



Association Européenne pour l'Information
sur le Développement Local a.s.b.l.

ANNUAL REPORT 2016

TABLE OF CONTENTS

IN BRIEF

The culture of “co”	3
---------------------------	---

AEIDL 2016

The pursuit of development	4
----------------------------------	---

AEIDL 2016

2016 – The year in the Association	5
--	---

INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION

<i>AEIDL Flash</i> and website	7
--------------------------------------	---

REFUGEES

Promoting citizens’ initiatives for migrants and refugees	8
---	---

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

ESF Transnational Cooperation Platform	9
--	---

THE ENVIRONMENT

LIFE at the service of the environment and climate	10
--	----

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT

FARNET: sustainable development of Europe’s fisheries areas	12
---	----

RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Contact Point of the European Network for Rural Development (ENRD)	14
--	----

SOCIAL INNOVATION

Social Innovation Community (SIC)	16
---	----

SIRClE: Social Innovation for Resilient Communities	18
---	----

AEIDL in 2016	22
---------------------	----

The culture of “co”



Photo: Márta Márczis

Events in European in 2016 inspired me to review not just the last year of our organisation in this preamble, but also to touch on the spirit of a common Europe. It is time to rethink some essential questions - Where are we? What is our place?

Europeanism is struggling with shrinkage and expansion. It is shrinking not only because of Brexit, but also because of the well-known social, economic and political malaise that exists in many Member States. It is also shrinking due to the psychological retreat of more and more countries in the wider region, where the motivation for being closer to a common Europe is fading, and in parallel the looming presence of dictatorships or the growing magnetic allurements of Russia is on the rise. On the other hand, Europe is struggling with the tensions of expansion, the rapidly growing multiculturalism and the need to ensure the integration of the large numbers of people who arrived in recent years, fleeing from wars, poverty and discrimination in their home countries and seeking a better future in Europe.

“In order to make anything change, just create a space that is not created by our actions, but our presence.”¹ In this case, the presence of those who believe that there is still time to reinvent Europe, which includes AEIDL, a European association. We all, individuals and our organisation have our role to play.

This changing context has inspired AEIDL to rethink its ‘presence and space’. Looking at all aspects of the organisation’s operations and performance, the team is currently in the process of an internal review. The entire AEIDL community was involved last year in the evaluation of the strategy approved in 2012, and in a reflection on a new strategy of change, aimed at refreshing the 29-year old organisation.

The strategic process is being led by a 12-member core group, including representatives of the staff, freelancers, board and general assembly. The strategy document will be finalized and approved in 2017 and its implementation will start in 2018, the year of AEIDL’s 30th anniversary. The main directions are already clear and have been commonly agreed by the core group. AEIDL shares the values enshrined in the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights. The members are individuals engaged in sustainable local development from across Europe, who believe that sustainable local development initiatives need a stronger voice in the process of re-inventing Europe. The vision is of a Europe where sustainable local development and community initiatives are widely recognised, not just for their ability to enrich people’s lives, but also as the living embodiment of European values.

AEIDL promotes a culture of cooperation, co-creation, community-leadership, caring for the commons, and creating value as a social enterprise. It is in the business of collaboration, creating the conditions to let new ideas flourish, and open to new forms of service delivery at local level. The nature of the professional services (networking, project coordination, information collection, etc.) that AEIDL delivers can have a bigger impact when they include the ‘commons’ dimension, when cooperation is complementary to competition, and when each assignment is co-created. The culture of ‘co’ is AEIDL’s brand, as it promotes the sustainability principles of a social enterprise and delivers high-value services through collaborative approaches.

At 60, Europe is in bad shape but having the will and self-belief to recover is half the struggle. The other half is responsible citizenship, which each member of the AEIDL community represents, and the common goal of contributing to the process of change, by action and by presence.

Márta Márczis,

President

August 2017

¹ Peter M. Senge, American systems scientist, senior lecturer at the MIT Sloan School of Management.

The pursuit of development

2016 was a year of continuity and development for AEIDL. The contracts signed in 2014 and 2015 with several European Commission's Directorate-Generals (DG Maritime Affairs & Fisheries, DG Employment, DG Environment and EASME agency, DG Agriculture) allowed us in 2016 to consolidate our achievements. New types of funding, such as Horizon 2020, have increased AEIDL's experience in social innovation and opened up many opportunities for development and partnership.



Photo: Sophie Brynart

EMPL). On the other hand, we saw a reduction in revenues compared to the planned budget (-6%) following the abolition of certain tasks in the LIFE contract.

