

RDP analysis: Measure 16 ‘Cooperation’

M16.7

Non-CLLD strategies

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.

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 cooperation¹

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.²

¹ Reg. 1305/2013 Art.35

² *“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 16.7

Sub-Measure 16.7 (M16.7) provides for: **support for the implementation of local development strategies by public and private partnerships, other than the Community-Led Local Development (CLLD) strategies implemented by the Local Action Groups (LAGs) funded under M19.**³

The sub-Measure aims to support Local Development Strategies (LDS) that are less comprehensive than the strategies funded under the CLLD approach (M19). LDS funded under M16.7, in fact, are expected to focus on few needs identified in a specific area.

2. RDPs programming the sub-Measure

M16.7 is programmed in 29 RDPs across 3 Member States (MS).

Table 1 - List of RDPs programming M16.7

N	RDPs ⁴
1	DE-Baden-Wuerttemberg
2	DE-Hessen
3	DE-Niedersach./Bremen
4	DE-Nordrhein-Westfalen
5	DE-Sachsen-Anhalt
6	FR-Alsace
7	FR-Aquitaine
8	FR-Auvergne
9	FR-Basse-Normandie
10	FR-Bourgogne
11	FR-Bretagne
12	FR-Champagne-Ardenne
13	FR-Franche-Comte
14	FR-Guadeloupe
15	FR-Haute-Normandie
16	FR-Ile-De-France
17	FR-Languedoc-Roussillon
18	FR-Limousin
19	FR-Lorraine
20	FR-Midi-Pyrenees
21	FR-Paca
22	FR-Poitou-Charentes
23	FR-Reunion
24	FR-Rhone-Alpes
25	IT-Campania
26	IT-Friuli Venezia Giulia
27	IT-Marche
28	IT-Piemonte
29	IT-Umbria



Map 1 - RDPs programming M16.7

For MS having regional RDPs, the map indicates the number of RDPs that programmed M16.7 out of the national total.

³ Reg. 1305/2013 Art.35(2)(c) “...implementation, in particular by groups of public and private partners other than those defined in point (b) of Article 32(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013, of local development strategies other than those defined in Article 2(19) of Regulation (EU) 1303/2013 addressing one or more of the Union priorities for rural development”

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

3. Identified approaches

M16.7 is planned following several approaches out of which it is possible to identify two main ones:

1. Support for **integrated LDS with a broad variety of objectives** including job creation, nature protection, development of agriculture and local products, creation and improvement of basic services and social inclusion;
2. Support for **LDS aiming at improving land and forests use and management.**

While the first more general approach is common to all MS, the second approach was exclusively programmed in the **French RDPs**.

Since the two approaches have substantial differences they will be treated separately in sections 4 and 5.

3.1 M16.7 LDS or CLLD LDS?

Notwithstanding the approach followed, RDPs often **demarcated the intervention fields of the two Measures M16.7 'non-CLLD LDS' and M19 'CLLD LDS'**. For example, some RDP specify that:

- it will be possible to implement M16.7 LDS in **those territories not covered by CLLD LDS** (e.g. FR-Champagne Ardenne, FR-Ile de France, FR-Midi Pyrenees, IT-Fiuli Venezia Giulia); and
- where a partnership and/or a project are eligible for both M16.7 and M19 'CLLD', **primacy will be given to M19** (e.g. FR-Franche Comte, FR-Alsace, FR-Poitou Charentes).

Three more cases were identified:

- In DE-Niedesach.-Bremen, M16.7 will support **unsuccessful LEADER applicants** and the management costs of **ILEK groups**⁵.
- In FR-Basse Normandie the sub-Measure targets **non-LEADER areas** and will be used as a **'start-up toolkit' for CLLD** enabling rural communities to gain experience in the implementation of the CLLD approach.
- In FR-Auvergne, M16.7 will support **LDS with a regional scale** while CLLD will support projects addressing specific local needs more at a sub-regional territorial level.

