

II.11 GEOGRAPHICAL REPORT PORTUGAL

Contents

1.	General introduction	427
2.	Report on the Focus Group	428
2.1	Introduction	428
2.2	Description of partnership and activities	429
2.3	Hypothesis referring to the main implementation questions of Leader in the intervention area	430
2.4	Conclusions and recommendations	433
3.	Report on the evaluation at national level	435
3.1	Overview and synthetic description	435
3.2	Overall assessment	437
3.3	Relevant conclusions and recommendations of the evaluation reports	438
4.	General appreciation of the geographical evaluator	441
4.1	General appreciation of the implementation and the effects of LEADER II	441
4.2	Critical reflection of the evaluation process	442

1. General introduction

The portuguese expert participated, in Brussels, in the meeting of the team for the ex-post evaluation of LEADERII and after the reception of the final versions of the instruments for the empirical research, organised the implementation of the following tasks:

- formal letter to the Institute that, in Portugal, is responsible for the management of LEADER, asking for permission to have access to files concerning the national Programme and to the 10 selected LAGs;
- several working meetings with the staff that followed the co-ordination of the programme at national level (the responsible persons for the management were replaced in 2001) – to fill in the financial and the factual part of Q34;
- contact with the co-ordinators of the 10 selected LAG to know about their availability to answer Q202;
- translation to portuguese of Q34 and Q202, since the co-ordinators of LAG didn't accept to be inquired in a foreign language;
- arrangement of interviews for the application of Q202, since – with one exception- the LAG co-ordinators didn't accept to answer by mail or e-mail;
- interviews with a duration of more than 1 working day; this duration is explained by the fact that the human resources of the LAG are scarce and by the strong difficulty to fill in – with reliability- the financial fields and other data related to the selected projects; these constraints obliged to a direct consultation of the paper files by the team; there was a limited availability of the LAG co-ordinators to answer the questions of Q202 without interruptions caused by other tasks;
- insistent phone calls to get data that was not available when the team went personally to the intervention areas; only one entity – DESTEQUE – Terra Quente Transmontana – refused to answer (it took 4 months!);
- case study of a transnational project (Paralelo 40);
- participation in the session of the “focus-group” of the spanish colleagues in Terra Chã (Galiza);
- preparation and organisation of the session of the “focus-group” with the LAG LEADERSOR (1 working day);
- translation into English of the 10 case studies (9 + transnational project).

The team for the implementation of the described tasks was: A. Oliveira das Neves (economist, responsible evaluator), Sónia Relvas and Vanessa Sousa (sociologists and interviewers) and Emília Andrade (translator).

2. Report on the Focus Group

2.1 Introduction

The session of the focus group was organized with the partners of a local entity, responsible for an intervention area in the north of Alentejo and individual promoters of Leader projects, supported in the framework of the LAP of LEADERSOR. This entity has private partners, entrepreneurs and producers' associations

The contact was established at the beginning of June, after the insistence of Carlo Ricci and after the enquire was sent. The session was arranged to 18 June, after several diligences of the co-ordinator of the LAG to call the participants.

The session too place in the meeting room of LEADERSOR, with the following participants:

- Quinta do Belo Ver – tourism in a rural environment – José Fernando Pereira (project promotor)
- Raul Martins Lobato – entrepreneur (project promotor)
- AG Terra – Estudos e Gestão Rural (project promotor)
- ACORPSOR – ovines producer (partner in LEADERSOR)
- NATURSOR (partner in LEADERSOR)
- Associação Montes Alentejanos – tourism in a rural environment (partner in LEADERSOR).
- Banda Musical Alterense – cultural group (project promotor)
- AFLOSOR – Associação de Produtores Florestais do Sôr (partner in LEADERSOR).

