

Operation of Rural Network Unit in Estonia ja Leader

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Rural Network functions and action plan

- **The mission of the Estonian National Rural Network (NRN) is to add value to the implementation of the Estonian Rural Development Programme (RDP).**

Keywords of Estonian Rural Network

- Keywords of Estonian Rural Network are the following:
 - a source of up-to-date information
 - a meeting place for the various sectors
 - increase positive approach to rural life
 - step by step development
 - flexibility - to accept new ideas
 - consideration of bottom-up initiative
 - development in time
 - Cooperation

Rural Network tasks

- Rural Network tasks:
 - Provide information of rural life in Estonia and EU
 - organisation of events for rural development
 - support activities as Leader information centre
 - collection, aggregation and dissemination of best practice and innovative approaches of **Estonian Rural Development Programme (RDP)**, incl. on the implementation of Leader method;
 - support to cooperation initiatives
 - administration of an operating website environment of network functions
 - International relations
 - Researches
 - Publications

Establishment of the Rural Network Unit by the Rural Economy Research Centre

The Estonian Rural Network Unit was established by the Rural Economy Research Centre (an authority under the administration of the Ministry of Agriculture), and began activities in:

January 2007 – preparatory activities

May 2007 – starts activities as support structure for Leader local action groups

April 2008 – Rural and Fisheries Networks Department:

- Rural Network Bureau
- Fisheries Network Bureau

Management and coordination of Rural Network

- For the management and coordination of network activities:
 - Network Unit ensuring the implementation of Rural Network administration and action plan
 - Network Cooperation Chamber, of which the members are selected according to the objectives of the axes of the Rural Development Plan and to former experience gained from networking

Role of the Rural Network Cooperation Chamber

- Role of the Rural Network Cooperation Chamber:
 - to advise the Rural Network Unit in the preparation and implementation of the action plan;
 - to assist in Rural Network coordination;
 - to advise the Rural Network Unit in the selection of thematic areas and in the coordination of work;
 - to make proposals to the Rural Network Unit for the establishment of thematic working groups, if necessary.

The Chamber for Cooperation (1)

Members:

Improving the competitiveness of agriculture and forestry:

- Estonian Private Forest Union
- Estonian Farmers Federation
- Union of Estonian Young Farmers
- Estonian Chamber of Agriculture and Commerce

Improving the environment and the countryside:

- Estonian Council of Environmental NGOs
- Estonian Council of Organic Farming Organisations
- Centre for Ecological Engineering

The Chamber for Cooperation (2)

Improving quality of life in rural areas and diversification of the rural economy:

- Estonian Village Movement Kodukant
- Association of Municipalities of Estonia
- Estonian Rural Tourism
- Network of Estonian Nonprofit Organizations
- Estonian Association of SMEs
- EUROPEA Estonia
- Green Riverland Partnership (Leader group)
- Valga Country Partnership Board (Leader group)
- Estonian Institute of Humanitarian, University of Tallinn
- Pärnu College, University of Tartu

The Chamber for Cooperation (3)

Implementing agencies involved in rural development and the implementation of the organizations:

- Institute of Economics and Social Sciences, Estonian University of Human Sciences
- EAS Enterprise Estonia
- Rural Development Foundation
- State Nature Conservation Centre
- Ministry of Agriculture
- Estonian Agricultural Research Centre
- Agricultural Registers and Information Board (ARIB)
- Private Forest Center
- Estonian Ministry of the Interior, Regional Development Department
- Rural Economy Research Centre

Support structure for LEADER LAG-s

- In the years of Rural Network start-up, Leader activities make up ca 90% of the action plan activities
 - efficient support to Leader action groups was important
- Now also the extension of the activities directed to farmers, environment and village improvement (axis 1, 2 and 3) are wider involved and by the activities of the in particular:
 - cooperation between different sectors,
 - cooperation examples
 - Cooperation forum
 - information exchange
 - Youth forum
 - Local food issues

