

2 - 3  
OCTOBER

Formations

Workshops

Cooperation fair

Experience feedbacks

# European LEADER Congress 2024

*Let's talk about cooperation !*

POITIERS, FUTUROSCOPE, FRANCE

*Theme : LEADER Cooperation*

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European LEADER Congress 2024

## 64 MA and 64 Eligibility Criteria: how to homogenize cooperation rules?

Juha-Matti Markkola  
Laura Jänis  
Anke Weymeher  
Dr. Konstantinos C. Zapounidis  
Melanie Steinbacher



# FINLAND

Laura Jänis – Finnish Rural Network Support Unit

**64 MA and 64 Eligibility Criteria: how to homogenize cooperation rules?**



Mit Unterstützung von Bund, Land und Europäischer Union

 Bundesministerium  
Land- und Forstwirtschaft,  
Regionen und Wasserwirtschaft

**WIR leben Land**  
Gemeinsame Agrarpolitik Österreich



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# Finnish LEADER and TNC

- Finnish LAGs are the most active ones in implementing TNC-projects in the whole EU. Last period 118 tnc-projects with 27 countries. This period 20 application (6 approved).
- Strengths:
  - Finnish LAGs "invest" in transnational co-operation
  - Stakeholders are the tnc-partners, LAG is funding and helping
  - Good cooperation between LAGs and managing authority
  - Managing authority (ministry and paying agency) are encouraging LAGs for transnational co-operation
  - TNC-projects are just normal projects

What could we do better in the EU? Thematical working group listed the answers and actions – just make them happen.



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# LEADER

## For ideas on a human scale

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# Germany

Anke Weymeher - BAGLAG

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## 2011: Development of a proposal for cooperation projects

- e.g. possibilities of financing a cooperation project
  - Each partner for himself applies for money for a special part of a project. The lead partner is managing the project (this is part of his project application)
  - The partners are alternately financing parts of a project, f.e. year by year. The project management is changing year by year as well.
  - The lead partner is responsible for financing the whole project in advance and send invoices to the partners. That means all partners have to accept the administrative rules of the lead partner!

## Since this funding period: One strategic plan for Germany

- It is regulated in the national strategic plan of Germany that all LEADER cooperation partners are accepting the administrative rules of the leading LAG



# Austria

Melanie Steinbacher, *Leader Kufstein und Umgebung (Austria)*

**64 MA and 64 Eligibility Criteria: how to homogenize cooperation rules?**



Mit Unterstützung von Bund, Land und Europäischer Union

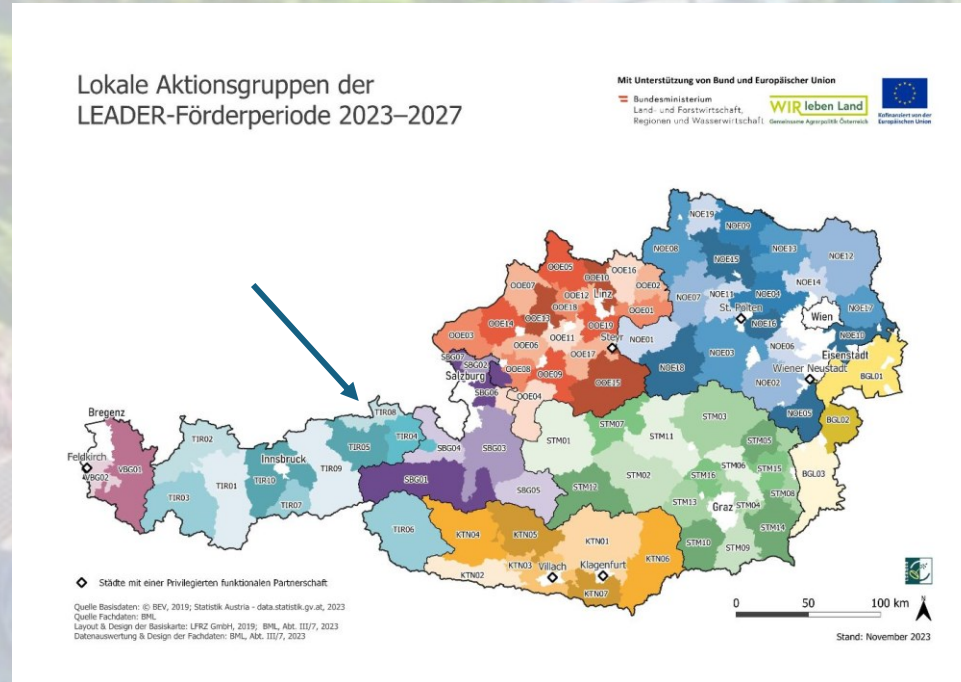
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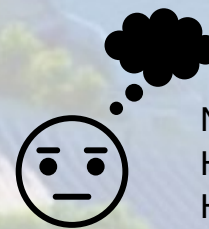


