

## ENRD Thematic Group on Smart and Competitive Rural Businesses

13 October 2016

**Venue:** Atrium 14, Rue de la Science 14b, Brussels

### Objectives

- To specify, through the contributions of selected thematic group members and a participative process, the **specific sub-themes** that the thematic group will work on. Based on feedback from the Thematic Group members, potential sub-themes may include: *digitisation and the use of ICT and broadband by rural businesses; networking for rural businesses; business development based on local community, natural and cultural assets (smart specialisation), urban-rural linkages*
- To identify **specific challenges and opportunities** that the thematic group could address, with specific focus on improving **RDP support to SMEs** (e.g. improving measure implementation, improving flexibility of programmes, to create space for experimental projects, etc.)
- To develop, based on stakeholder/ member needs, ideas on what would be the **most useful methods and tools** to address specific sub-themes, issues and challenges identified (including practical examples and case studies, practical guidance, factsheets, etc.);
- To **identify thematic group members** for each of the selected sub-themes who will actively contribute to the work of the group (through developing case studies, identify relevant resources, contributing to the development of specific tools, etc.).

### Agenda

Timing	Agenda item
9.00 – 9.30	<i>Registration of participants</i>
9.30 – 10.30	<b>Introduction: What is the purpose and process of the Thematic Group?</b>
<i>Session 1</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Welcome: Paul Soto (ENRD CP) &amp; Matthias Langemeyer (DG AGRI)</li> <li>• Icebreaker: <i>Who is in the Group?</i></li> <li>• <i>Objectives of the Thematic Group &amp; Purpose of the meeting: Results of ‘rural businesses’ survey and background research, Edina Ocsko (ENRD CP)</i></li> </ul>

Timing	Agenda item
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reflection by members</li> <li>• Jointly defining (up to 3) sub-themes for further discussion (Session 2)</li> </ul>
10.30 – 10.50	<i>Coffee break</i>
10.50 – 12.15	<p><b>What are the specific challenges and opportunities of rural businesses &amp; rural business support?</b></p> <p><i>Session 2</i> Small-group discussion <i>on selected sub-themes</i> (e.g. digitisation, networks, smart specialisation, urban-rural links, etc.)</p>
12.15 – 13.15	<i>Lunch</i>
13.15 – 14.30	<p><b>Which sub-themes should the Thematic Group work on during the year?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presentation of sub-themes &amp; challenges from the small-group discussions</li> <li>• Reflection from members &amp; discussion within the whole group</li> <li>• Joint selection and defining of up to 2 sub-themes that the group would like to work on</li> </ul>
14.30 – 15.10	<p><b>How to address challenges and improve RDP implementation with regard to the chosen sub-themes?</b></p> <p><i>Session 4</i> Small-group discussion on identifying possible tools, methods and actions for addressing the selected sub-themes: case studies, factsheets, guidance, platforms, meetings, etc.</p>
15.10 – 15.20	<i>Coffee</i>
15.20 – 15.50	<p><b>How the Thematic Group can add value? Where do we go from here?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feedback from the two groups on possible tools and actions</li> <li>• Discussion on possible areas of action for the group</li> <li>• How can members contribute (contacts, research, examples, etc.)? Identifying members and possible contributions for the sub-themes</li> <li>• How can the ENRD Contact Point support the work of members?</li> </ul>
15.50 – 16.00	<b>Concluding remarks &amp; indication of next steps</b>