Network and Leader Activities 2007-2008

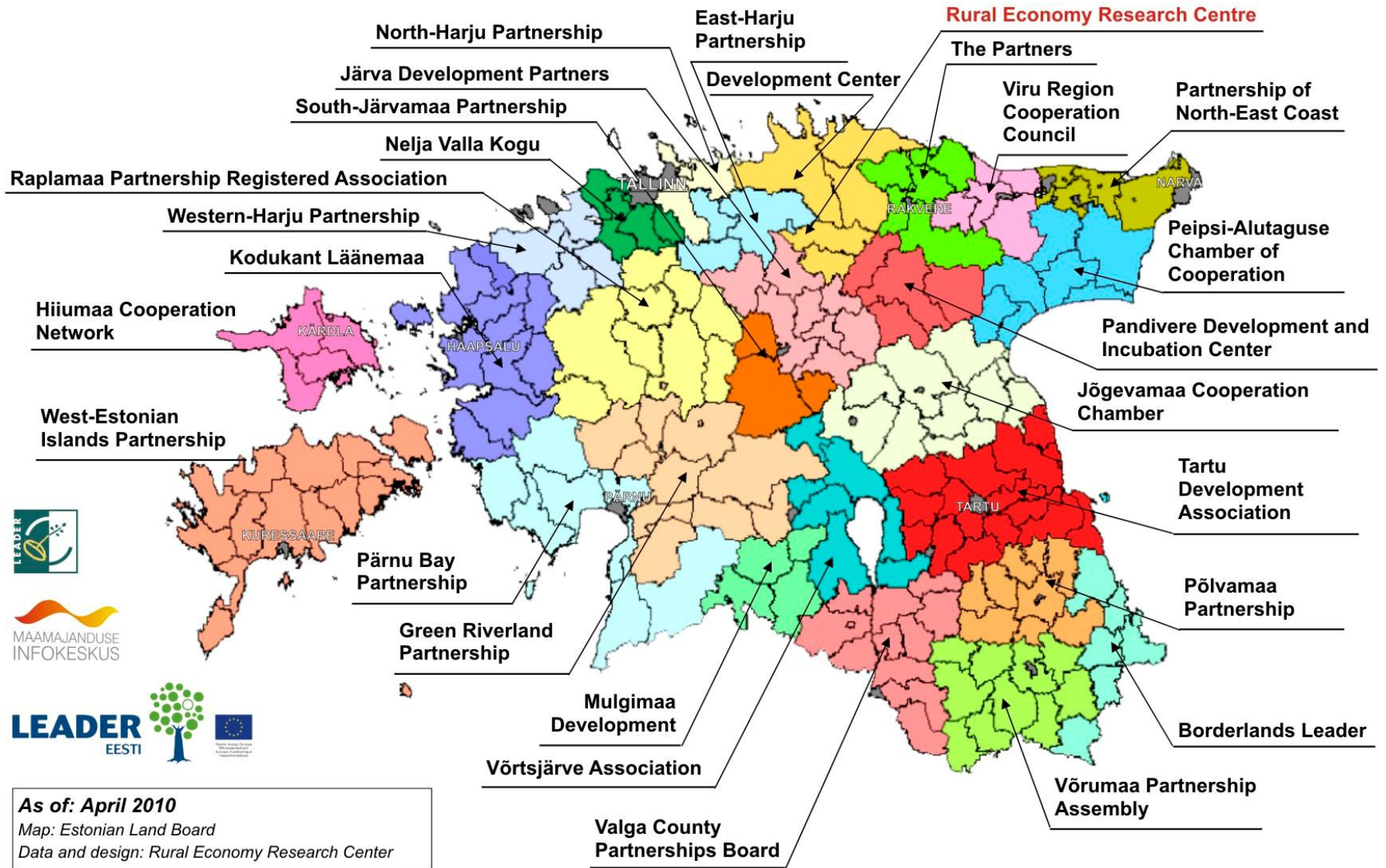
Main target for 2007-2009 activities –

- Assist LAG-s as smoothly as possible from old period to the new period

Seminars:

1. “How to build up Leader strategy” – seminars in regions
2. “What is Leader” – seminars for potential Leader-areas
3. “Rules for bookkeeping in Leader” infoday with Paying Agency
4. “Contracts and Law” – seminar with lawyer
5. “How to build up regional Leader-measure” – infoseminars in regions

