



# Added Value of Networking

## Success Story

Success Story title *NSU and NGO partnership in the thematic working group to promote cooperation in agriculture*

Theme *Cooperation*

NRN *Latvia* Coordinator *Latvian NSU*

Partners *NGO Latvian Agricultural Cooperatives Association*

Period *2011* Resources *2.277 EUR*

Geo-location *Latvia*

Beneficiaries *Leaders of Latvia's Agricultural Cooperatives, executive of NGO "Latvian Agricultural Cooperatives Association", representatives of the Ministry of Agriculture of Latvia, representatives of the Latvian NSU*

### Background

The activity addressed sectorial issues. The aim of the thematic working group was to promote the establishment and development of cooperation in agriculture by creating practical suggestions on cooperation issues for farmers, cooperatives and state institutions. The reasons for organizing the thematic working group were the actual problems and questions in cooperation sphere in Latvia:

- The significant development of Agricultural cooperatives in Latvia started about 10 years ago. During these years cooperatives, based on practical experience, have faced issues with the Law on Cooperatives (created in 1998).
- The agricultural cooperatives should pass the conformity assessment each year which allows the cooperative to use different types of benefits established by legislation as well it is a guarantee for farmers to trust the cooperative. As there are several cases where the cooperative didn't comply with eligibility requirements, the existing requirements should be evaluated.
- Cooperation becomes binding also for forest owners which mean that the current system needs to be supplemented.
- The representatives of the cooperatives have been faced with different types of issues to be taken into account when planning to organize a new cooperative or to improve the existing cooperative activities.

### Main activities

The main activities were:

- Experts' work with legislative documents and cooperative's administrative documentation to create suggestions for their improvements;
- Experts' working groups with focus on necessary improvements for promoting cooperation in Latvia;
- Questionnaire to beneficiaries with a view to discuss the experts' suggestions for changes in legislation concerning cooperatives.





#### Main results/benefits

The main results of the working group were:

- Recommendations for changes of legislative on administrative documents needed for registration of cooperative and for its compliance with the good practice requirements;
- Recommendations for changes of cooperatives' legislation;
- Recommendations and samples of documents establishing the cooperative and the daily work-related issues;
- Advices to farmers for use of cooperation and recommendations for domestic and European support policy in future.

Based on the working group results, the changes of legislative on administrative documents for registration of cooperative and for its compliance with the good practice requirements were approved by the Latvian government on February 21, 2012 (the experts' recommendations are legally entered into force). Recommendations and samples of documents for establishing the cooperative and for a daily work-related issues developed by experts are published on Latvian NRN's and Latvian Agricultural Cooperatives Association's websites.

#### Contribution of the NSU

Latvian NSU organized the working groups and a questionnaire to beneficiaries. The representatives of NSU participated in experts' work as well as ensured public information about this initiative.

#### Contribution of the partners

The NGO Latvian Agricultural Cooperatives Association whose members are Latvia's Agricultural Cooperatives (producers of agricultural products) invited the experts on cooperation from different spheres, ensured the communication between the group members and collected the experts' suggestions.

#### Success factors

The success factors were:

- The idea and activities were born in a bottom-up way (the activity came from the NGO Latvian Agricultural Cooperatives Association, representing Latvian cooperatives and the promoting the idea of cooperation).
- The activities were focused on addressing issues of an important topic.
- The experts of the field were involved.

#### Additional information

More information about the results of the Thematic Working Group:

[http://www.laukutikls.lv/lauksaimniecibas\\_kooperativi/zinas/2561-izstradati\\_priekslikumi\\_kooperacijas\\_sekmesanai\\_latvija](http://www.laukutikls.lv/lauksaimniecibas_kooperativi/zinas/2561-izstradati_priekslikumi_kooperacijas_sekmesanai_latvija)

