

5TH WORKSHOP: IMPROVING DELIVERY: SUCCESSFUL GOVERNANCE AND NETWORKING

Rural Development Policy combines a Community approach with national and regional programming as well as bottom-up elements. The policy's architecture and the delivery mechanisms applied ensure that policy priorities are taken into account at various levels and are translated into actions at the level of Member States and regions adapted to their specific requirements.

Establishing a Community framework provides for common rules and a level playing field in the implementation of a policy. Furthermore, it ensures a consistent strategic orientation towards Community objectives as laid down in the Community strategic guidelines for Rural Development. National and regional implementation ensures targeting towards needs that might differ by Member State and region. The implementation via a bottom-up approach is key to stimulating private initiative and encouraging stakeholders in taking ownership in the development process.

Enhancing the complementary nature of the different elements of successful governance and ensuring feed-back at different levels of policy actions requires investment into networking. Rural Development Networks bring people together in mutual learning and sharing best practice. They serve as platform to facilitate the dissemination of information and thus, improve the policy delivery. Besides, networking allows partnerships between different types of actors, and different sectors which interact in the process of rural development.

This workshop aims to examine the governance structure of Rural Development Policy. It will discuss the best balance between top-down and bottom-up approaches, and it will explore the functioning and potential for networking concepts in business and public administration

Main questions for discussion:

- Which governance structures are most relevant for the design, delivery and implementation of rural development policy, and how do they interact?
- What are the potential advantages and/or constraints associated with different governance structures?
- Potential and functioning of networking concepts in Rural Development.
- How to ensure "successful governance and networking" dealing with constraints and overcoming potential obstacles? What changes are needed in the current rural development policy framework?