

SOUTH EASTERN EUROPE
SWG RRD
 Regional Rural Development Standing Working Group

Presentation Euregia 2008




Transnational cooperation in South Eastern Europe (SEE)
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SWG RRD

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SWG RRD

SWG

- SEE moving towards integration and EU accession
- Agriculture plays an important role in national economies
- Development of rural areas as a major challenge
- Preconditions are:
 - Copenhagen criteria and
 - Regional cooperation in all levels





SWG RRD **SWG**



- Starting with a first conference in november 2001, a series of seven events has been organised. Apart from two events in Leipzig, Germany, meetings were held in Romania, Albania, Macedonia/Serbia, Bulgaria and Montenegro.
- Concurrent theme of all events was the agricultural and rural transition process in SEE countries.
- One of the main achievements was the formation of the Regional Rural Development Standing Working Group (SWG) in 2005.

SWG RRD **SWG OBJECTIVES**


- Development of agriculture and rural development strategies
- Adaptation of rural development legislation
- Establishment of required institutions for implementation
- Direct support
- Conducting studies

SWG RRD **SWG AIMS**




- To assure a close and permanent cooperation among members in order to accomplish the common policy of integration with the EU
- To stimulate and organize initiatives and activities on a national, regional and global scale under the supervision of the SWG assembly
- To devote itself to an open, active, constructive and critical approach to the ongoing integration processes towards Europe and a world wide cooperation.

SWG RRD **Status**



- The SWG has been established on the basis of a common wish to establish an informal organisational body consisting of representatives of governmental institutions and other bodies responsible for rural development in their respective countries and territories of South Eastern Europe (SEE) and working on relevant rural development topics on sustainable principles, through networking and permanent cooperation between all stakeholders of rural development in the region.

SWG RRD **Progress**



- **Increased membership**
 - Croatia, Slovenia, B&H (State Level and Federation Entity), Romania
 - Contacts with Turkish Ministry
 - Reestablished for joining



SWG RRD **Progress**



- **Functional Communication with EU established**
 - DG Enlargement
 - DG Agriculture and Rural Development
 - EC Delegations in Western Balkans (Regional level)



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Progress

- **Contacts and cooperation with other organizations**
 - OECD – Organization for economic co-operation and development
 - ICDT - International Centre for Democratic Transition
 - PREPARE – Partnership for Rural Europe
 - TAIEX - Technical Assistance and Information Exchange
 - RCC - Regional Cooperation Council



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Challenges

- Identification and analyses of potential resources
- Utilisation of economic potentials
- Further support to institutional building
- Bilateral of cross boarder cooperation
- Development of networking in rural areas
- Promoting regional exchange



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Challenges

- Development of rural policies
- Work in relation to poverty reduction in rural areas
- Creation of new jobs
- Empowerment of new farmers
- Gender issues
- Diversification of activities




SWG^{RRD} **Challenges**

- Registration of the SWG as a legal entity (*statutory changes and status agreement*)
- Financial Sustainability – *Membership fee and co-financing of RD cross-border projects*
- Staffing and premises of the secretariat




SWG^{RRD} **SWG Activities**

- Presentation of the SWG on the East West Agricultural Forum – Green Week - *Germany*
- Regional Training FP7 - *Macedonia*
- Conference and TOT on LEADER approach - *in cooperation with ICDT - Hungary*
- 4-th Regional SEE Sheep and Goat Breeding Day - *Macedonia*
- WS - EU Legislation and institutional set-up as a pre condition for utilization of the fifth component of IPA instrument IPA-RD– *Montenegro*
- 6-th Regional Fair of Balkan Biodiversity and Rural Heritage - *Serbia*



SWG^{RRD} **Potentials of Transnational Cooperation**

- Finalizing of assessments of cross-border areas
 - Drina – Tara Region (SRB-BIH-MNE)
 - Debar– Peskopeja (MKD –ALB)
- Financing and startup of “Shopska Land” project (MKD-SRB- BG)
- Training for traditional handicraft production
- Five booklets on EU RD policy, CAP
- Documentary on RD Best Practices in Western and Central Europe
- Strategic multi-annual planning of SWG activities
- Participation on euregia fair



SWG *RRD*

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Thank you!

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