2.2 Description of partnership and activities

LEADERSOR – Associação para o Desenvolvimento Rural Integrado do Sôr (association for sustainable development of Sôr) is constituted by associative entities, local public entities and private members, mainly agricultors, namely:

- ACORPSOR – Associação de Criadores de Ovinos da Região de Ponte de Sôr, that represents the cattle producers (1.000 members).
- AFLOSOR – Associação de Produtores Florestais da Região de Ponte de Sôr, that represents the forestal producers of the region (110 members).
- G.E.S. – Gabinete de Engenharia do Sôr, does technical and economical projects and trades agricultural equipments and alternative energies.
- Caixa de Crédito Agrícola Mútuo de Ponte de Sôr.
- Associação Gente – Association for local development .
- Montes Alentejanos – Associação de Turismo Integrado (it promotes and organises resources of integrated tourism in a rural environment – with 14 members).
- Câmara Municipal de *Gavião*, de *Mora* e de *Alter do Chão* (local administration bodies – it corresponds to a half of the six councils of the intervention area).
- Individual members (agricultors, forest engineers and agronomists, etc.).

The main activities of LEADERSOR are the promotion and management of the global grant that supports the LAP, in the intervention territory. At the same time, it has implemented a transnational project in the framework of 'volet 2' of the Programme – *Paralelo 40*.

No other activities are known, for example, in the management of other community programmes, a complementarity that is frequent in other associations for local development of LEADER II.

2.3 Hypothesis referring to the main implementation questions of Leader in the intervention area

The type of the raised questions was influenced by the compared experience with the session in Galiza (Spain) that was attended by a member of the portuguese team. During the session four type of questions were raised:

1st group of questions – strategy

- What was the defined strategy for the intervention area before the programme?
- How does the idea to apply to programme arise? To answer to which needs and with which priorities?
- How is sustained development faced in the intervention area? What strategies were defined to approach rural sustainable development in the territory?
- What were the initiatives developed by local actors towards a strategic and sustainable development in the territory?

2nd group of questions – LEADER approach

- *Area-based approach.* Degree of coherence of the selected territory to the intervention area. Coherence and adequacy of the strategy to the territory. Strong and weak points of the territory. Degree of coherence of the defined strategy in terms of sustainable development.
- *Bottom-up approach.* What were the motivation procedures for local actors (public and private)? Which degree of participation did the economic agents have in the territory needs analysis? How did this diagnosis reflect the problem-dimensions of the territory and of the main but also supporting actors?
- *Participation.* Participation in the sensitizing meetings addressed to the different types of agents – public and private (social, cultural, environmental): how was this type of actors represented in the LAG? The Lag was specifically created for the management of LEADER II or did it exist before and with which type of activities?
- *Innovation.* Which innovative elements are to highlight in the region? What kind of innovation: new forms of presenting the products? A rural development different of other projects? The use of new technologies facilitated the production for the market? What were the strategies of the LAG to answer the needs of specific target groups (women, long term unemployed and youngsters)?
- *Multi-sectoral approach.* What were the relationships developed in the framework of the rural economical activities? How did Leader promote multi-sectoral integration?

- *Development of partnerships.* How did the cooperation work, namely with the European Observatory and the CB? Was there, or not, work developed in partnership (local or transnational with other LAG)?
- *Decentralized management.* How formal were the criteria to the selection of projects? How were the selection procedures and the financial procedures valued? Was there a lack of financing in some areas or not? If yes, in which ones?

3rd group of questions – operationalisation of the principles/ Leader specificities

Classification in terms of Positive/negative, relating to aspects (external to the LAG) that influenced the development of the Programme and the performance of the LAG in the intervention area (for instance, training for touristic guides to dynamize the TER).

- *Bottom-up approach* (training; participation of public or private agents – reasons for the inhibition of the private ones; elements that facilitated the work of the LAG).
- *Innovation* (degee of interconnections between Programmes – what kind of exploitation).
- *Cooperation/partnerships* (at formal level what can have been a difficulty for the development of partnerships/cooperation – positive and negative aspects).

4th group of questions – learning for the future

How can each of the LEADER principles be improved? How can the Programme work better (from the outside to the inside)? Description of some elements *(i)* to go from local administration to local population? *(ii)* What are policies to be implemented at european level to improve the programme?

