Leader as a Driver for Rural Europe: Workshop for New LAGs

Workshop C: Transnational Cooperation and Networking under LEADER - in practice

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European Network for
Rural Development

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Overview

1) Why cooperate transnationally

   – a vision of a united Europe based on the LEADER approach

2) Technical Assistance:

   • Project preparation;

   • Project implementation;

   • Networking.

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Speaker: Thomas Müller

- Nationality: Austrian

- Volunteer in LEADER since 1999 (LAG "Hausruck")

- LAG-Manager since 2003 (LAG "Sauwald")

- Project examples:

  - Local: Tree-Top-Walking (www.baumkronenweg.at);

  - Interregional: 6-LAGs' web-marketing (http://maps.innviertel-hausruck.at);

  - Transnational LEADER+: Adding value to potato products;

  - Transnational LEADER 07-13: European Ox-Trails (www.oxenweg.net).

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1) Why cooperate transnationally – a vision of a united Europe based on the LEADER approach

- TNC (Transnational Cooperation) = one of the most ingenious & important features of rural development programmes all over the world.

- Why cooperate:
  - Income?
  - Jobs?
  - Adding value (monetarily)?

N24.de

Rob Peters (European Commission DG AGRI),
Leader subcommttee, November 2009:

„We have to bring Europe closer to the people and the people closer to Europe."

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Transnational Cooperation in rural development is...

„Creating and designing a united Europe.“

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The past: Europe was a continent with borders

The future: a Europe of the regions

Leader+
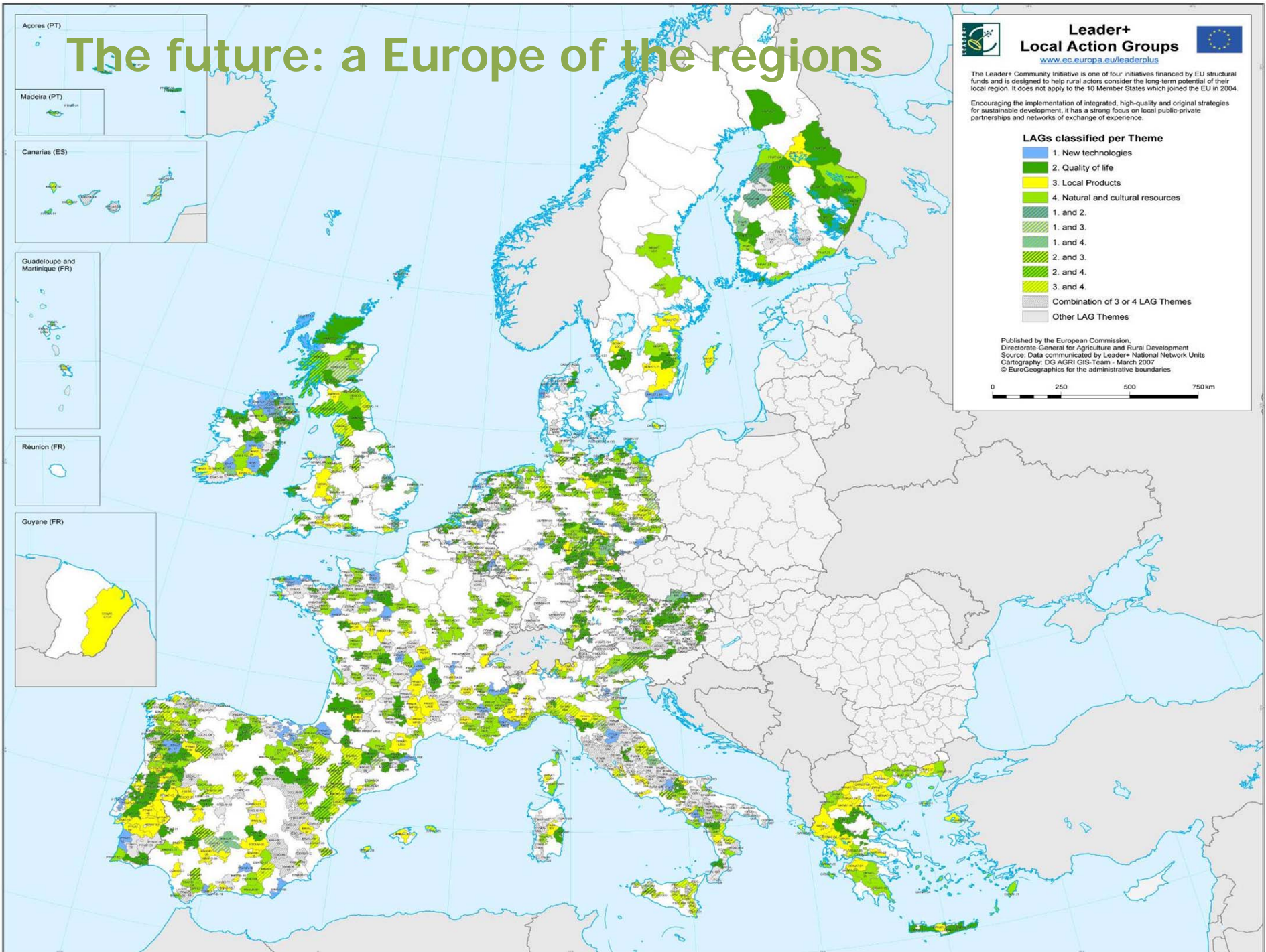**Local Action Groups**
www.ec.europa.eu/leaderplus

The Leader+ Community Initiative is one of four initiatives financed by EU structural funds and is designed to help rural actors consider the long-term potential of their local region. It does not apply to the 10 Member States which joined the EU in 2004.

