

An overview of LEADER and CLLD implementation in the New Member states with a focus on Poland, Slovenia, and Croatia. The major challenges faced and the solutions found (or not) to overcome these challenges.



Poland case



Krzysztof Kwatera, The Chairman of Managing Board and Manager of LAG Dolina Raby; the representative of Polish LAGs for ENRD

Evolution of LEADER in Poland

	LEADER+ (2004-2006)	Axis 4 (2007-2013) + Axis 4 of “Fishery Program”	LEADER/CLLD (2014-2020)
Number of LAGs (+ FLAGs)	149	338 + 48 (some were the same entity)	323
Area covered % of the national territory	40,1	90,0	93,0
Budget M€	30,5	988,4	984,0
Funds Implementation	Only EAFRD pilot version – no calls for projects; tasks implemented by Managing Board	Two funds: EAFRD – 735 M€, EMFF – 253,4 M€; two separate LDS for the same LAG	EAFRD – 735 M€ (75%) EMFF – 93,8 M€, ERDF – 82,1 M€, EFS – 73,1 M€ 4 funds in 2 of 16 regions; 12 LAGs in other 8 regions – EAFRD & EMFF; 7 urban LAGs (ESF) one LDS for LAG

LAGs and funds in Poland

- **324 LAGs** selected and LDS approved, mostly in the first half of 2016 (third number in EU); 42 multi-funded LAGs
- 292 (90%) uses EAFRD; 249 (77%) - the only EAFRD,
- 36 Fisheries LAGs (in all 16 regions; 24 mono-funded EMFF, 13 multi-funded; 9 are coastal, 27 inland)
- 4 funds available in 2 regions of 16 (podlaskie, kujawsko-pomorskie) - 31 LAGs uses ERDF + ESF, including 1 LAG has 4 funds (kujawsko-pomorskie, of 9 in EU), 29 LAGs (EAFRD, ERDF, ESF), 1 LAG (ERDF, ESF)
- 7 Urban LAGs (the only ESF, the only in the region of kujawsko-pomorskie)

