



Report on Transnational Cooperation Aspect of
the LEADER Event 2012

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Connecting Rural Europe

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Executive Summary

The objective of this report is to present results of the cooperation aspect of the “LEADER Event 2012: Local Development Strategies and Cooperation” held in Brussels 27-28 April 2012.

The purpose of this event was to bring together around 400 participants, including about 200 LAG representatives, from all 27 EU Member States, plus representatives from the National Rural Networks (NRNs), Managing Authorities, the European Commission and rural organizations in order to share experiences about the design and implementation of stronger local development strategies, and to promote a new wave of transnational cooperation (TNC) projects.

Introduction

In order to organise the TNC aspect of the event 7 key cooperation topics were established

- Local Development;
- Social/Educational & Culture;
- Environment;
- Entrepreneurship & Local Products;
- Food & Farming;
- Tourism;
- Other cooperation themes

All invited LAG representatives were contacted before the event and invited to submit:

1. Project offers
2. Cooperation Cards as an expression of interest for cooperation

This received information was used as a base to organise a LAG match-making around project offers.

The offers were combined with cooperation cards on the Appointment board during 2 days of the event.

1 LAG match-making results

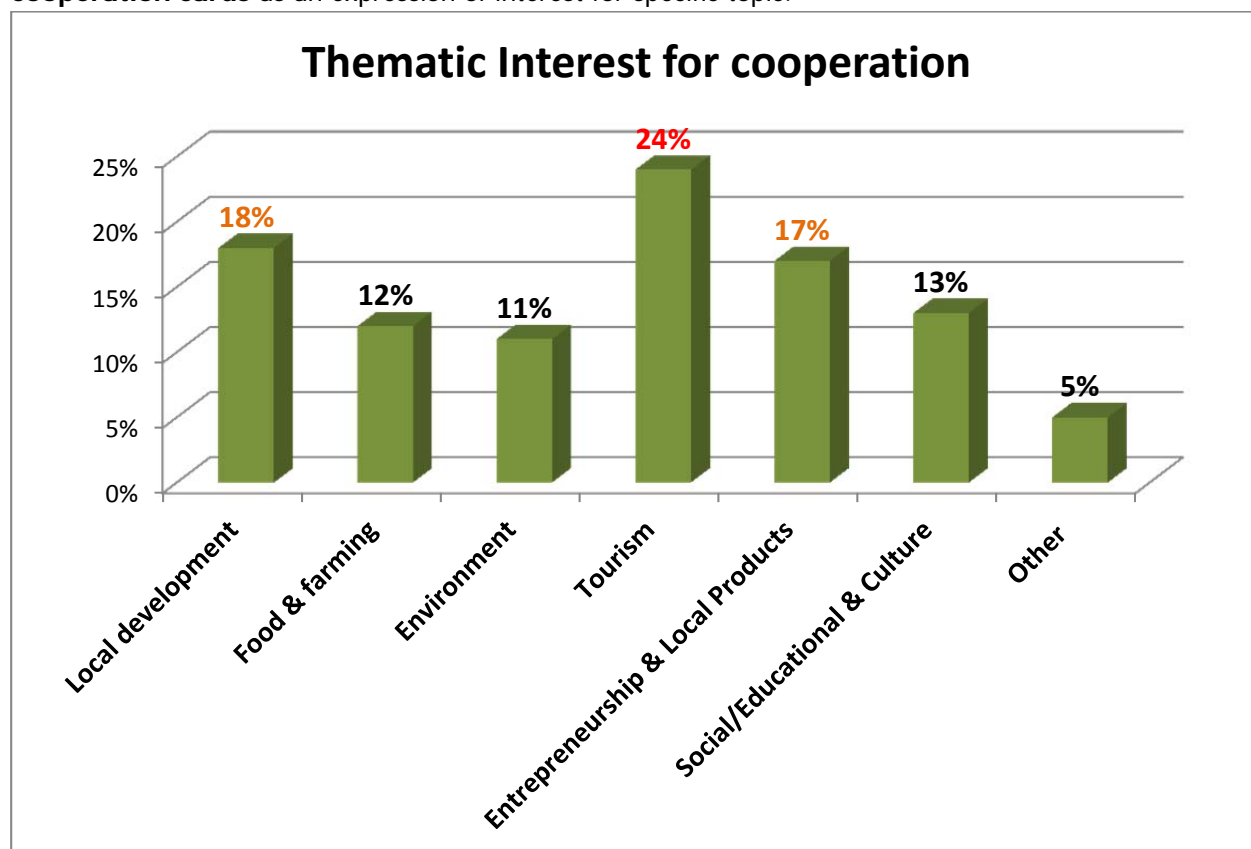
Before the event we received 55 project offers and 208 cooperation cards as an expression of interest for cooperation.