Encouraging the implementation of integrated, high-quality and original strategies for sustainable development, it has a strong focus on local public-private partnerships and networks of exchange of experience.

LAGs classified per Theme
- 1. New technologies
- 2. Quality of life
- 3. Local Products
- 4. Natural and cultural resources
- 1. and 2.
- 1. and 3.
- 1. and 4.
- 2. and 3.
- 2. and 4.
- 3. and 4.
- Combination of 3 or 4 LAG Themes
- Other LAG Themes

Published by the European Commission,
Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development
Source: Data communicated by Leader+ National Network Units
Cartography: DG AGRI GIS-Team - March 2007
© EuroGeographics for the administrative boundaries

0   250   500   750 km

Açores (PT)

Madeira (PT)

Canarias (ES)

Guadeloupe and
Martinique (FR)

Réunion (FR)

Guyane (FR)

Global competitors:

Country	Population (million)	Country	Surface (million km²)
China (CN)	1 321.8	Russia (RU)	17.1
India (IN)	1 129.9	United States (US)	9.6
European Union (EU-27)	495.0	China (CN)	9.6
United States (US)	301.0	European Union (EU-27)	4.2
Russia (RU)	141.4	India (IN)	3.3
Japan (JP)	127.4	Japan (JP)	0.4

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Negative impacts of change:

- People loose their identities – feel unsafe

- Basis for nationalism and fear of foreigners

LEADER areas:

- strengthen the regional identity;

- provide the „backbone" for identity;

- stimulate competition among regions;

- help citizens to become & identify themselves as Europeans;

= a cultural border is better than an iron border!

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Globalisation + Localisation =

GLOCALISATION

- Think global, act local
- TNC under the LEADER approach is the perfect instrument to play this music!

Opportunities through TNC:

- Gives the regions names and the people faces;

- Provides opportunity to exchange experiences;

- Brings the people together with a chance of lasting connections;

= You don't have to explain Europe any more!

The role of LEADER

- Small area-based regions, like European families!

- LAG management available to fulfill supporting role.

- Efficient structure:

- LAG-Management, National Rural Network - Support Unit, EN RD
  Contact Point, Cooperation databases, Partner-Search tools...)

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Important role of the LAG Management:

- Thinking and acting as (transnational-) Networkers;
- Necessity to manage foreign language skills;
- Making TNC-projects „comfortable";
- Availability as full-service-interpreter for all issues;
= TNC is not only a job, it's a mission!

Lesson learnt:

If you have not experienced it, you won't feel it!

2) Technical Assistance

Two different approaches to TNC:

- PROJECT-based TNC

- AREA-based TNC

PROJECT-based TNC

- Project promoter with good idea is looking for cooperation-partners:
    - Local inside the LAG (e.g.: developing a local food or tourism product);
    - Within some neighbouring LAGs (e.g.: tourism marketing web platform);
    - Neighbouring country's LAGs (e.g. cross-border projects, nature and enviroment, culture, sharing human resources…);
    - LAGs from across in Europe (e.g. learning from each other, benchmarking, getting/creating new ideas…).

- Advantage:
    - Better access to markets, solutions, creativity.

- Disadvantage:
    - Increasing complexity and costs.

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AREA-based TNC:

- A region is looking for cooperation partners

- … not necessarily depending on future/concrete projects.

This is part of the process of a LAG's evolving characteristics:

- Actors and staff are thinking global;

- Cosmopolitan approach – you can't learn it!

- The own/specific regional identity becomes an important part of the wider European identity.

Technical assistance: PROJECT-based TNC

1. Create a clear & short concept: describe WHO is runs the project, what do you expect from partners, costs, contact details, languages spoken, time limit for feedback...);

2. Distribute the document via Network Support Units and the EN RD Contact Point to all LAGs across Europe;

3. Await feedback, carry out research about potential partners, direct email exchanges;

4. Letter of intent – establish, agree and sign;

5. Apply for LEADER funding – awaiting confirmation/approval;

6. Let's start!

Technical assistance AREA-based TNC:

1. Make use of official Partner-Search tools;

2. Write a summary about your LAG (key topics, goals) and distribute it via Network Support Units and the EN RD Contact Point;

3. Upon LAGs' respose, start an enquiry in order to exchange your/their thoughts about different themes;

4. Based on an analysis of the results of the enquiry, formulate a letter of intent and a project-description;

5. Continue with the steps described before (PROJECT-based TNC).

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Useful contacts & links:

- EN RD Contact Point, Brussels, with info and links to the National Rural Network Support Units: http://enrd.ec.europa.eu/

- EN RD Cooperation Guide: http://enrd.ec.europa.eu/leader/2007-2013/tnc-guide/en/tnc-guide_home_en.cfm

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