⁵ In German: Integrierten Ländlichen Entwicklungskonzeptes (ILEK). ILEK groups are public-private partnerships very similar to CLLD Local Action Groups implemented in various German Länder.

4. Integrated Local Development Strategies

4.1 Scope of the activities

Impact

In the Italian, German and a number of French regions⁶ M16.7 supports the creation and implementation of LDS with a great variety of objectives.

While the majority of the RDPs specify a **list of topics or objectives** that the LDS have to focus on, very few RDPs do not provide thematic guidance to the LDS therefore also ensuring a bigger freedom to the partners applying for support under 16.7 (e.g. DE-Hessen, FR-Basse Normandie).

M16.7 supported LDS are expected mostly to focus on:

- Strengthening **social cohesion** (e.g. DE-Baden Wuttemberg, DE-Northrhein Westfalen, FR-Haute Normandie, IT-Friuli Venezia Giulia) in some cases with special attention on **women** (e.g. DE-Baden Wuttemberg) and **youth** in rural areas (e.g. DE-Northrhein Westfalen).
- Improvement and creation of **services** to the public with specific attention on **basic services** (e.g. DE-Baden Wuttemberg, DE-Northrhein Westfalen, FR-Haute Normandie, FR-Ile de France, IT-Campania, IT-Marche).
- Creation of **new income and employment opportunities** (e.g. DE-Baden Wuttemberg, FR-Champagn Ardenne, FR-Ile de France), in some cases also with specific attention on **women** in rural areas (e.g. DE-Baden Wuttemberg).
- Fostering **collaboration among various actors in the agriculture and nature protection fields** in order to foster a more sustainable agriculture, a circular economy and practices that are more water and biodiversity friendly (e.g. DE-Baden Wuttemberg, DE-Niedersach-Bremen, FR-Ile de France, FR-PACA, FR-Rhone Alpes, IT-Friuli Venezia Giulia).
- Supporting the **handcraft and agro-food sectors producing quality local products** (e.g. IT-Campania, IT-Marche, IT-Friuli Venezia Giulia) and **sustainable products** (like IT-Friuli Venezia Giulia that will support 'slow tourism').

⁶ See also table No 3 at page 9.

Case 1: Detailed M16.7 themes in FR-Bourgogne

A few RDPs set a diverse and precise list of objectives for the LDS applying for M16.7.

FR-Bourgogne, for example, planned five specific operations under M16.7:

1. LDS for the development of the forestry sector;
2. LDS focusing on demographic problems and improving the capacity of the territory to welcome incoming people;
3. LDS for the creation of ‘territorial clusters for economic cooperation’⁷ improving and innovating specific local economic sectors;
4. LDS supporting projects of transition to renewable energy and conversion to ‘Positive Energy Territories’⁸; and
5. LDS focusing on cooperation actions for promotion and innovation in the tourism sector as well as the organisation of professional training for those working in tourism.

Additionally to the above-mentioned objectives, three regions in France use M16.7 to tackle the **specific needs of peri-urban areas** (FR-Champagne Ardenne, FR-Rhone Alpes, FR-Ile de France). These regions face problems of inconsistent development of peri-urban areas due to fragmented town jurisdictions.

The operations supported should aim to improve consultation between local actors on the future management of agricultural land in peri-urban zones. For this reason, the partnerships and projects funded are expected to involve the private and public entities of several towns.

Trans-National Cooperation

M16.7 transnational cooperation projects can be supported in FR-Franche Comte on the condition that the respective municipalities are involved.

4.2 Contribution to Focus Areas and Priorities⁹

M16.7 implemented for the support of integrated LDS is **mostly expected to contribute to Focus Area 6B ‘Local development in Rural Areas’**. Depending on the scope of the projects supported M16.7 is also expected to support:

- FA 6A ‘Diversification & job creation’, in those countries where M16.7 focuses on employment;
- FA 3A ‘Agri-food chain integration & quality’, in those countries where M16.7 focuses on local quality products and supply chains;
- Priority 1 ‘Knowledge transfer & innovation’, P4 ‘Ecosystems management’ and P5 ‘Resource efficiency & climate’, in those countries where M16.7 focuses on environmental protection and knowledge transfer for more sustainable agriculture and land management practices.