The **main answers from participants** are presented according to the group of questions presented before.

A. Strategy of the intervention area

The action strategy of Leadersor , in a 1.st phase, was oriented to the diffusion and motivation of rural world, in a double folded perspective:

- (i)* creation and/or reconversion of the work placements that occurred from the integrated exploitation of intervention area endogenous potential;
- (ii)* valorization of environment, by its protection and as a touristic resource;
- (iii)* transformation and commercialization of local products;
- (iv)* supply of services and technologies with an innovative character.

The concern with sustainable development rises mainly in the ways the landscape and environmental resources are integrated in the touristic offer (farms, fluvial beaches, etc). The rural touristic promotion has a key role in this intervention area, also as an answer to the need to diversify the concentration of activities in agriculture.

B. Principles of the LEADER approach

- (a) the territorial area is adequate to the objectives to be reached, either on a geographical point of view or in what concerns the resources-type for the intervention strategy, very centered in the economical valorisation of elements of a composed touristic product, differentiated by the 'environmental' competitive advantage.
- (b) Information sessions for the direct contact/information with population were organised. The 'philosophy', actions and resources of the LAP were diffused in local radios and newspapers. The local administration bodies had a relevant role in the Programme in the motivation of the region – that was fairly positive. Most of the present promoters valued the individual support given by the LAG in each of the applications and in the definition/design of the project. Having this in mind, the open information sessions seem not to have been clarifying enough and there is no correlation between participation in the open sessions and the presentation of projects.
- (c) Most of the projects are individual and there is a trend to the diversification of sectorial activities, making the best of advantage around natural and productive resources. this individual approach in the promotion of projects related to available resources, is sometimes not accompanied by a strategic vision of the territory – this is, the promoter develops a project in a territory, but lives too closed in himself and is not opened to what happens around and to the potentialities that his territory can offer to him/his project. Summarising: there is a lack of a culture to work in partnership with other promoters.
- (d) Some local projects in partnership were presented, namely in the diffusion of the network for tourism in rural environment. This doesn't render invalid the fact that the mentality of individual promoters is not very open and that they are reluctant to build associations and to work in partnership.
- (e) In what concerns financing and due to centralization in this matter the management authorities are not able to answer immediately to the needs of promoters. The same does not happen with management and monitoring of the Programme – where the technical structure of the LAG has a supporting role to promoters that is considered satisfactory.
- (f) In this intervention area and through the supported projects, innovative activities in the existing sectors appeared – namely by the promotion and creation of a 'network' of new endogenous micro-poles, with the capacity of economic self-support and to create work placements inside the activities of a rural economy.

C. Operationalisation of principles/specificities of the LEADER method

One of the great obstacles was the start of the Programme with the late signature of the Financing Local Contract. Besides, there was the concern with the regularity in payments.

In what concerns the external factors that influenced positively the Programme implementation, the potentialities of the region had a determinant role. The following elements, related to the operationalisation conditions and to efficacy were also highlighted:

- the coherence of the territorial area influences positively the fight against isolation and human and physical desertification of the rural world;
- the insufficient initiative capacity of the possible promoters, is less connected to the lack of 'ideas' and is more linked to the fear of delayed financing/payments, as it happened in LEADER I. The referred fear includes the generality of activities – this fear is the main negative factor and gives origin to great expectations concerning the 'new' programme;
- the cooperation of the local administration bodies and the management structure influenced very positively the implementation of the Programme;
- there were some difficulties in the implementation due to the centralization of information, although this was important in the application phase.

Finally, in what concerns **learning for the future** (4.th group of questions in the session), the participants highlighted the following aspects:

- To maintain the principles of the LEADER approach that proved to be effective in the support to the needs in the framework of the Programme;
- more flexibility in the financial 'path', which must be less slow and more open/transparent.

