultural productivity and sustainability'.

¹³ See section 3, 'Practical innovative projects'.

6. Financial aspects

Max. budget

Most of the MS provide a unique maximum budget allocation and do not differentiate among the different phases of M16.1 implementation. The maximum budget allocated to each OG/project may vary from € 15 000€ to 1 000 000.

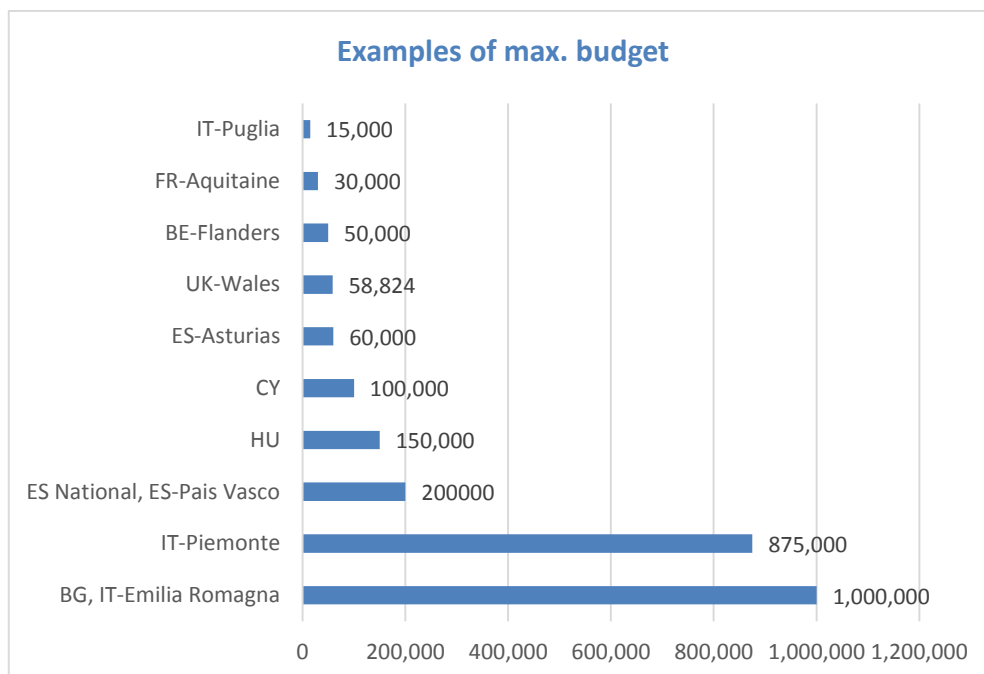


Figure 1 - Examples of maximum budget allocation

Max. budget: phases distinction

A number of Italian regions and two additional regions from Spain and France, differentiate the maximum budget among the two phases of OG set-up and project implementation.

Table 3 - Examples of maximum budget allocation: distinction per phases

| RDP | Creation of the OG | Implementation of the project |
|--------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------------|
| ES-Galicia | 6.000 | 1.200.000 |
| FR-Guadeloupe | 300.000 for 6-12 months | 1.000.000 for 2-3 year |
| IT-Sardegna | 50.000 | 800.000 |
| IT-Sicilia | 40.000 | 500.000 |
| IT-Friuli Venezia Giulia | 25.000 | 400 000 |
| IT Basilicata | 20.000 | 400.000 |
| IT-Abruzzo | 20.000 | 250.000 |
| IT-Lazio | 20.000 | 200.000 |
| IT-Liguria | 20.000 | 100.000 |
| IT-Calabria | 15.000 | 400.000 |

Some RDPs set a **variable maximum budget** per OG/project.

- In ES-Aragon the maximum amount for irrigation investments is €200 000, whereas for the agriculture and forestry holdings and quality food investments it is €100 000.
- Some RDPs set a maximum budget per year, like in ES-La Rioja (a maximum of €30 000 per year) and FR-Picardie (a maximum of €40 000 per year).

Case: Maximum support rates in GR

The Greek RDP set a more complex system of maximum budget allocation depending on the intervention area of the project. The following table presents the different scenarios considered:

| Size of the project | Creation of the OG | Implementation of the project |
|---|--------------------|-------------------------------|
| Project/OG at local character (covering one 'prefecture') | 30.000 | 120.000 |
| Project/OG at national level | 60.000 | 240.000 |
| Transnational cooperation project/OG | 90.000 | 360.000 |

Support rates

M16.1 support rates vary from 80% to 100%.

Table 4 – Examples of support rates

| Examples of RDPs | Support rate |
|--|--------------|
| ES National, ES-Galicia, BG, ES-La Rioja, FR-Centre, FR-Guadeloupe, FR-Lorraine, FR-Lorraine, FR-Reunion, IT-Abruzzo, IT-Liguria, IT-Puglia, IT-Sardegna, UK-England, UK-Wales | 100% |
| FR-Aquitaine, FR-Champagne Ardenne | 90% |
| CY, FR-Basse Normandie, FR-Ile de France, FR-Picardie | 80% |

In respect of the regulations, several RDPs clearly specify that the above listed support rates are valid **except for activities that could be funded by other Measures**. In this case, the maximum amount and the support rate of the concerned Measures apply.

Some RDPs do not set a unique support rate but **establish** specific conditions to variable support rates (e.g. IT-Bolzano, IT-Molise, IT-Umbria, IT-Marche, ES-Asturias, ES-National Programme, FR-Corse, and PT-Mainland), for example:

- The ES-National Programme sets a support rate varying between 55% to 100% of eligible costs depending on the type of cost and the thematic area of the project.
- FR-Corse has a support rate of 100% of eligible costs related to the set-up and running of the OG, 90% for direct costs and investments and 100% for dissemination costs.

- IT-Marche sets a support rate for the second phase, namely for project implementation, of 80%. However, it can be increased to 100% if the project is on one of a defined list of subjects focusing on the environment and climate change.
- IT-Emilia Romagna decided to prioritise some specific rural development priorities and set the following support rates: i) 70% for projects related to P2 and P3; ii) 90% for projects related to P4 and FA 5E; and iii) 100% for projects related to FA 5E.

**Simplified
Cost
Options:
cases**

- In FR-Centre Simplified Cost Options (SCOs) are applied using a 15% flat rate on direct staff costs.
- In FR-Midi Pyrenees and FR Picardie SCOs are applied using a 15% flat rate on indirect costs related to eligible staff expenditure.
- SCOs are used in UK-Norther Ireland.