⁷ In French: Pôles Territoriaux de Coopération Economique (PTCE)

⁸ In French: Territoires à Energie Positive (TEPOS), also territories committed to increase to the maximum use of renewable energies.

⁹ Very little information was collected in the RDPs concerning linkages to other measures.

4.3 Eligibility criteria and selection process

Eligible costs

Costs identified as eligible are:

- costs related the development of the LDS including studies and research on topics of specific interest for the territory concerned.
- costs of the partnership personnel;
- costs for territorial animation, identification of local development potential and mobilisation of the local actors;
- direct costs for the implementation of the project; and
- costs for communication activities aiming at raising awareness.

Case 2: DE-Niedersach-Bremen

DE-Niedersach-Bremen programmed two specific operations under 16.7:

1. The first specific operation provides **support for the ILEK groups** (already mentioned under 3.1). Under this operation M16.7 will support costs very similar to the ones mentioned under 'eligible costs' and will support costs incurred by the groups to do networking activities with the CLLD groups.
2. The second specific operation support to LDS linked to the '**Cultural Landscape Stewardship and Land Management**', an instrument conceived to foster collaboration among various actors from the agricultural sector and actors active in nature protection.

Eligible expenses are:

- development of solutions to improve the effectiveness of the agri-environmental Measure;
- communication, cooperation and interaction processes to promote acceptance of conservation and agri-environmental Measure;
- studies and development plans for Natura 2000 sites and other areas of special importance for biodiversity;
- ongoing coordination, information, guidance and animation of the parties involved in the partnership and in the projects;
- implementation of the projects; and
- dissemination activities on positive and exemplary landscape management projects.

Duration

LDS integrating M16.7 are expected to cover and be financed for a maximum of two to seven years.

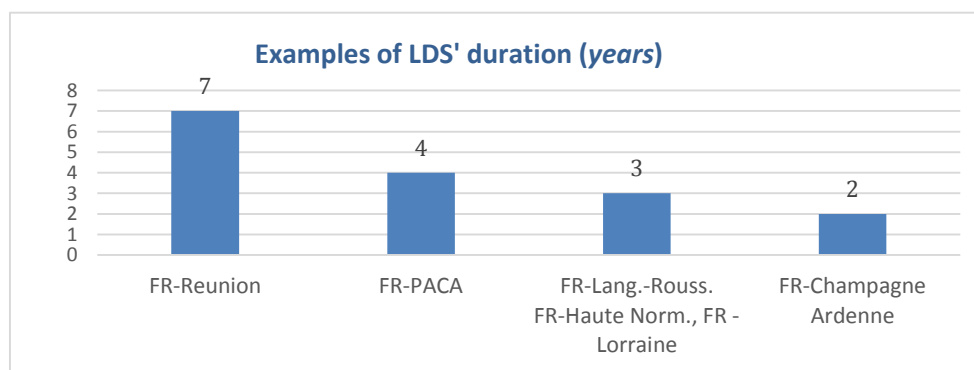


Figure 1 - Examples of LDS duration (Integrated LDSs)

Cooperation Group Cooperation groups, also identified by the RDPs as ‘partnership’, are expected to involve:

- public bodies;
- natural persons;
- businesses;
- private institutions of public welfare;
- associations across municipalities;
- educational institutes, schools, research institutes and universities; and
- local people.

In Italy where the LDS open up to cooperation activities to support local products the partnerships are also expected to involve:

- agricultural operators and related associations;
- SMEs; and
- tourism and cultural operators.

Depending on the thematic focus of the eligible LDS and the specific role given to M16.7, some RDPs might include more specific categories:

- In DE-Baden Wuttemberg, for example, LDS will involve nature park associations and woman networks.
- In FR-Basse Normandie, the Measure is specifically open to those partnerships that failed in getting access to CLLD funding.