During the event more LAG representatives expressed their interest to establish TNC projects and new project offers and new cooperation cards were received.

The TNC meetings finally organised were based on 72 project offers¹ and 231 cooperation cards². In total 122 LAGs expressed interest for cooperation.

1.1 Thematic interest for cooperation

In general the biggest interest to establish cooperation was expressed for tourism with 24% which was followed by two topics: local development (18%) and entrepreneurship and local products (17%). Thematic interest includes 2 components: **project offers and also cooperation cards** as an expression of interest for specific topic.

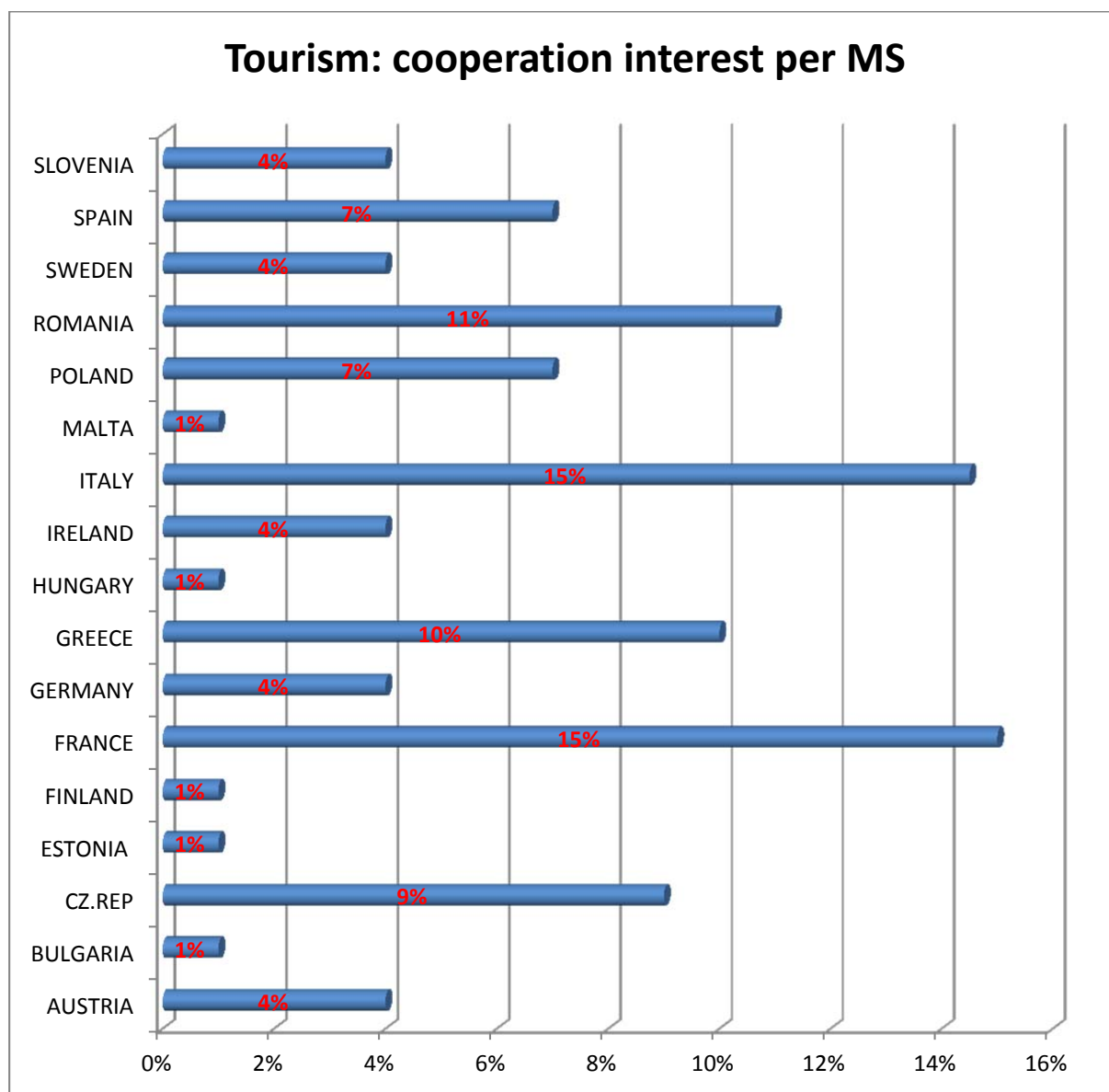


¹ Project offer: concrete project proposal including title, summary, local context & objectives of the project.

² Cooperation card: expression of interest for cooperation according to the 7 general topics: local development, food & farming, environment, tourism, entrepreneurship & local products, social/educational & culture and other

1.2 Tourism: cooperation interest per Member States

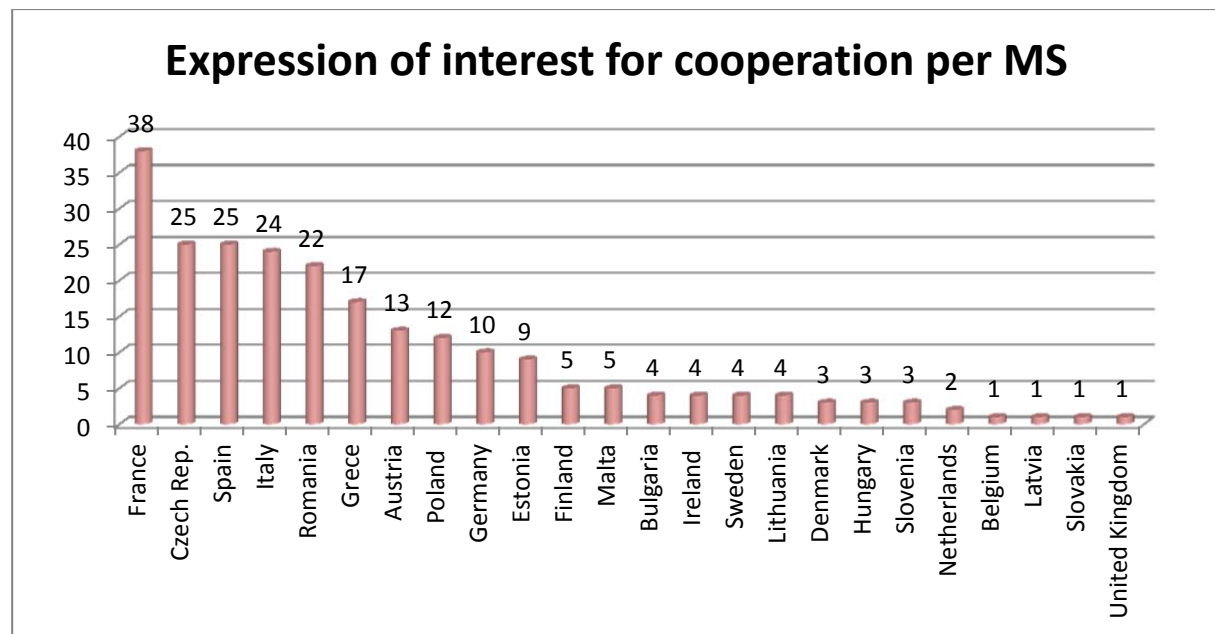
The graph below shows that tourism is the most popular topic for Italian and French LAGs. They are followed by Romanian and Czech LAGs who wish to also establish transnational cooperation under tourism.