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# The Region LAG KUUSK



inhabitants: + 15% 48.000  
Area: 435 km<sup>2</sup>  
economic upswing: + 30.4%



Migration  
High living cost  
High volume of traffic



# Experience with TNC

- 2 bilateral with Germany
  - Cycling Path Project
  - Canyon Concept
- Sweden, Finland, Germany and Austria
  - Immigrant Integration into the rural area (labour market)
- Project in preparation aims to support and qualify volunteers



# Challenges

- Rule-making power, especially in bilateral settings, no clear definition
- Regional level limited perspectives

# Support



- Processing is handled by one authority
- A binding implementing regulation for all member states is needed.

# GREECE

*Dr Konstantinos Zapounidis, (Pieriki Anaptixiaki S.A.-O.L.A., Head of Unit)*

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An aerial photograph of a theme park. In the foreground, a large, multi-tiered fountain with numerous water jets is the central focus. To the left, a roller coaster with a white track and a tall drop tower is visible. The park is surrounded by lush green trees and various buildings, including a large, dark, castle-like structure in the background. The overall scene is bright and sunny.

# A short historical background

*Once upon a time...*

**In February 2018, ENRD has organised a LEADER workshop, under the title: Putting simplification into practice ....**

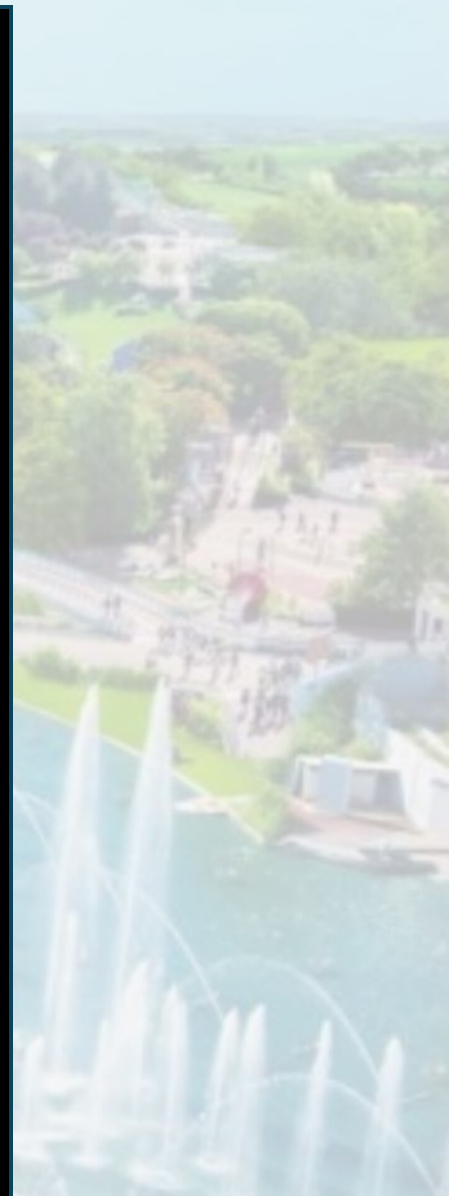
**I was proud enough to participate, having strong beliefs, after my 15 years of implication by then, that there was space for improvement...**

## *Once upon a time...*

This workshop discussed how LEADER implementation can be simplified in the current programming period as well as simplification priorities for the future....

Key themes for the current period (then) included:

- *harmonisation of LEADER delivery systems with LEADER principles;*
- *controls and sanctions; and*
- *improving delivery at the Local Action Group (LAG) level.*



Multisectoral,  
Multifunding,  
Integrated

but **NOT**  
multi-managed &  
multi-controlled.

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## *What's the question*

From simplification to harmonisation?  
Simplification Vs Harmonisation?  
or  
Simplification is Harmonisation?

