



WORKSHOP ESTABLISHING OPERATIONAL GROUPS
6-7 MAY 2014 - PRAGUE, CZECH REPUBLIC



Workshop "Establishing Operational Groups under Rural Development Programmes"

Organised by the European Commission and hosted by
The Czech Republic, Ministry of Agriculture – Managing Authority for Rural
Development Programme
Hotel Diplomat, Prague, Czech Republic

The European Innovation Partnership on "Agricultural Productivity and Sustainability" (EIP-AGRI) works to foster competitive and sustainable farming and forestry throughout the EU. It aims to contribute to ensuring a steady supply of food, feed and other biomaterials that is produced in harmony with the essential natural resources on which farming and forestry depends.

One important approach used by the EIP-AGRI is to encourage the bottom-up formation of so-called "Operational Groups". Operational Groups are partnerships that link farmers, researchers, advisors, businesses, NGOs and other actors to implement innovative projects that can be funded through rural development programmes.

During February – May 2014, DG AGRI is organising **a series of workshops focused on the practical aspects of establishing Operational Groups under Rural Development Programmes (RDPs)**. The fourth workshop will take place in Prague, Czech Republic on 7 May 2014. It will be kindly hosted by the Managing Authority for the Rural Development Programme of the Czech Ministry of Agriculture and participants from the Czech Republic, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Ireland, Bulgaria and Slovakia will be invited.

The workshop aims to give stakeholders practical information on how to set-up Operational Groups. The specific objectives of the workshop are:

- To introduce the **key principles** for practical implementation of the EIP-AGRI, with a specific focus upon setting-up Operational Groups with RDP funding
- To provide **existing examples** of: a) interactive innovation projects relevant to Operational Groups, and; b) relevant Innovation Support Services
- To facilitate the **exchange of knowledge, experience and ideas** between workshop participants – the *"EIP-AGRI multipliers"*
- To identify **practical next steps** for workshop participants – the *"EIP-AGRI multipliers"* - to stimulate / promote the practical implementation of the EIP-AGRI
- To **further develop the EIP-AGRI Network** by connecting workshop participants with each other and the EIP-AGRI Service Point



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Programme

Wednesday, 6 May

18:00 – 22:00 Social event kindly organised by the Ministry of Agriculture of the Czech Republic

Thursday, 7 May

08:15 - 09:00 Registration

09:00 - 09:30 Welcome *Ms Jaroslava Benes Spalkova, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Agriculture of the Czech Republic*

Introduction to the workshop *Mr Mark Redman, EIP-AGRI Service Point*

09:30 - 10:30 Setting the Scene

General principles and practice of the EIP-AGRI and practical recommendations for the setting up of Operational Groups

Ms Inge Van Oost and Ms Pilar Gumma Solernou, DG Agriculture and Rural Development

State of play with RDP / EIP programming in the Czech Republic

Mr Josef Tabery, Director, Managing Authority Department for Rural Development Programme of the Ministry of Agriculture of the Czech Republic

10:30 - 11:15 Break

11:15 - 13:15 Putting Principles into Practice

Introducing the EIP-AGRI Service Point *Ms Margarida Ambar, EIP-AGRI Service Point*

Concrete examples of Innovation Support Services for inspiration:

- Duchy Originals Future Farming Programme in the United Kingdom – innovation with farmers in the driver seat *Ms Kate Pressland, Soil Association*
- KANON Knowledge Centre: North East of the Netherlands – matching practice and research for innovation *Mr Herman Schoorlemmer, Applied Plant Research of Wageningen University*

Concrete examples of Interactive Innovation Projects for inspiration:

- Burren LIFE Project in Ireland – innovation based on traditional practices and a hands-on research approach *Mr Tom Kelly, TEAGASC*
- Upgrading cheese processing technology in Jesinek Agricultural Cooperative in the Czech Republic – bridging the gap between practice and research *Mr Tomáš Rátínger, Technology Centre ASCR*



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13:15 - 14:15 Lunch

14:15 - 16:00 Think Tanks (country group discussions)
Country groups will be guided through a set of questions focusing on the setting up of Operational Groups

16:00 - 16:30 Break

16:30 - 17:30 Feedback and Practical Next Steps
Conclusions from discussions in groups with the aim of identifying common key issues, reinforcing important messages and highlighting practical next steps

17:30 Closing of the workshop