LEADER ACTION GROUPS IN ESTONIA



Leader Summer-seminars 2008-2010

2008 Vanaõue, Estonia

- 170 guests from Estonian LAG-s and foreign guests from Latvia, Lithuania, Finland and Sweden.
- Three Discussion Panels: "Leader – innovation or an old bright idea?"
- Estonian Leader calendar 2009.
- Foreign guests market – partnership search possibility
- Team games

2009 Salascriva, Latvia

- 250 guests from Estonia and Latvia
- Sharing experiences with neighbours: Two parallel infoseminars about "Leader implementaion in Estonia and Latvia."
- Study-tour to Dikly district in Latvia.

2010 Jänedä, Estonia

- 200 guests (with Fishery groups) and guests from Finland, Latvia and Lithuania.
- Thematical workshops of best parctice projects in 8 themes

International co-operation

- To support international cooperation:
- Partnership search assistance database
- Co-operation with EU Commission (DG AGRI) and memberstates' rural networks
- Participation of committees, thematic work-groups and focusgroups. Estonia+Finland leading focusgroup 3 on international Leader cooperation theme.
- Organise study tours (Denmark, Sweden, Germany, Austria, Latvia-Lithuania-Poland, Slovenia)
- Invites our partners to Estonia
- Baltic-Nordic Network
- Support participation of Estonian specialists of thematic seminars, conferences and working-groups (social-farming, forestry, entrepreneurship)

Support structure for axis 1, 2 and 3

The extension of the activities directed to axis 1, 2 and 3 are wider involved :

- farmers,
- environment and
- village improval

and by the activities of the in particular:

- cooperation between different sectors
- cooperation examples
- Cooperation forum
- information exchange
- Youth forum
- Local food issues
- Thematic study-tours

Support activities

- To visit LAG-s infoday's, seminar's, meeting's, training's, etc - to perform presentations or explain about Leader principles, EU Leader best practice, current Leader situation in Estonia, new period, etc.
- Consultations by telephone
- Represent Leader info in local fair's – Farmers Days, Farmers Fair

Spread of information about rural life

Internet Website www.maainfo.ee - information about:

- Leader events around Estonia.
- Rural events around Estonia
- Ministry of Agriculture and Paying Agency
- Seminars
- International events
- Information about EU countries NDP and Leader
- Important regulations or links

Weekly e-newsletter in every Tuesday e-newsletter "Võrgukiri" - important events and information

Handbooks, handouts and other training materials

- Estonian NNU composed a handbook "**Developing Local Initiative – Leader- approach – The Handbook for Building Up Strategy for Leader Territory**" – May 2007
- Photos from NNU events

Media

- Teleprojects in cooperation with the Estonian Public Broadcasting
 - in 2008: 45 video clips about rural life and.
 - in 2010: 30 videoclips of Leader and EDP best practice in ETV evening program
- Articles about Leader and Network Unit in different nationwide, regional, rural organisations or LAG newspapers, magazines, handbooks, etc.
- Interviews in Radio and TV
- Publications (Leader calendar, banners, Leader best practice book 2010 in Estonian and English)

Agricultural fair MAAMESS

- Since 2008 Rural Network Unit has been participated in Estonian biggest Agricultural fair MAAMESS.
- In year 2010 DG AGRI was attending the fair with its stand.
- Estonian NRN has been in cooperation to find local projects to represent beneficiaries of RDP 2007-2013 such as:
- Imavere ostrich breeding farm, Local food project „UMA MEKK“, Development of food network in South-Estonia, Sustainable tourism network Genuine Experiences in Lahemaa, Center of trout fishing „Oxforell“ and NGO Sport-club LaitseRallyPark.

Researches

“Implementation of LEADER activities in Estonia”

(October 2008 to January 2009.)

The part of the survey was systematised examples of best practice of Leader activities and the analysis of all 24 action groups.

“Practical examples of joint marketing of agricultural products (on local level)”. (November 2008 - February 2009)

To find examples of joint marketing of agricultural products produced and processed within joint activity of agricultural producers and other representatives of the sector of enterprise.



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THANKS! 😊

Ave Bremse 😊

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