2.4 Conclusions and recommendations

The main results give value to an approach based in the deep knowledge of the intervention territory, of its potentialities and weaknesses. Mainly, people wish to have a grounded technical diagnosis that can be adequated to a positive intervention in what concerns the transformation of local resources.

This transformation should favour the concerns/objectives of sustainable development – what sometimes involves a sensitizing work (the staff of the LAG, but also of public bodies with technical competences) around the norms and requirements of environmental nature to be followed in projects of industrial transformation, of the occupation of rural space, of the recuperation of ancient houses or the fruition of natural landscape.

In the recommendations to the local actors are also important the objectives related to the technical dimension of projects and to the need to give more importance to aspects linked to commercialisation in general, including 'design', packing and presentation to clients and also the integration in networks of valorisation of traditional/regional products.

The difficulties of the financial and administrative circuits justifies the need of a higher investment of private promoters in the organisation of documental and accounting files in order to facilitate the checking processes either of expenses or financial processing. A better organisation would also allow more consistent elements on the point of view of monitoring and evaluation by national coordination and by external evaluators

Concerning recommendations to the responsible – people and structures – for the design/elaboration of programmes, the main points refer to :

- flexibility in the administrative and financial rules and procedures. Both should be compatible with the dimension of projects, the competences of local actors and with their distance to the decision centres;
- the national programmes should include a strategy for financement, in such a way that the application of the selection criteria '(re)guides' the projects of private promoters to the most adequate financing instruments. In this way LEADER could support the projects of a smaller dimension, with local roots and a better capacity to produce situations of a better use of resources as well as creation of employment and income for local population.

3. Report on the evaluation at national level

3.1 Overview and synthetic description

Portugal benefited of a single operational programme for all the rural territories, separated in 48 intervention areas in the continent and the autonomous regions (Açores e Madeira).

The General Directorate for Rural Development, with the support of the European Commission, signed a contract with an external entity to develop a *Study for an intermediary and on-going evaluation of the LEADER II Initiative*, in which framework several reports were produced. The on-going evaluation up-dated the data on 31/12/99, through an adenda to the initial contract.

During the phase of the intermediary evaluation, the National Programme was object of assessment at the level of policies and problematics of rural development and there was a deep analysis of the key dimensions that were a requirement for the time of the evaluation. The table of contents gives an idea of the work developed.

- I. **Framing of the Programme:** problematics and policies of rural development that embrace the appreciation of LEADER in the context of these policies.
- II. **Diagnosis of the starting point of LEADER II,** with the characterization and typification of the intervention areas and analyses of the diagnosis made in the framework of the LAP.
- III. **Dynamics of financial and physical execution,** involving a global analysis and characterization and typification of the selected projects.
- IV. **Study cases of final beneficiaries,** with a synthesis view of the answers on the operationalisation of projects and typology of results.
- V. **Key dimensions of the intermediary evaluation,** judging the diagnosis and planning dimensions, the general conditions of efficacy of the initiative and the profile of adhesion and the plans carried out.
- VI. **Balance and recommendations** according to the criteria of opportunity and relevance, of rationality and internal and external coherence and with a set of recommendations on the point of view of the management and development of the Programme.

The main problems identified in the report refer to the following aspects:

- very unequal levels of cooperation/development between the regional structures and the sectorial departments;
- very limited complementarities with other community financed programmes;

- scarce results in what concerns partnerships and transnational cooperation;
- preponderance of the individual logics of the promoters that make impossible the implementation of projects based on threshold levels of associations of interests;
- weakness of the projects monitoring arrangements, with objective difficulties in their development at the level of the intermediary structures (e. g., Regional Directorate for Agriculture and Regional Coordination Commission);
- conflict between the need to speed up the execution rhythms and the need to make viable the philosophy of the Initiative.

On the phase of the continuous and final evaluation the report had the following chapters:

- I. **Dinamics in the selection and implementation of projects**, where besides the aspects of financial execution, the characterization and tipification of the approved projects was done.
- II. **Analysis of the organization and functioning of the LAG** according to their capacities and institutional dynamics to promote local development and the modalities of management and development of the LAP.
- III. **Analysis of complementarities in what concerns financing and local development** highlighting the real complementarities in the projects, namely training and the certification of local products and values.

