

FLAG Cooperation in Bulgaria

Introduction

Cooperation projects in Bulgaria are likely to emerge later in the programming period, especially as FLAGs here are still relatively new to Community-Led Local Development and the process of fostering local territorial development is still a challenge. However, poor cooperation and lack of communication was pointed out as a weakness from the 2007-2013 period, to be addressed in the future. With this in mind, Bulgaria's Operational Programme for the EMFF states that each FLAG should propose at least one cooperation project in its local development strategy.

Although the Managing Authority in Bulgaria sees cooperation with partners from neighbouring countries in the **Black Sea basin or along the Danube** as a priority, it has allowed for maximum flexibility for FLAGs to choose the type of cooperation projects to implement and the partners to involve.

In terms of budget available for cooperation in Bulgaria, each FLAG takes the decision on the amount of its budget that should be allocated to cooperation projects.

Number of FLAGs expected in Bulgaria: 8

Organising Cooperation

- Cooperation is a responsibility for each FLAG which decides how much of their budget to devote to cooperation projects
- It is compulsory for each FLAG to implement at least one cooperation project
- FLAGs will each publish calls for project applications, including for cooperation. The timing of these calls and selection of projects will be decided by each FLAG

Possible Partners

- Cooperation projects in Bulgaria can be implemented by the FLAGs, LEADER LAGs or other NGOs from the FLAG area, in collaboration with the FLAG.
- FLAGs can cooperate with partners in Bulgaria, the EU or outside the EU
- Bulgarian FLAGs can cooperate with partners from CLLD groups funded by all European Structural and Investment Funds and/or with non-EU funded CLLD-type public-private partnerships.

Eligibility and Financing Rules

- Cooperation projects are subject to the same financing rules as any other FLAG project

For any further information or assistance for cooperation in Bulgaria...

Bulgaria still has not yet established a National Network but the Managing Authority is available for additional information. Contact: Stoyan Kotov, Ministry of Agriculture: SKotov@mzh.government.bg