

## BELGIUM

# Knowledge transfer

**Location**  
Flanders

**Programming period**  
2014 - 2020

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n/a

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**Implemented by**  
Flemish National Rural  
Network

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The Flemish NSU organised a series of Learning Networks for LEADER meetings focussing on specific topics, in order to support the exchange of information, invite topic experts and improve LEADER and CLLD implementation.

### The challenge

The idea for the creation of a network for specific topics came from one of the 12 LAG coordinators in the Flanders, in order to learn from each other through informal meetings and the creation of cooperation projects at a later stage. All other LAGs in Flanders were interested, so the NSU organised the Learning Network, with a start-up meeting in June 2015

The LAGs wished to identify themes on which they could exchange knowledge, and there was a desire and need to identify common topics. All 12 LAGs were interested in the development of a network, and presented their themes to the NSU.

### Main steps and features

There are four key themes in the Local Development Strategies of the Flemish LAGs:

- Sustainable Villages (7 LDS)
- Regional Identity (9 LDS)
- Nature & Agriculture Education (5 LDS)
- Poverty and vulnerability in the agricultural and rural community (6 LDS)

Within each workshop, discussion on one of these themes took place. There was a discussion why the LAGs selected these themes, but also project examples were discussed, and experts on these four themes were identified.

On the first meeting on 29th June 2015, 11 from 12 LAGS attended the first meeting.

The NSU has a lot of information to plan learning networks in the future. In the coming learning networks, there will be focused on one of these four themes. The format of the learning networks can be different, depending on the topic: for example discussions among LAG members, discussions among LAG coordinators, discussions with experts, project visits, and excursions. The LAGs themselves are invited to suggest experts and projects relevant to the themes.

Costs for the start-up meeting in June 2015 were covered by the NSU, and thereafter LAGs will look to host meetings, particularly where the topic is relevant to them.

### Results

The opportunity was to have peer-to-peer learning on themes which are important to the LAGs, and the meetings are held on a regular basis. The format of the meetings and the process of developing the themes enables all LAGs to participate.

### Challenges and lessons

- ❑ If the appropriate themes are selected which are relevant to the widest group, meaningful exchanges can take place involving the full range of actors.
- ❑ It is important to enable self-selection of expertise and knowledge from within the LAG base.