This report includes a set of signed texts written by several experts who reflected on the problematics of services at a local scale, the answers given by social policies in depressed contexts, the socio-local animation for development, environment as factor of local development in the context of the valorisation of transversal priorities in the management of structural funds, namely in equal oportunities.

The European Commission followed the several phases evaluation phases, namely in the framework of the Programme Monitoring Units, where there was a point in the agenda for the external evaluator to present the reports and to speak on the status of the studies.

One of the aspects highlighted in the reports and in the discussions with the European Commission is associated to the LAG's responsibility – that manage public funds in an autonomous way – to stimulate collective action and the initiative for local projects, in order to stimulate an economical initiative that is oriented to the dinamization of local territories and the exploitation of endogenous resources.

In what concerns planning the recommendations value aspects as the technical/theoretical fundamentation of the LAP (correcting insufficiencies in what concerns the knowledge of the

territory), the reinforcement of the programmes management capacities and projects for development (a more demanding relation between results/effects and the added value of the interventions) and the adoption of perspectives for future sustainability, grounded on management and resources indicators and on middle/long term activity plans.

3.2 Overall assessment

The evaluation exercises are frequently seen as an intromission in the autonomy defined by the modalities of management of the global grant. As the external evaluation work proceeds and intermediary results are attained (reports with analysis and recommendations), some LAG change their position and the same happens with Programme National Management.

The National Management/coordination changes from a formal attitude (evaluation as an obligation that occurs from the community commitments) to a collaborative attitude that tries to understand in which way the external evaluator can contribute to a better efficacy in the Intervention, in the application of resources and in the relation with the LAG – inside the local monitoring committees (in the regions where they were built and functioned)

The work of the CB , mainly in the thematic plans, introduced positive and innovative elements, namely in what concerns the involvement of the LAG in participative evaluation, in this way benefiting from works developed in the framework of the European Observatory. The design and operational development of the PES method created – during a certain phase of the CB activities – great expectations towards results, namely in what concerns the development of learning at local level (diagnosis of the territory, strategic development plans for the intervention areas, bottom-up approach and partnerships, etc.).

The present phase, in LEADER+, the main concerns have a more self-centered nature, caused by the difficulties and constraints imposed by the management model adopted by the new programme.

However, in the geographical expert's opinion, the evaluation exercise of LEADER +, benefited at institutional level from the previous evaluation exercise (in the framework of LEADER II).

The first proposal of the National Programme was object of several critical appreciations, even previous to the ex-ante exercise. Those critics reflected the conclusions of the final evaluation of LEADER II that were not sufficiently incorporated in what concerned design/conception, planning and implementation.

The proposal for the National Programme was substantially reformulated in order to be appreciated by the European Commission and the text includes a grid with the adjustments that result of the incorporation of the recommendations of the ex-ante evaluation.

However, in the balance done at the moment, with the changes of the political cycle that occurred simultaneously with the approval and beginning of LEADER+, it seems that there is a low priority given to rural development in the public policies of the Ministry of Agriculture. The disconnection of the regulating functions of the Regional Directorates of Agriculture (more centered on bureaucratic and formal control questions) weakens the possibility of a better integration between the policies for the development of the territory and the development of rural economies.

Therefore, the recommendations for future evaluations are around three fundamental dimensions:

- clearness in the processes of conception/design and planning of policies in order to stimulate a more effective approach of structural funds, on the point of view of the development of the territory and of the sustainable exploitation of its natural/active and economical resources, etc.;
- flexibility in the modalities of management and implementation of the LAP in order to safeguard the specificities related to the nature and quality of partnerships, the initiative and of project capacities capacities (logistic and financial) of promoters and to the needs concerning technical support (organisational, productive, technological, commercial, ...);
- light information arrangements containing monitoring elements that can be useful either in a bottom-up relation (LAG/promoters) or in a top-down relation (LAG/manegement of the Programme), with consequences on the quality of the information to be sent to the European Observatory and European Commmission, in a retro-action rergister.

