



**European Rural Networks'
Assembly**

Rural Networks self-assessment
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6th Meeting
Brussels – 16 December 2019

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EU RN Strategic Framework

General Objectives	Specific Objectives
1. Enhance participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase involvement of stakeholders - Establish a dialogue between farmers and the research community - Facilitate the inclusion of all stakeholders in the knowledge exchange process
2. Improve policy quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Facilitate the exchange of expertise and good practice - Improve the quality of RDPs - Support the evaluation of RDPs
3. Increase awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Play a role in informing the broader public on the benefits of rural development policy



RN self-assessment elements



Conducted

Summer 2019

October 2019

Presented

12th RN Steering Group
meeting
October 2019

6th RN Assembly
meeting December
2019



Self-assessment report

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Self-assessment report

Purpose

- Illustrates the outputs and results of the activities carried out by the networks within the Strategic Framework of the EU Rural Networks

Based on

- Self-assessment survey – 13 June - 1 August 2019
 - 12 questions collecting key stakeholder views on
 - i) fulfilment of the objectives of the Strategic Framework of the EU Rural Networks,
 - ii) experiences with Rural Networks' outputs and
 - iii) ideas for improvement of the Rural Networks' work
 - 139 respondents from 28 Member States (*2017: 156 respondents, 28 MS*)
 - RN Assembly, LEADER sub-group, Innovation sub-group, Expert Group on Monitoring and Evaluating the CAP (Grexe)
- Result indicators collected by the Support Units





Outputs and results of the EU Rural Networks

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EU RN – Main Outputs

Timeframe: 2014 – mid-2019

Main Events

	Number
ENRD Workshops & conferences	39
ENRD NRN meetings	14
ENRD TWG meetings	37
ENRD Thematic seminars	5
ENRD Evaluation capacity-building events	136
EIP Innovation workshops & seminars	32
EIP Focus Groups	38

Main Publications

	Number
ENRD Newsletters	58
ENRD Magazines	10
ENRD Thematic publications	10
ENRD Project brochures	9
Evaluation Working Documents	4
Evaluation Guidelines	6
EIP Reports	86
EIP Brochures	44
EIP Factsheets	47

**The ENRD & EIP-AGRI
events had a total of
16 141 participants**

**The total number of newsletter subscribers was
18 826, out of which
ENRD 7 332
ENRD Evaluation 3 851
EIP-AGRI 7 643**



GO1: Enhance Participation

Survey results and respondent comments

- ENRD activities lead to a greater involvement of various stakeholders in rural development and activities address their needs (71%)
 - More joint activities, as well as events for specific groups, and geographic events
 - Increased focus on thematic work and fostering of thematic networks
- Participation in the ENRD activities led to improved knowledge and capacities on implementation of rural development policy (72%)
 - Online materials, seminars, publications, workshops very good
- EIP-AGRI Network has succeeded in establishing a dialogue between farmers and research community (62%; 74% Innovation sub-group)
 - Greater involvement of farmers in EIP-AGRI activities, support to national level networks
- EIP-AGRI Network activities contribute to launch research activities based on farmer'/ foresters' needs (57%; 70% Innovation sub-group)
 - Increased role of farmers and innovation brokers, increased role for thematic networks



GO1: Enhance Participation

Preliminary result indicator

- The outcomes of all ENRD events were rated as good (3.1 – 3.4) by the participants of the events (scale: 0 – 4)

Steering Group reflections

- Improved targeting of events and information
 - Enhance the engagement of old and new (youth, socially excluded, civil society, municipalities, CAP pillar I) stakeholders
- Fostering thematic networks
 - Collaborative work and synergies to be encouraged by focussing on common issues, thematic areas and geographic clusters, use of participatory methods
- Support free exchange and build trust between different actors



GO2: Improve policy quality

Survey results and respondent comments

- ENRD successful in improving rural development policy quality (77%)
 - Analyses, studies, Thematic Groups, use of participative methods positive
- EU RN activities facilitate the exchange of expertise and good practice (general ENRD 88%; EIP-AGRI 79%)
 - ENRD website, working groups, and events mentioned as positive
- Information produced by the EU Rural Networks are used and shared (ENRD general 71%; EIP-AGRI 68%) . Dissemination is done typically through email, website, social media, newsletter, events, meetings.
- ENRD evaluation-related activities contribute to supporting the evaluation of RDPs (58%; Grexe members 67%)
 - More capacity building for evaluators and stakeholders, workshops, dissemination of Good Practices and examples of evaluation methods, and guidance on qualitative evaluations



GO2: Improve policy quality

Preliminary result indicator

- The participants' level of knowledge increased in every capacity building – event organised by the Evaluation Helpdesk

Steering Group reflections

- Capitalising on the neutrality and reach of the Networks
 - Support existing initiatives and act as mediators of policy exchanges
 - Stimulate new linkages
- Improve relevance and uptake of policy recommendations drawn up from the Networks
 - Focus on specific topics with key stakeholders, address broader issues, capacity building in and use of evaluation results
- Include flexibility in Network's action plans to allow them to adapt



GO3: Increase awareness

Preliminary result indicator

- Activities of the EU Rural Networks help to increase awareness about the benefits of the rural development policy (81%)
- General ENRD publications (79%) and website (75%) play a role in increasing awareness about the benefits of rural development policy

Preliminary result indicators (ENRD general)

- 7 332 newsletter subscriptions
- 1 509 490 page views
- 493 848 unique visitors
- 171 366 downloads



GO3: Increase awareness

Steering Group reflections

- Sufficient resources for communication activities
 - More interactive approach to social media: needs resources
- Informing about the benefits of networking for rural development policy
 - More focus on the benefits of policy, not only activities
- More targeted information
 - Streamlining communication through a filtering and identification of relevant content by topic to avoid overwhelming stakeholders with too much information
- Development of communication tools to enhance engagement + face to face
 - E.g. 'have your say' box on the Support Units' websites, key word tagging for the website, translating extracts of reports, webinars, farminars
- Communication as a Network activity
 - Exchanges with national actors, co-creation of information

Collaboration between EU RNs

Survey results

- 47 % consider collaboration between the ENRD and EIP-AGRI Networks as complementary and synergetic, 27 % answered 'neutral'
- NRN respondents most positive, MA and LAG most negative
- *Focus of written comments:*
 - Need for increased collaboration and synergies between ENRD and EIP-AGRI Networks, especially in AKIS for the future CAP
 - Joint activity plan
 - Joint events
 - Joint communication on shared topics
 - Collaboration on M16
 - Opposing views on the future of the networks
 - Combining the networks into one European Rural Network in the future
 - Two different networks with different focus and stakeholders





Thank you!

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