

## RDP analysis: Measure 16 ‘Cooperation’

# M16.10

## Other forms of cooperation

In 2015, the Contact Point of the European Network for Rural Development (ENRD CP) carried out a broad analysis of the 2014-2020 Rural Development Programmes (RDPs). The following text forms part of a series of summaries outlining the information gathered on specific Measures (M) and sub-Measures. The summaries aim to provide an overview of the common trends and main differences in the programming decisions taken across the range of RDPs. If you believe that any of the information presented does not accurately reflect the content of one of the RDPs, please communicate your concerns to [info@enrd.eu](mailto:info@enrd.eu).

Where specific RDPs are referenced in the analysis, they are indicated with the official EU country codes (e.g. EE for Estonia). In the case of regional RDPs, the name of the region is given after the country code (e.g. IT-Lazio).

### 1. Regulation background

#### 1.1 Measure 16 cooperation<sup>1</sup>

Supported actions under Measure 16 (M16) and its sub-Measures are implemented by groups of at least two cooperating entities (except in very specific cases of pilot projects). In this report we will refer to these cooperating entities, which includes networks, clusters, EIP Operational Groups and others, using the term ‘cooperation group’.

According to the Rural Development regulation (EC 1305/2013), cooperation groups supported by M16 are expected to implement projects fostering, “*cooperation approaches among different actors in the Union agriculture sector, forestry sector and food chain and other actors that contribute to achieving the objectives and priorities of rural development policy...*”

M16 sub-Measures offer potential support for:

- the establishment and running of cooperation activities, covering the cooperation groups’ and the projects’ coordination and organisation costs, and
- the carrying out of projects, covering the direct costs that arise from the activities of the project.

However, RDP Managing Authorities may decide to support only the creation and running cost of the cooperation group under Measure 16 and fund the direct project costs (such as investments) under other RDP Measures.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Reg. 1305/2013 Art.35

<sup>2</sup> “Where support is paid as a global amount and the project implemented is of a type covered under another measure of this Regulation, the relevant maximum amount or rate of support shall apply.” Reg. 1305/2013 Art.35.6

## 1.2 Sub-Measure 16.10

**Sub-Measure 16.10 (M16.10)** provides support for **any other cooperation activity that does not fall under the categories identified by sub-Measure 16.1 to 16.9 and that contributes to the achievement of the priorities of the rural development policy.**

Paragraph 2 of art. 35<sup>3</sup> introduces the types of activities suitable for support. The words "in particular" indicates that **the cooperation activities presented in Art. 35 do not form a closed list** and that the Member States (MS) have the freedom to programme support under M16.10 for other types of cooperation activity. In such cases, RDPs are requested to provide a sound justification for the introduction of alternative categories.

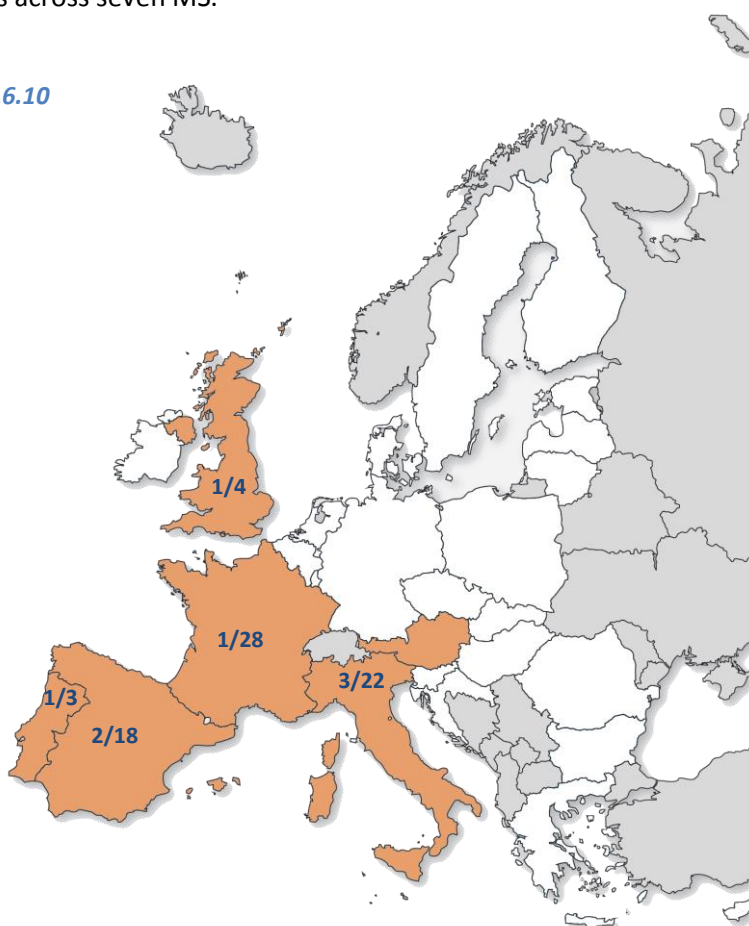
The only restriction that applies to M16.10 is that it should not be used to programme new categories similar to other M16 sub-Measures with the aim of bypassing their specific restrictions for support provision.