Selection criteria often concern the cooperation group drafting and implementing the LDS. Selection criteria will consider:

- the **diversity and the number of partners** involved in the project;
- the extent to which the partnership **represents the categories of actors of key importance to address the objectives of the LDS** (e.g. in case of LDS in support of local producers, selection criteria will consider the extent to which the partnership represents of the whole supply chain); and
- the extent to which the partnership **represents the territory** by involving its key actors including **the local people**.

The LDS In order to be eligible for support the cooperation group must submit a **Local Development Strategy**.

Selection criteria will include:

- Consistency and concrete contribution of the LDS to the specific development needs of the region.
- The added value of the LDS and its contribution in terms of economic development, job creation, innovation and environmental protection.

4.4 Financial aspects

Budget The RDPs presented limited information on the maximum budget allocation permissible. From the information collected it is possible to see that **support intensity may differ a lot among the regions**. For example, while in DE-Northrhein Westfalen and DE-Hessen the maximum budget will be respectively of €100 000 and €200 000, in IT-Friuli Venezia Giulia the budget per LDS will be of €3 million.

Support rates Support rates will vary from 80% to 100%, with the majority of RDPs supporting 100% of eligible costs.

Table 2 - Examples of support rates: integrated LDS

Examples of RDPs	Support rate
DE-Hessen, DE-Northrhein Westfalen, FR-Basse Normandie, FR-Poitou Charentes, IT-Umbria, FR-Auvergne, IT-Friuli Venezia Giulia	100%
FR-Champagne Ardenne, FR-Guadeloupe, IT-Marche	80%

Simplified Cost Options Simplified Cost Options will be used in FR-Bretagne with a flat rate of 15% of costs.

5. M16.7 in France: LDS on forest management

In France the regional RDPs followed three different approaches:

1. seven RDPs planned support only for **integrated LDS with a broad variety of objectives**, out of which three will focus on **peri-urban areas** (described under section 4);
2. eight RDPs planned support for **LDS aiming at improving land and more specifically forest use and management**; and
3. four RDPs planned support for both the first and second approach.

Here follows a summary table:

Table 3 - Summary table: M16.7 in France

Integrated LDS	Forest LDS	Both Integrated & forest LDS
FR-Basse Normandie FR-Champagne Ardenne FR-Guadeloupe FR-Haute Normandie FR-Ile de France FR-Reunion FR-Rhone Alpes	FR-Alsace FR-Aquitaine FR-Auvergne FR-Bourgogne FR-Bretagne FR-Limousin FR-Midi Pyrenees FR-Poitou Charentes	FR-Franche Comte FR-Languedoc Roussillon FR-Lorraine FR-PACA

Only 9 out of 28 French RDPs did not programme M16.7 (FR-Centre, FR-Corse, FR-Guyane, FR-Martinique, FR-Mayotte, FR-Nord Pas de Calais, FR-Pays de la Loire, FR-Picardie and the FR-National Programme).

The following paragraphs present information on the planned operations funding LDS in the forestry sector.

5.1 Scope of the activities

Impact

In France 8 RDPs use M16.7 to support forest management LDS. The area-based approach proposed by M16.7 is considered a good solution to tackle problems of **forest land management where this is highly fragmented and is performed with inefficient or unsustainable practices**.

The sub-Measure is expected to trigger joint actions for collective problem-solving, in order to implement a **more dynamic management of forests with higher economic and environmental performance**. The sub-Measure is also expected to **intervene in the wood supply chain for a fairer distribution of the value added among the actors involved**.

5.2 Contribution to Focus Areas, Priorities and linkages to other Measures¹⁰

M16.7 Forestry LDS are expected to contribute mostly to **P4** 'Ecosystem management' and **P5** 'Resource efficiency and climate'. At the same time, the support to the forestry sector and the wood supply chain will also contribute to **FA 6B** 'Local development' and **FA 6A** 'Diversification and job creation'. Interventions in the supply chain and on the local businesses might also contribute to **P2** 'competitiveness'.