1.3 Expression of interest for cooperation per Member States

The expression of interest for cooperation per Member States was established on the basis of the project offers and also cooperation cards submitted by LAGs representatives. The most important

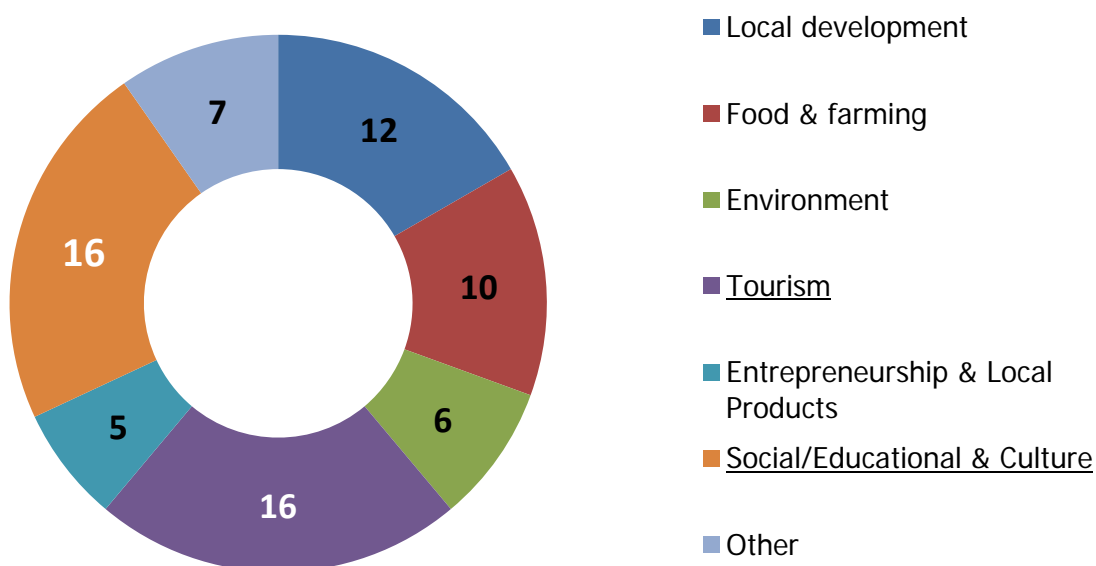
number of expression of interest came from French LAGs , followed by Czech and Spanish LAGs (each 25 expressions of interest).



1.4 Project offers received per topic

The most important number of concrete project offers received was related to social/educational and cultural development issues and also to tourism – for each of 2 topics - 16 offers were received. Those topics are followed by local development and food and farming.

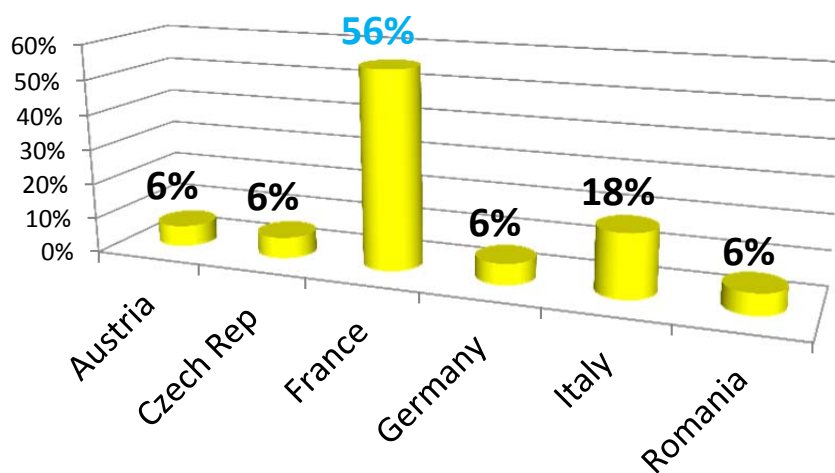
Number of project offers per topic (72 project offers received)