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An aerial photograph of a theme park, likely Six Flags Great Escape & Great Escape Water Park. The image shows a large, multi-tiered fountain with numerous water jets in the foreground. In the background, there is a tall roller coaster structure and a large, dark, castle-like building. The park is surrounded by green trees and grass. The text "What the Greek MA offered to the Greek LAGs?" is overlaid in the center of the image.

**What the Greek MA offered to the  
Greek LAGs?**

# Support Actions

Open call throughout the whole duration of the programme.



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Preparatory phase based totally on the SCO.



## Simplified Cost Options

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# Support Actions

Main phase: A study is being drafted for implementation of SCO in specific activities and cost categories.



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# Support Actions

Organization of 2 conferences for LAGs per year with sessions dedicated to cooperation actions.



# Support Actions

Simplification of projects' modifications, especially for cost modifications within the same cost category.



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# Support Actions

Openness and no-existence of strictness in the eligibility of actions/expenditures, as long as there is no violation of State-Aid rules.



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# Support Actions

Option for participation of non LAGs of EU but also outside of the EU as observers.



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# Support Actions

Eligibility for LAGs to participate in networks, conferences, workshops that could possibly also lead to cooperation.



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An aerial photograph of a theme park, likely Euro Disney, showing various rides and structures. In the foreground, there's a large, multi-tiered fountain with many water jets. To the left, a roller coaster with a white and blue track is visible. In the background, a tall Ferris wheel stands against a clear sky. The park is surrounded by green trees and grass. The text "Some conclusions/challenges at European level..." is overlaid in the center in a large, black, sans-serif font.

**Some conclusions/challenges at  
European level...**

## *Key issues*

- Complexity is a burden on the system.
- Beneficiaries/Stakeholders/Shareholders/Authorities have difficulty in understanding the complex rules and the multiple bodies involved.
- This discourages their involvement, leads to more mistakes, is less cost effective and diverts time and resources from development activities.

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## Key issues

- No common concurrent calls.
- No same minimum supporting documents.
- Requirement of supporting documents that do not exist in other management systems.
- No same implementation duration option.
- Different rules.
- Time-consuming processes.
- Lack of harmonisation and severe bureaucracy “kills” innovation and willingness to cooperate.

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## ***Some solutions (...)***

- Same and more than one implementation periods (i.e. early: 2025-2026, late: 2027-2028).
- Common document of MA or other body approval.
- Simplified common cooperation agreement.
- Same/harmonised rules.
- More flexible funding tool for preparatory phases.
- Support innovative ideas.

## Some solutions (...)

- Use SCOs in TNCs and share SCO case studies and models through peer exchanges, workshops and training.
- Flat rates, existing instruments/tools and draft budgets are of high interest.
- Improve communication and coordination between MAs / PA/ LAGs/ National Networks / Funds / auditors to build common understanding and approaches.
- European Cooperation Management Forum (incl. MA, LAGS, NRN)
- National CLLD support units/working groups (e.g. a one stop shop involving LAGs, MAs, PAs) can be useful.

ADMINISTRATION COOPERATION  
PROJECTS  
CLARITY RULES  
INNOVATION MEASURES  
POWER ROC EU LAG  
LAGS LAG  
DESIGN APPROACH MULTIPLE LESS  
FLEXIBILITY  
MA  
LEVEL DELIVERY  
BUILDING GUIDANCE  
SYSTEM CAPACITY  
LEVELS FOCUS  
CONTROLS SMALL FLEXIBLE  
BUREAUCRACY FLEXIBLE  
FREEDOM





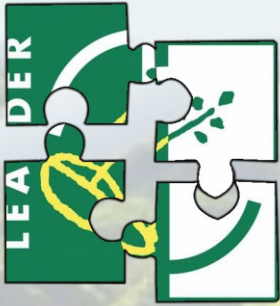
## Participation Supported by:

The framework of Measure 19 "Support for local development in the framework of LEADER (CLLD-local development under the leadership of the Community)", Sub-measure 19.4.

With the co-financing of Greece and of the European Union.

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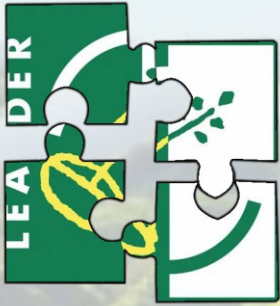


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# Q&A

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# Thank you!

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