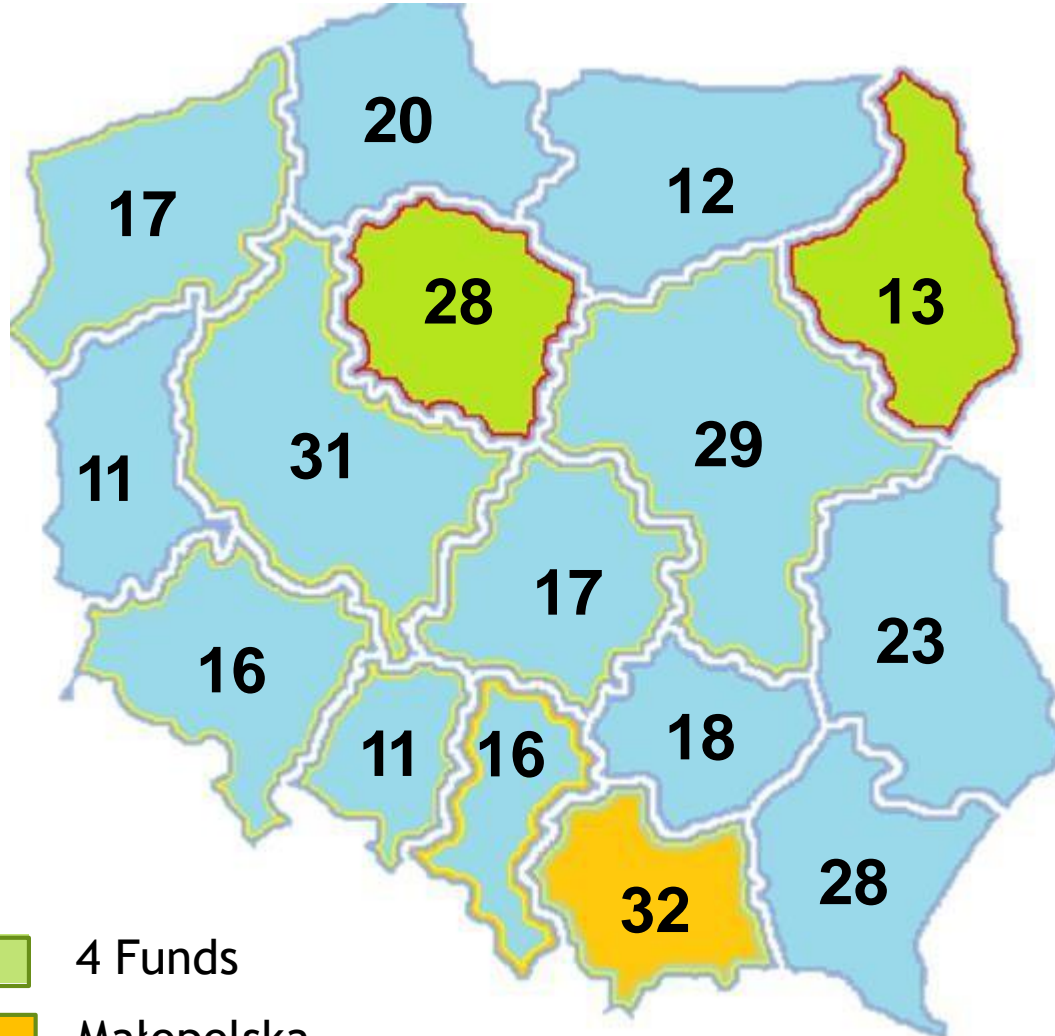
Map of LAGs in Poland



LEGEND

	Only EMFF
	ERDF & ESF
	EAFRD & EMFF
	EAFRD, ERDF & ESF
	EAFRD, ERDF, ESF & EMFF
	Only EAFRD
	Only EFS

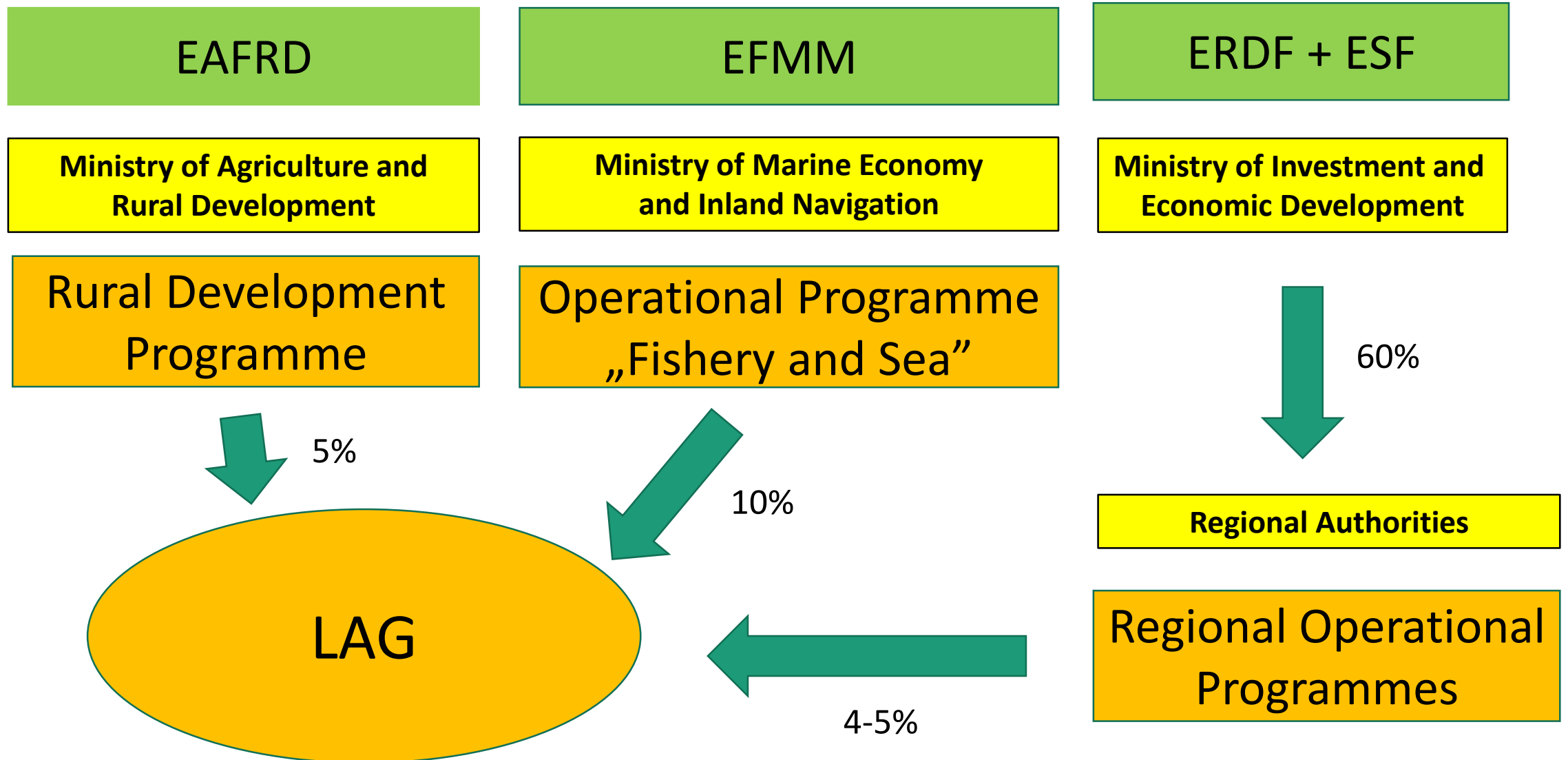
Number of LAGs in regions



Population: 60 668 (2016)
Budget: about 2 M€



Flow of funds to LAG



Legal framework

- Act of 20th of February, 2015 on local development involving the local community
- The Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development regulations for sub-measures:
 - 19.2 Implementation of local development strategies;
 - 19.3 Implementation of cooperation projects;
 - 19,4 Running costs and activation.
- Regulations for implementation of Regional Operation Programs, for use of EAFRD, EMFF

Responsibility of LAG

- Calls for projects
- The formal assessment (completeness of documentation)
- Evaluation of goals and selection of projects using local criteria (the Board)
- Answers for appeals
- Validity of costs, final agreement with the project promotor and an approval of application for payment is made by regional authority (the Marshal Office)

Legal form (1)

- The LAG is a special association.
- It applies the law on associations with several changes which result from the law about CLLD.
- In accordance with the law on associations, ordinary members can be only natural persons - in the LAG - members can be also legal persons for example municipalities (local self-governments) outside the regional (provincial) self-government.
- The provincial government supervises the activity of the LAG. That's another difference. Normal associations are supervised by the Starosta office – the county authority (a structure of public administration between the municipality and regional one).

Legal form (2)

- The third difference – two internal bodies of association are mandatory: the Managing Board and the Audit Committee. A LAG must have additional body. This decision-making body referred to EU Regulation 1303/2013 on the LEADER/ CLLD approach. This decision-making body is often called in Poland – Board.