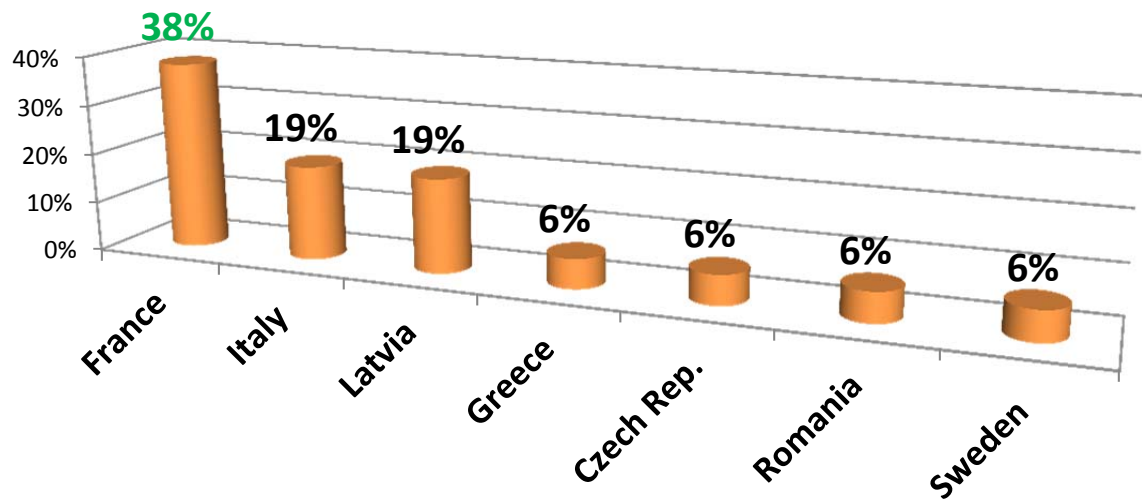
1.5 The most popular topics for project offers per Member States

The analysis above shows that social/educational/culture and also tourism were the most important topics for potential cooperation. In those 2 topics French and Italian LAGs sent the biggest number of project offers.