3.3 Relevant conclusions and recommendations of the evaluation reports

The following filled in grid answers this item and tries to reflect some of the essential aspects of the implementation and the kind of results/effects obtained by LEADER II in Portugal, in a broad vision that considers the 48 intervention areas in which the implementation of the Programme in Portugal was structured.

Summary appreciation from the regional evaluation report

Operational Programme: Portugal

	Implementation (methods, practices, limits, obstacles)	Intended or unintended effects	Recommendations
Area-based approach	<p>The LEADER flexible approach allows a local adaptation able to give origin to dynamics of exploitation concerning local resources.</p> <p>The elaboration of diagnosis in the intervention areas revealed imbalances between the variables of the characterization of the territory and the perspectives of strategic development and modalities of action, according to specific and operational objectives.</p>	<p>Strategies of dinamization adjusted to social and economical realities of the local territories, supported by selective diagnosis of the intervention areas.</p>	<p>Improvement in the theoretical fundamentation of the LAP turning them into real Strategic plans for local development, as a platform to the access of diverse financing instruments.</p>
Bottom-up approach	<p>The modalities of diffusion of the LAP to potential promoters, as well as the logistic organisation of the LAG – with branches and nucleus in several places of the intervention area – contributed to an effective relation with promoters.</p>	<p>The meaningful number of LAP that incorporate proposals and actions resulting of participative work of the basis and of others that result of the recuperation/extension of previous interventions.</p>	<p>Reinforcement of technical resources of partners in order to improve their intervention in the phases of conception/planning and management of the LAP.</p>
the Local Group	<p>Recruitment of qualified staff living in the intervention area for the LAG. With them it was possible to organise teams of a diversified background.</p>	<p>Capacity to integrate other technical competences than management, that can integrate useful dimensions to a better intervention by the promoters.</p>	<p>To improve LAG capacity to support promoters in the implementation phase of the projects.</p>
Innovation	<p>Difficulty in the transmission of new knowledge, not only on account of the high costs but also on account of the resistance of promoters of a higher age level. Difficulty in meeting partners to develop pilot projects in new cultures.</p>	<p>to set up workshop schools/training centres connected with traditional arts and crafts.</p> <p>Recuperation of estate heritage oriented to support the valorisation of local products in the market.</p>	<p>To use the new technologies in the recuperation and capitalisation of traditional knowledge (traditional production, associated with design, marketing and certification)</p>
Multi-sectoral integration	<p>Change in attitudes concerning entrepreneurship, on the point of view of a more integrated capitalisation of the local resources. Training for 'animateurs' for rural development.</p>	<p>Rehabilitation of jobs that are meaningful in the diversity of activities of the rural world.</p>	<p>Need of a more effective connection between the systems of education and of training for development.</p>

	Implementation (methods, practices, limits, obstacles)	Intended or unintended effects	Recommendations
networking	Levels of cooperation mainly institutional (for instance between the local entity, the Council and associations of producers). Exchange and sale of several LEADER products.	Training to the support to the management of projects of sauce-local 'animation'. This unintended result has the potentiality to produce good results in the future.	Better capitalisation of the thematic aspects in the constitution of networks (e.g. central booking TER, fairs of traditional products).
transnacional cooperation	Great dependence of the initiative of external partners. Insufficient 'investment' of integration in strategic networks.	Very limited transferability of experiences in management and local capitalisation interventions.	Better integration in thematic and strategic networks, to facilitate the access to information and to co-operative learning arrangements.
decentralised management and financing	Compared with other incentive systems, the solutions for the management of financement revealed to be positive. There were difficulties with payments that were delayed during the transition phase.	The proximity of the Initiative to local communities led to a new focus referring to the management of financial resources and the type of projects to privilege.	Maintenance of the decentralisation principles, with the assurance that the financial amounts are transferred on time so that the implementation of projects is not at risk.
Other important issues (Demonstrativity)	Development of new local solidarities and of neighbourhood. Good local work concerning certification of local products, whose recognition by the intermediary structures of the Ministry of Agriculture was limited.	Good regional reputation of Leader projects, as a contribution to highlight the possibility of exploitation of resources and opportunities.	Creation and development of simple arrangements for dissemination of good practices, e.g. from the results of pilot initiatives.