- LAGs must have partners from three sectors: public, social and economic. An obligatory member of LAG must be a municipal self-government and it cannot be a member of another LAG – this causes the only one LAG activity in the municipal area concerned.

Cooperation and umbrella projects in Poland

Cooperation projects

- LAG put drafts of cooperation projects in Local Development Strategies (till the end of 2018?)
- An approval of application is made by regional authority (the Marshal Office) using national criteria

Umbrella projects (small projects for NGO)

- More power for LAGs (agreement with grant promoters)
- Big problems with „Umbrella” projects (no experience) and some errors in the procedure

Running and activation costs, preparatory works

- Lump sums for running costs and activation and for preparatory works (also „lump sum” for people who would like to start with own business) – EAFRD (also ESF from 2019)
- There are possibility of advance payment
- Increase of bureaucracy (a lot of institutions engaged (Poland is the only country in Europe so big one with one national, rural program, 16 Intermediatory Bodies)
- Lead fund:
 - 274 (85%) uses EAFRD, 26 EMFF, 24 ESF
 - different rules for different funds (lump sum or reimbursement, different level of advance payment, different level of own input)

Implementation of LDS (19.2) Stay of play

- Total limit in framework contracts under sub-measure 19.2:
575 442 834 Euro (2 416 859 904 zł)
- Limit usage on 30th of April 2019 (% with regard to the limit):
 - Signed agreements: 1 464 296 571 zł (61%)
 - Payment claims: 933 135 432 (39%)
 - Realized payments: 768 793 079 (32%)

REGIONS	% of signed agreements
Dolnośląskie	58%
Kujawsko-Pomorskie	51%
Lubelskie	63%
Lubuskie	61%
Łódzkie	67%
Małopolskie	53%
Mazowieckie	57%
Opolskie	56%
Podkarpackie	55%
Podlaskie	70%
Pomorskie	68%
Śląskie	62%
Świętokrzyskie	77%
Warmińsko-Mazurskie	66%
Wielkopolskie	61%
Zachodniopomorskie	63%
Razem	61%

