

Report on the Regions in Recovery e-Festival 2022: Special Session 23. Local Development: Lessons for the future from recent research and practice



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Special Session 23

Chair: Urszula Budzich-Tabor, President, LDnet

Moderator of the discussion: Peter Ramsden, Vice President, LDnet

Speakers and presentations:

- Marianne Doyen, DG EMPL, European Commission – Karolina Jakubowska, ICF: The ESF and Community-led Local Development: Lessons for the future
- Cristina Duarte, TESE: FatorC – Lessons from Portugal
- Ondra Konečný, LAG Brána Vysočiny and Mendel University in Brno:

Experiences and Future of CLLD Implementation through Multi-funded Support (ESF) in Czechia

The special session was organised by LDnet. The session started with the presentation of the recent study carried out for the European Commission on “The ESF and Community-Led Local Development: Lessons for the future” presented by M. Doyen and K. Jakubowska. After a short overview of CLLD objectives and practice in EU member states the encouraging (broader range of eligible themes, target groups and projects, space for experimentation, facilitation of integrated approaches, promotion of community trust, programming support) and discouraging (administrative capacity and silo mindsets, time and capacity building, connecting local needs to Thematic Objectives, existing other place-based interventions) factors affecting the use of ESF funding for CLLD were evaluated. The main types of ESF funded CLLD support were employment, inclusion, and education. The value added of supported projects were presented through case studies. In summary, the recommendations are the following:

- More communication and sharing of learning,
- More administrative flexibility,
- More autonomy for LAGs,
- More diverse target groups,
- More diverse indicators to measure progress.

The presentation on Portuguese experiences introduced the wide range of FatorC activities in Cascais municipality, concentrating on employment and social inclusion covering various social groups and sectors. The main challenges were the complex application processes, little flexibility to create application announcement and reduced capacity to analyse reimbursement request. Solutions were the organisation of clarification sessions, bringing together urban LAG in Lisbon region to create common proposals for social innovation, and closer articulation between LAGs and MA to facilitate its analytical work.

There was a dynamic increase of CLLD-s in Czechia involving 95% of rural inhabitants by 2015. Top level the obstacles to the implementation of CLLD strategies were the missing subsidies for necessary topics, the conditions within

calls narrowed the use of subsidies, different rules, and guidelines of each OP/RDP, inconsistent and changing rules for strategy implementation. The share of LAGs was over 70% in the supported themes of social inclusion and family support, around 50% for employment and social entrepreneurship. Key points for the future of ESF in CLLD after 2021: appropriate targeting, positively perceived benefits of projects through appropriate addition of support to local applicants, social entrepreneurship and social service planning through networking, strengthening the role of LAGs, management and coordination of implementation, more autonomy and responsibility.

These last points and the conditions of capacity building, social innovation, and the relation between LAGs and Managing Authorities (MA) were discussed vividly both after each presentation and in the final discussion part. Questions were discussed like how much autonomy is good and on what conditions, rules of selecting and evaluating projects and risk management problems, what should be controlled by MAs, the relation to trust, eligibility and relevancy, the role of negotiation in coordination. Though there are different solutions but best experiences to ensure relevant projects are in cases where MAs are organised at regional level, they are interested in setting rules, and LAGs in subjects to follow local needs.