## 2. RDPs programming the sub-Measure

M16.10 is programmed in nine RDPs across seven MS.

*Table 1 - List of RDPs programming M16.10*

N	RDPs <sup>4</sup>
1	Austria (AT)
2	ES-Andalucia
3	ES-National
4	FR-Champagne-Ardenne
5	IT-Basilicata
6	IT-Lazio
7	IT-Lombardia
8	PT-Mainland
9	UK-Scotland



*Map 1 - RDPs programming M16.10*

*For MS having regional RDPs, the map indicates the number of RDPs that programmed M16.10 out of the national total.*

<sup>3</sup> Reg. 1305/2013

<sup>4</sup> Belgium (BE); Germany (DE); Spain (ES); Finland (FI); Italy (IT); United Kingdom (UK).

### 3. Scope of the RDP programmed activities

Given the low number of RDPs programming M16.10 no general trends can be identified among them. According to the information available, the following boxes present case-by-case the programming choices of the RDPs that programmed M16.10.

#### Case 1: Set-up networks, clusters and cooperation among organisations

##### RDP: Austria

The Austrian RDPs planned three specific operations under M16.10:

**Objective** Two specific operations under M16.10 support **the establishment and operation of new clusters and networks**, as well as new forms of collaboration within existing clusters or networks, aiming at supporting the implementation of new projects in the fields of **sub-Measures from 16.2 to 16.9**.

**Cooperation group** In the case of support for clusters the following actors are eligible: grouping of legal entities and associations, independent companies and institutions, including start-ups, small, medium and large enterprises as well as counselling services and/or research institutions.

In the case of the establishment of networks, the cooperation group has to cover at least two federal provinces.

At least two actors have to cooperate.

**Financial aspects** Costs for materials and staff are eligible for support.  
Applicable support rates:

- Where the undertaking is of no relevance with regard to competition regulations: 80% of eligible costs.
- Where an undertaking falls under the scope of competition regulations:
  - if support is provided as de-minimis subsidy: 80% of eligible costs; or
  - within the frame of an approved state-aid subsidy: 50% of eligible costs.

**Objective** The third specific operation under 16.10 supports **cooperation among producer groups, and producers' organisations, cooperatives and industry/branch associations**. This specific operation supports: coordination actions among the entities involved in the cooperation group, studies on the area concerned, the creation of business plans, and organisation of events and training for the recruitment of new members.

**Cooperation group** Groupings of legal entities and associations registered in Austria of the following types: associations of producer organisations, agricultural cooperatives, producer organisations, associations of producer groups or cooperatives with other actors in the value chain, sector associations.

At least three actors must be involved, and at least one partner needs to be a producer organisation or a cooperative. However, the group should not solely consist of cooperatives. Forms of collaboration solely based on actors from the fruit

and vegetables sectors, of which one receive support under Re. EU 1308/2013 are not eligible.

**Financial aspects**

50% of eligible costs will be supported and the minimum support rate per project is set at € 10 000.

**Case 2: Studies for more efficient small agro-food enterprises**

**RDP: ES-Andalucia**

**Objective** M16.10 support cooperation between two or more entities conducting: feasibility studies, studies on firms' integration, industry integration and agribusiness integration, business plans, management plans or equivalent instruments.

This Measure expects to achieve a **higher knowledge on how small and less competitive stakeholders from the agro-food sector can achieve a higher level of efficiency.**

**Cooperation group** The cooperation group must be made of private entities regardless of their legal form and at least one entity of the public administration.

EIP Operational Groups are excluded from access to this sub-Measure.

**Financial aspects**

70% of eligible costs.

**Case 3: Innovation in the bio-economy sector**

**RDP: FI-Mainland**

**Objective** M16.10 supports **cooperation in the bio-economy sector**, particularly aiming at the:

- development of **innovative high value-added products**; and
- implementation of **projects targeting the entire production chain**, such as the organic food supply chain.

The sub-Measure supports new innovative processes and technologies to mitigate and adapt to climate change as well as new, innovative environmental practices based on cooperation.

Projects must include the involvement of different sectors, must include needs analysis of micro-enterprises and businesses and may run in cooperation with EIP Operational Groups.

The projects can also deal with decentralised energy production, resource efficiency and business models.