Source: Ministry of Agriculture & Rural Development

Research papers

1. Aleksander Noworól (MI&D) – Performance and efficiency analysis of territorial instruments in Poland, July 2018
2. EGO (MA&RD), The determination of the optimal model of functioning of Local Action Groups (LAG) in the new financial perspective quality and effectiveness assessment of their functioning, April 2019
3. Soma (K-PV), The evaluation of the implementation of the CLLD instrument under RPO WK-P 2014-2020 and the possible assumptions of the instrument in the 2021-2027 perspective, September 2019

Aleksander Noworól (the territorial analysis)

- The **success** of the CLLD is based on three pillars: (a) participatory inclusion of local communities in the programming and implementation of development processes, (b) the continuity of the instrument and (c) the possibilities of ongoing financial support Implementation of the project
- It is worth considering the use of CLLD in urban areas of revitalisation and the entrustment of the LAG to the function of the manager/operator of it
- It is recommended to disseminate CLLD as a mechanism financed by both the Common Agricultural Policy funds and the Cohesion Policy ones - it is worth to impose the use of the instrument in all ROP and it would be necessary to introduce this obligatory use at the level of the Partnership Agreement
- The development of a bottom-up LSR should be followed before identifying the sources of funding for individual interventions
- LAGs should be „a crucible” of creating area-specific solutions, rather than merely agreeing on the projects of individual partners who can seek individual support

EGO (the national research of CLLD)

- The least developed service [of LAG] is animation, which mainly means information activities, however it should relate to working with local communities or local leaders to develop ideas that fit into LDS.
- LAG use to a small extent tools that could in practice lead to the integration of various sectors in the framework of LDS implementation.
- LDS are created using participation tools and usually authentically engage LAG members and the most active members of the community, taking into account the representation of various sectors (social, public and economic). However, the weakness of this process is too small inclusion of a wide range of residents, going beyond the most active groups.
- One of the main assumptions of the current financial perspective in the years 2014-2020 was to be a significant simplification of the formal conditions for the implementation of programs and projects. Although this general simplification has taken place, it can still be considered unsatisfactory. The opinion of stakeholders and users of the CLLD implementation system: it is over-regulated compared to other aid programs.

Soma (the regional research of multifunding) - 1

- The CLLD instrument is assessed by the respondents as a valuable and necessary element of ROP K-PV, whose activities should also be maintained in future years, both in rural areas and in cities
- Several factors affect the LAG's performance in implementing the instrument. One of them is previous experience - the wider it was, the easier it became to adopt a new instrument.
- Other elements play an important role, including matching activities to the vital needs of municipalities or poviats, bottom-up initiative of residents, the ability to accurately assess socio-economic conditions.
- The current CLLD instrument only partially reflects the original assumptions. CLLD assumes decentralization, but at the same time does not fully enable it - the MA created a catalog of possible activities, verifies LAG decisions limiting their freedom and autonomy of decisions.

Soma (the regional research of multifunding) - 2

- Future actions aim at increasing the quality of life of residents of local communities, both by supporting economic development and by building social capacity.
- The basis for development should be endogenous resources.
- Activities in the future perspective should include a wider community, which also means expanding the range of activation activities (social rather than professional). Actions taken in the LAG area should be complementary to each other to achieve the overarching development goal set out in LDS and process-oriented.
- The main expectation formulated by the respondents is related to further simplification of decision-making procedures and shortening the time of decision to grant or refuse funds.
- The strong recommendation is extending the catalog of activities to enable the development of local communities at various stages of development and operating in different socio-economic conditions, and to include this catalog in the updated LDS.

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Benefits of multifunding

- Easier access to Regional Operational Programmes (ROP) resources for smaller project promoters; capacity building of NGOs in rural areas;
- Better access for intervention from the ESF (not only for promoters from larger cities);
- Increased cooperation on the field than that of the RDP;
- Better cooperation between the LAG and the regional government, partnership relation
- Increased confidence for LAGs

Problems with multifunding

- A major obstacle is the lack of a uniform approach already at the level of EU regulations, the various national legislation dedicated to individual funds.
- Multifunding is a challenge, not all LAGS have the right institutional capacity to meet the demands.
- A number of measures should be taken to simplify the implementation of measures, reduce unnecessary bureaucracy and prepare good regulations that will not interfere with each other.



DZIĘKUJĘ
(Thank you)

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