

**DG AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT  
(DG AGRI)**

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<b>Initiative</b>	<b>Keyword(s)</b>
<p>One of the priorities of Rural Development policy (Priority 6 – promoting social inclusion, poverty reduction and economic development in rural areas) covers the integration of vulnerable groups in rural areas, including the integration of migrants. A guidance document about the "Possibilities within the Rural Development programming to address the humanitarian crisis faced by refugees accessing the EU" was prepared by DG AGRI and presented to and discussed with MS in the Rural Development Committee on 18.11.2015. The possibilities offered by the rural development policy in the area of third country nationals (TCN) integration has been on the agenda of the 2015 Annual review meetings with the MS authorities responsible at national/regional level for managing each rural development programme (RDP).</p> <p>Under the rural development policy, the local development strategies financed through LEADER remain the main instrument for helping migrants integration. Several Local Action Groups have included TCN integration in their local strategies. The rural development "cooperation" measure also can support setting up public-private partnerships for integrating refugees/migrants.</p> <p>Member States who so wish can include in their rural development programmes an additional specific focus area about migrants and other groups at risk of social exclusion. In case such a specific focus area is included, the RDP would indicate the financial means allocated and programme-specific indicators to monitor the results achieved. DG AGRI is encouraging MS in this direction.</p> <p>On 20/07/2016 DG AGRI organized 2 presentations to MS in the Rural Development Committee about "State of play of dealing with migratory challenges" delivered by DG HOME, and "ESIF Coordination: Migration in Finland" by the Managing Authority of the Finish RDP. Commission guidance and good practice examples have been well received by MS.</p> <p>The Cork 2.0 European Conference on Rural Development held on 5-6 September, 2016, aimed to develop the future agriculture and rural development policy, addressed the integration of marginalized communities like third country nationals in the rural society in workshop 4 devoted to rural viability. The Cork Declaration adopted in this Conference refers to migrants in the point number one of its policy orientations as follows:</p>	<p>Rural development</p>

<p>"The rural potential to deliver innovative, inclusive and sustainable solutions for current and future societal challenges such as economic prosperity, food security, climate change, resource management, <b>social inclusion, and integration of migrants</b> should be better recognised".</p> <p>Within the simplification measures proposed by the Commission under the "Omnibus Regulation", DG AGRI has included a change in the RD Basic Act (EU) 1305/2013 as to allow MS to start funding urgent actions related to reception/integration of migrants, even before the official submission of the relevant RD programme amendment to the Commission.</p> <p>In addition, Implementing Regulation 808/2014 has been modified 15th November 2016 ((EU) n°2016/1997). With this modification, the amendment of rural development programmes necessary to finance actions related to the reception/integration of migrants are not accounted against the number of RDP modifications allowed and a 'flagging' obligation has been introduced to identify the operations where there is a potential contribution to the integration of third-country nationals.</p> <p>TCN and migrants integration is priority number 6 in the working programme 2016-17 of the European Network on Rural Development (ENRD). The ENRD has organized several seminars on TCN integration and published in August 2016 a project brochure sharing good practices on the integration of migrants and refugees (<a href="http://enrd.ec.europa.eu/sites/enrd/files/publi-eafrd-brochure-03-en_2016.pdf">http://enrd.ec.europa.eu/sites/enrd/files/publi-eafrd-brochure-03-en_2016.pdf</a>)</p>	
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