**Cooperation group**

A cooperation group can involve public or private actors, SMEs, research and development organisations, foundations, educational institutions, municipalities

	and associations.
	The cooperation group must have a leader that takes responsibility for project implementation.
<b>Selection criteria</b>	<p>The applicants must submit a plan detailing both the project implementation and how project achievements will be disseminated.</p> <p>The project must have a minimum duration of three years and a maximum duration of five years.</p>
<b>Financial aspects</b>	<p>100% of eligible costs will be supported for clusters and pilot projects including a maximum of 10 companies.</p> <p>Budget rate will respect the 'De Minimis' rule.</p> <p>The RDP foresees the use of a lump sum.</p>

#### Case 4: Fostering collaboration for employment in agriculture and forestry

RDP: FR-Champagne Ardenne

<b>Objective</b>	<p>M16.10 will support cooperation action to identify <b>new pathways to foster employment</b>. M16.10 in particular aims to support <b>actions among actors that usually do not work together</b>. Cooperation will focus on the following themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Young farmers and generation renewal.</li> <li>• Reconciling offer and demand in terms of job opportunities available in the agriculture, viticulture, forest and food sectors.</li> <li>• New opportunities and markets for the agricultural and forest sectors.</li> </ul>
<b>Cooperation group</b>	Cooperation actions are expected to involve public institutions, private actors from the food and forestry sectors, innovation/research centres, sectoral associations, non-profit organisations.
<b>Selection criteria</b>	<p>Projects must relate to <b>promotion of employment in rural areas</b>, in agriculture, forest or food sectors. Selection criteria will take into account the number and the diversity of partners involved as well as their place along the supply chain.</p> <p>Projects must run for a maximum period of three years unless duly justified (e.g. environment/climate change oriented projects).</p>
<b>Financial aspects</b>	<p>The minimum support per beneficiary is of €6 250.</p> <p>Support rate is 80% of eligible costs.</p>

#### Case 5: Strengthening the supply chain

RDPs: IT-Basilicata, IT-Lazio and IT-Lombardia

<b>Objective</b>	In Italy the three regions of Basilicata, Lazio and Lombardia will use M16.10 to support <b>cooperation actions among actors in the agro-food and forestry sectors</b> .
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	<p>Actions supported include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• market studies;</li> <li>• knowledge transfer and communication of innovative practice;</li> <li>• promotion of new technologies;</li> <li>• integration of companies and creation of vertical and horizontal networks within the supply chain; and</li> <li>• creation of credit tools to increase firms' credit access.</li> </ul>
<b>Cooperation group</b>	Private actors representing the supply chain, research institutes and other private institutions.
<b>Selection criteria</b>	<p>Among the selection criteria great importance will be given to the <b>extent to which the cooperation group is representative of the whole supply chain.</b></p> <p>Preference goes to newly constituted cooperation groups or existing ones launching new activities and to cooperation groups having supporting actors, i.e. research actors and banks.</p> <p>Additionally, IT-Lazio requires that all M16.10 projects be funded through M04 and IT-Basilicata specifies that projects must last for a maximum of five years.</p>
<b>Financial aspects</b>	<p>IT-Basilicata and IT-Lazio set a support rate of 100% of eligible costs.</p> <p>In IT-Lombardia the support rate is set at 100% of eligible costs, with the exception of projects in the forestry sector and projects on agriculture diversification that will be financed only for 50%.</p> <p>Projects implemented within the frame of other Measures will be supported according to rates related to these Measures.</p>

### Case 6: Support to Inter-professional Organisations

RDP: PT-Mainland

<b>Objective</b>	M16.10 aims to support the implementation of <b>Action Plans to be implemented by Inter-professional Organisations (IO), within the agriculture, agro-food and forestry sectors.</b> The sub-Measure aims at strengthening the cooperation among agents and to support self-regulation initiatives that incentivise the use of better practices.
<b>Cooperation group</b>	The beneficiaries of the sub-Measure are exclusively <b>Inter-professional organisations (IO) of agriculture, agro-food and forestry sectors.</b>
<b>Selection criteria</b>	<p>Selection criteria will concern mainly the representativeness of IO in the sector, and the quality of the Action Plan.</p> <p>The Action Plan must cover a three years' period.</p>
<b>Financial aspects</b>	Support rate is set at 50% of eligible costs and the maximum budget is of €200 000 for a three-year period.

### Case 7: Common Grazings Committees

#### RDP: UK-Scotland

<b>Objective</b>	M16.10 will support formally-constituted <b>Common Grazings Committees</b> that have oversight and management responsibility over the use of <b>grazing land in shared use within remote and rural crofting communities</b> . The Common Grazings Committees will be responsible for coordinating delivery of joint investments that result in the improvement of the agricultural land. For this reason, M16.10 is expected to be implemented together with M04 'Investments in physical assets'.
<b>Cooperation group</b>	The beneficiaries will be only Common Grazings Committees recognised as such by the national authorities.
<b>Selection criteria</b>	<i>'The association to be established must be appointed by those with joint rights to a properly constituted common grazing registered in accordance with the statutory duties contained in national legislation'</i> (UK-Scotland RDP).
<b>Financial aspects</b>	One-off standardised cost of £500 (€636).