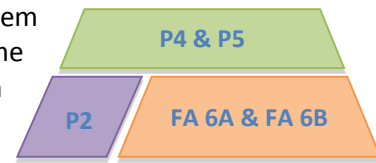


Figure 2 - M16.7 contribution to FAs and Priorities

Very little information was collected concerning the possible implementation of M16.7 together with other Measures. Where information was available, RDPs established linkages with **M06** 'Farm and business renewal', **M07** 'Basic services and village renewal' and **M08** 'investments in Forest Areas' (e.g. FR-Auvergne and FR-Bourgogne).

5.3 Eligibility criteria and selection process

Eligible costs Similarly to the integrated LDS supported by M16.7, eligible costs in the frame of forestry LDS will include:

- costs related the development of the LDS including studies, research and feasibility studies;
- costs of the partnership personnel;
- costs for territorial animation, identification of local development potentials and mobilisation of the local actors; and
- direct costs for the implementation of the project.

Duration Forestry LDS are expected to cover and be financed for a maximum of two to seven years.

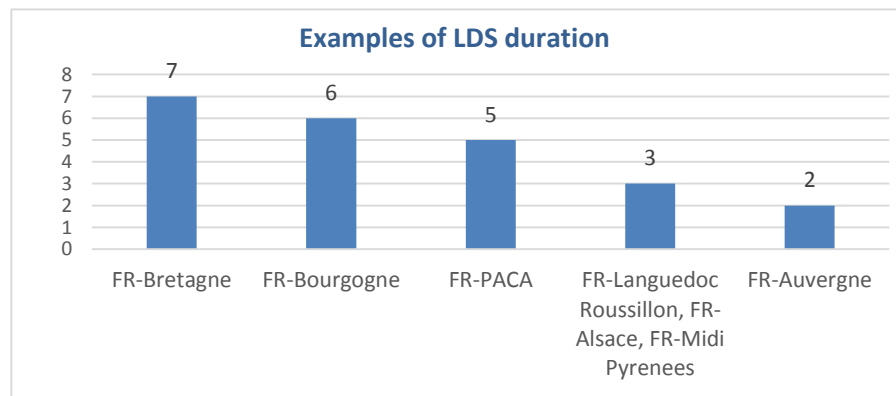


Figure 3 - Examples of LDS duration (Forestry LDSs)

¹⁰ Very little information was collected in the RDPs concerning linkages to other measures.

Cooperation group The LDS are expected to be created and implemented by a partnership of local actors including:

- forest holders;
- forestry associations, cooperatives and groupings;
- local authorities and other public entities;
- natural parks;
- education and research institutes; and
- local people.

The LDS Very little information was collected on the selection criteria for the forestry LDS.

FR-Auvergne, for example, specify that the strategy must include:

- a diagnosis of the local needs and challenges;
- the identification of mid-term objectives;
- a multi-annual action plan with a financial overview describing the modalities of support for each type of operation; and
- monitoring and evaluation indicators.

5.4 Financial aspects¹¹

Support rates Support rates will vary from 70% to 100%.

Table 4 - Examples of support rates: forest LDS

Examples of RDPs	Support rate
FR-Midi Pyrénées, FR-Alsace FR-Auvergne	100%
FR-Lorraine	80%
FR-Aquitaine	70%

Rather than set a unique support rate some RDPs' established specific conditions:

- FR-Lorraine distinguishes among LDS in the forestry sector funded for the 80% of the eligible costs and integrated LDS targeting a wider scope of objectives, funded for the 100% of eligible costs.
- FR-PACA distinguishes among studies and coordination funded for the 100%, equipment costs funded for the 40% and other expenditures funded for the 80%.

¹¹ Very little information was presented by the RDPs on the maximum budget allocated per project.