Social/Educational & Culture: project offers per MS



Tourism: project offers per MS

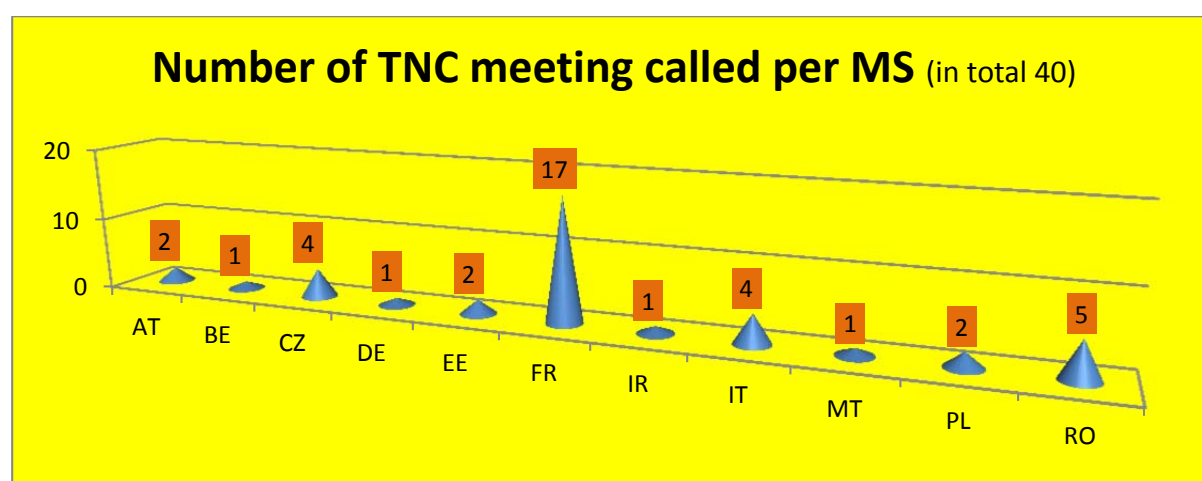


2 Meetings on Transnational cooperation (TNC)

The TNC meetings were organised during the evening of the 1st day of the event and on the 2nd day in the morning. The total number of the meetings foreseen on the appointment board was 66. However only 40 took place in reality, 22 out of 40 meetings taking place on the 2nd day of the event.

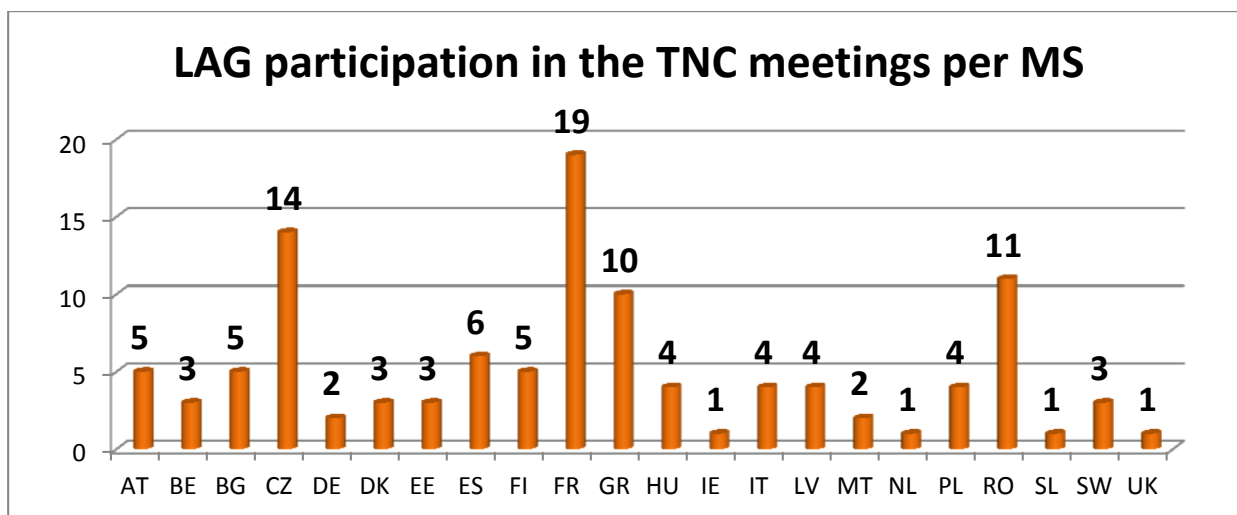
2.1 Number of TNC meetings organised per Member States

Total number of meetings which took place during the event was 40, out of which 17(43%) meetings were called by French LAG representatives. Romania, Czech Republic and Italy were also very dynamic regarding organisation of TNC meetings. Only 1 meeting out of 40 was called by a National Rural Network –again this was France.