4. General appreciation of the geographical evaluator

4.1 General appreciation of the implementation and the effects of LEADER II

On the whole, we can conclude on a positive balance concerning implementation and effects of LEADER II in Portugal. The political options of enlarging the geographical areas and the population included (in the transition from LEADER I and II) reflected an option to enlarge the scope of final beneficiaries.

In the final phase of the Programme, the need to speed up the rhythms of implementation was not accompanied by clear guidelines for the priorities in the selection of projects. This led to decisions of supporting institutional promoters, with entrepreneurial and project capacities, instead of to deepen the animation methodologies for the development of the initiative, mainly of innovative projects and with demonstrative potentialities.

One of the important limits to the implementation of the programme refers to the relevance of the objectives connected with the valorisation of human resources. The training of competences for the development of rural development, recognised as a strategic instrument, was not seen as that in the dynamic both of promoters and LAGs.

The explanations are not linear – the predominant is that the eligibility requirements are filled with difficulty by rural dynamics (e.g. limits for the composition of the groups of trainees, kind of expenses for trainers in affected areas, duration of the actions, specificities of the areas ...). At the same time, either on the point of view of trainees or of the 'host' entities (enterprises, organisations...), there are difficulties in the organisation of actions: the wished training is punctual, specific, of direct answer. The constitution of classes for the training implies the involvement of several entities, due to the very small size of most of enterprises/organisations existing in the rural areas and therefore with a low capacity as employers. The evaluation of LEADER II proposed that together with a greater flexibility in the application of the rules of ESF to the predominant type of promoter and wished training. It should be constituted 'stock lists' of trainers with specific competences and that are able to assure an ambulatory service, that are paid with a 'cheque/service' by the individual promoters.

4.2 Critical reflection of the evaluation process

In what concerns problems and difficulties of the evaluation process we highlight the following aspects:

- the high level of expertise of the questionnaires, that causes understanding problems to the local and national responsible persons;
- rotation of the human resources inside the entities, what makes difficult to answer the questions referring to the amounts of, for example, the design/elaboration of LAP, the definition of the strategy for the territory as well as the implementation in the initial phase of the Programme;
- absence of co-ordinators during the implementation of the study, being impossible to get the answers from other people in the entity;
- difficulty of the entities to access to data referring to years 94-99 that are already in archives, what means a long and slow researching process
- difficulties in the identification of projects specifically addressed to a type of beneficiaries, since this implies to check the list of all projects to identify the promoter's main activity;
- Difficulty in the identification of projects specifically addressed to environmental preservation – in the several required dimensions – what also implies to go along the whole list (in paper) of the developed projects.

(These are tasks that have to be accomplished by the evaluator, because the LAG neither have the human resources nor show to be available to do the task).

- difficulties in filling in the fields related to financing, due to the fact there were many changes not only in the amounts referring to what was planned but also to the final executed amount, what brings doubts in the decision on what are the amounts to be used;
- Concerning the Management of the Programme, the manager who followed the implementation phase of the programme was replaced, and anyway he was not responsible during the design/planning phase; those facts were in the origin of several (and important) constraints concerning the answers to sensitive parts of Q34. The available technical staff didn't see themselves in a position to answer a meaningful part of the questions.

The main suggestions for future evaluations are to separate the quantitative executed dimension (to be filled in on the basis of information arrangements of the co-ordination structures) of the qualitative dimension – more associated to management and implementation of Local Plans, where the work of the direct intervenients should be concentrated. This implies a different distribution of financial resources and of time to the evaluation activities.

Model of implementation



