

Focus groups

Draft proposal

During the Leader subcommittee on 25th November 2009, members asked for the possibility to discuss different topics in smaller groups to have a close look at the bottlenecks and other important issues in the implementation of the Leader approach in the period 2007-2013.

In this context **three Focus Groups** were created on a voluntary basis:

- Implementation of the bottom-up approach of Leader
- Preserving the innovative/experimental character of Leader
- Implementation of the measure „cooperation“

The **objective** is to discuss as active cells on the critical follow-up of the implementation of the Leader approach in all MS, refining the themes, gathering information and looking for possible solutions/recommendations. The groups will be asked to report back to the next Leader subcommittee in May 2010, and could have a sufficient potential to feed into other activities related to the implementation and improvement of the rural development policy.

These groups keep a **flexible format** (to be adapted to the needs), and are led by the volunteer member organisations of the Leader subcommittee. There will be no reimbursement of expenses by the Commission, but organisational and content support can be provided by the Contact Point.

There are in total 52 **participants** (representatives from Managing Authorities, National Rural Networks, LAGs and EU organisations) from:

- 21 Member States: AT, BE, BG, CZ, DE, DK, EE, FI, FR, HU, IE, IT, LV, LUX, MT, NL, PL, PT, RO, SI, SK and
- 4 organisations: COPA-COGECA, ELARD, EFFAT, PREPARE

Participants per Focus Group:

- Implementation of the bottom-up approach of Leader: 22 participants with two co-chairs: Italian NRN and ELARD
- Preserving the innovative/experimental character of Leader: 16 participants with two co-chairs: Netherlands and German NRNs
- Implementation of the measure „cooperation“: 14 participants with two co-chairs: Estonian and Finnish NRNs

For further questions related to the Focus groups please contact: The Contact Point: Kasia Panfil, kasia.panfil@enrd.eu, +32 2 235 20 41