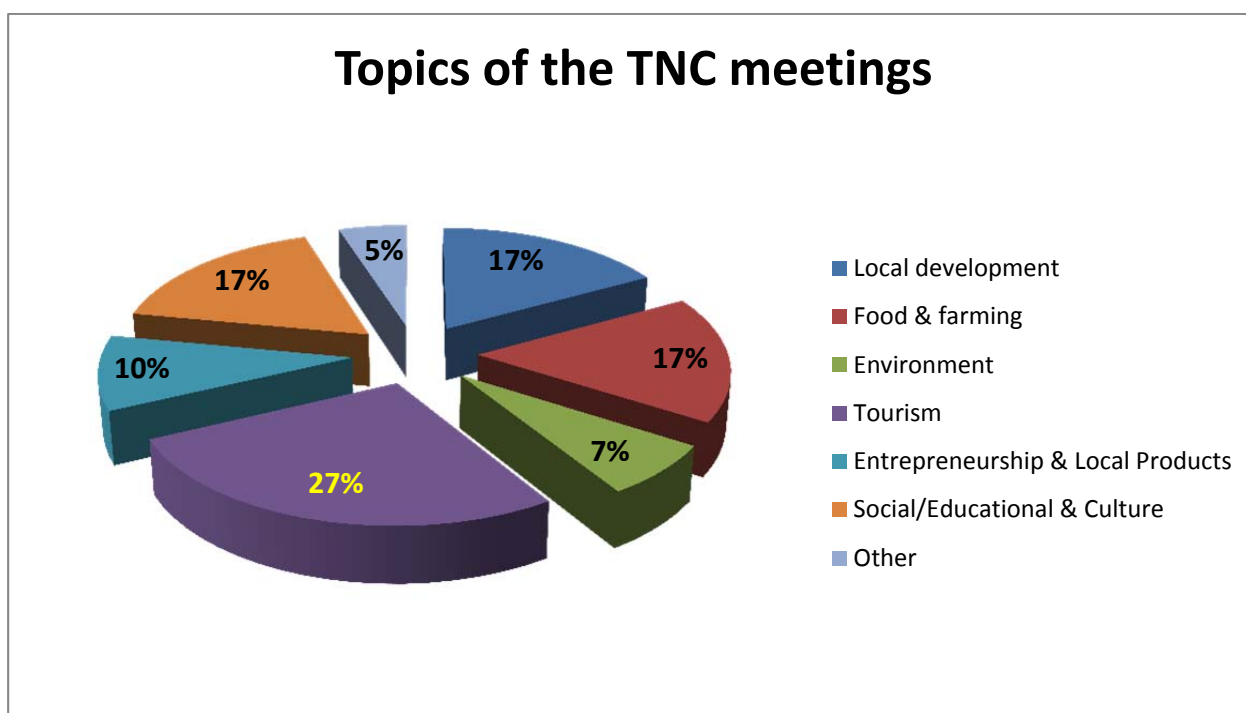
2.2 LAG participation in the TNC meetings per Member States

In total **151** LAG representatives participated in the TNC meetings of which 41 representatives (1 meeting was called by 2 LAG representatives) who called the meetings and **111 were the LAG representatives** joining the 40 meetings.



2.3 Topics of the TNC meetings

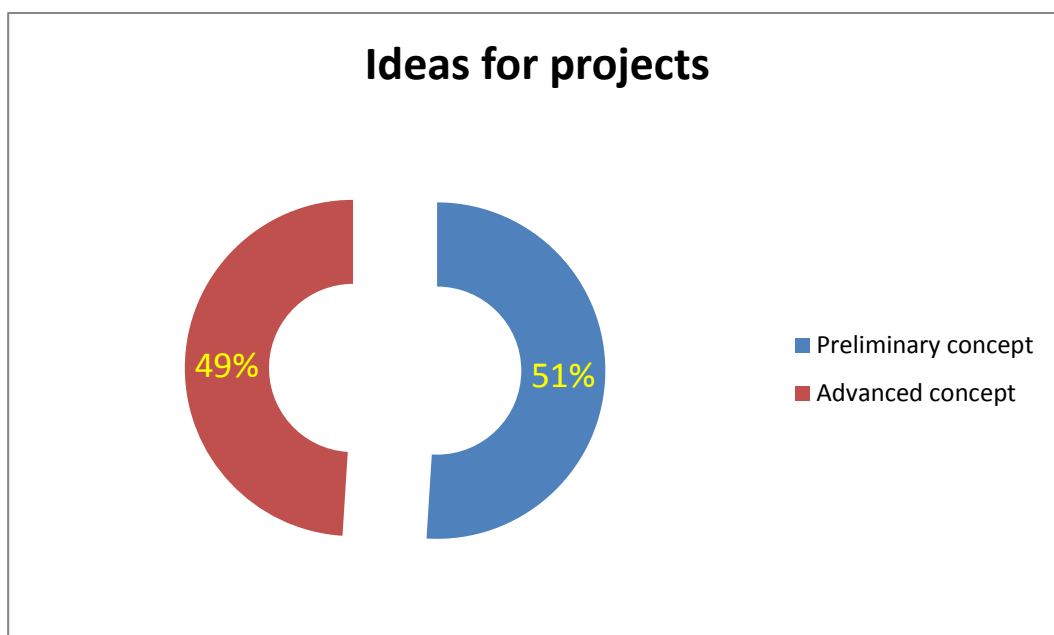
Tourism was the key topic of TNC meetings during the event. 27% of the TNC meetings were dedicated to the discussion on projects linked to tourism. On the second position there are 3 topics with exactly the same score - 17% for each of the following topics: Local development, food and farming and social/educational & culture.



Regarding other topics the discussions were focused for example on youth cooperation and exchange for LAG managers.

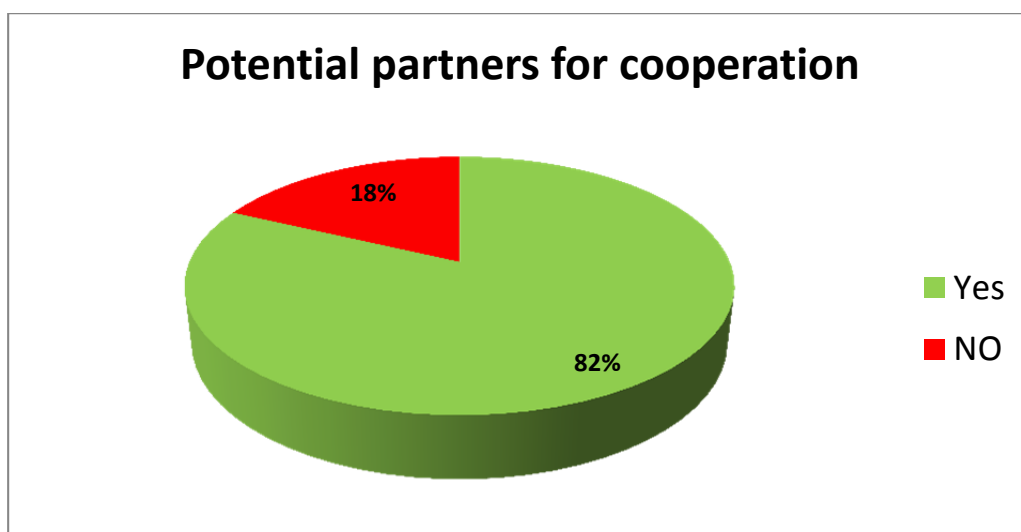
2.4 Ideas for projects discussed during the TNC meetings

During the TNC meetings we could observe a balance in the discussions between preliminary and advanced concept of the concrete project offers.



2.5 Potential partners for cooperation

In many cases the TNC meetings were very successful because they ended with a declaration from the participants to establish a TNC project. Only 18% of the TNC discussions had for the final result - lack of interest for cooperation.



Conclusion

According to the results from the TNC harvesting reports presented above it is clear that there is strong intention for future cooperations representing a new wave of cooperation projects. In the majority of cases the final result of the TNC discussions was: exchange of contact details in order to exchange further information about the potential project; this is related to the identification of common needs or common objectives to establish future actions.