Expenditure followed the same trend as revenue, increasing by 30.6% compared to 2015 but 13% less than projected in the 2016 budget. Cost control and the optimisation of contract budgets allowed us to record a net profit, helping to consolidate the balance sheet.

AEIDL also financed a number of in-house projects, targeting the priority themes identified in its strategy.

This was spread between 49 people - employees, freelancers, and partners.

Last but not least, a number of meetings bringing together all of AEIDL's active stakeholders were held, with a view to coordinating the evaluation of our strategic plan.

Jean Vanweydeveld,
Managing director

The nature of the services provided to customers included our core business activities (network management, communications, publications, event management, website creation and maintenance) and focused on themes directly involving local stakeholders: employment, the environment, regional, local and rural development, etc.

Contracts with the European institutions again represented the main proportion of AEIDL activities.

AEIDL's overall revenue increase in comparison to the previous year (+35.7%), mainly as a result of more activities within the LIFE contract and the power up of the ESF Transnational Platform contract (DG

Turning to staff development, part of the budget was used to provide individual training on specific topics.

A considerable amount of staff time was devoted to maintaining, improving and adding content to AEIDL's website, developing it into an exemplary information tool on social, environmental, territorial and citizenship themes associated with local development in Europe.

As regards the volume of activity, this increased by 7,672 hours compared with 2015, mainly due to the full year operation of the ESF contract. The total time worked in 2016 came to 53,832 hours, representing 31 full-time equivalents (FTEs).

2016 - The year in the Association

In 2016, we saw the conclusion of the AEIDL strategic plan 2010-2015, and the launch of a new reflection on our future strategy, involving employees, freelancers, board members and the members of the General Assembly.



Photo: AEIDL

AEIDL's General Assembly, 2016.

Membership of the association remained stable, at 30, with 13 European countries represented: Belgium (8 members), France (6), Italy (4), Hungary (2), United Kingdom (2), Bulgaria (1), Germany (1), Spain (1), Ireland (1), Lithuania (1), Portugal (1), Serbia (1) and Sweden (1).

A strategic membership campaign was planned at the 2016 General Assembly and will be launched in 2017, in advance of the General Assembly.

The objective is to:

- involve countries that are not yet represented (e.g. Poland, Portugal, Greece, UK-Scotland),
- address the generation gap and have "younger" opinions,

- prepare "succession" for the medium and long term.

There were six board meetings in 2016, including a first meeting by Skype!

Board members were keen to monitor AEIDL's current activities and business development, as well as budget stability, in the context of the EU programming cycle.

Members were informed through frequent updates from the General Director, and through the internal AEIDL NewsBrief and the fortnightly electronic newsletter, *AEIDL Flash*.

AEIDL's tradition of debates continued in 2016, notably with a work-

shop on "The Challenge of the Migrant and Refugee Crisis - Promoting Citizens' Initiatives for Migrants, Refugees and Asylum-seekers" (26 February 2016).

As regards AEIDL's strategic plan, 2016 was a transition year.

Challenges included:

- integrating the conclusions of the evaluation of the 2010-2015 strategic plan, which was carried out by the Berlin-based Kompetus consultancy firm, and pursuing or finalizing the work of the four internal strategic planning sub-committees.
- preparing a new strategic plan. To assist with this process, the

Board also chose to recruit a consultancy firm. A call for tender was launched and Kompetus was selected again.

A “Core Group” was also created to coordinate the strategic planning process. The members include representatives of the general assembly and staff on an equal basis.

Methodological elements were adjusted and adapted during the first meetings.

At the end of 2016, the Core Group had defined AEIDL's “vision” on local development and started to reflect on AEIDL's future mission.

All Core Group's meetings are reported and the results are quickly disseminated among AEIDL's members and staff to ensure good communication.

AEIDL, «Entreprise écodynamique»

Committed to reducing its environmental impact, AEIDL is working towards adopting more sustainable practices and raise its environmental awareness and standard practice within the organisation and with its members, partners and suppliers.

To ensure neutral third party control over this, AEIDL entered an environmental certification process and obtained the “Entreprise écodynamique” label in February 2015.

Valid for three years, the label is awarded after full investigation by a panel of representatives of public institutions, environmental and consumer organisations, business associations and universities. According to its environmental performance, the company or institution gets one, two or three stars.

In its [Environmental Statement](#), AEIDL ex-

pects its most significant impacts to concern:

- Emissions into the atmosphere from the use of carbon-based energy in offices and fuel in transport for work-related travel;
- Consumption of resources by use of raw materials, water, office supplies and furniture;
- Production of waste materials;
- Environmental policies of AEIDL's suppliers, partners and members.

An “Eco-Team” was re-activated at the end of 2016.

<http://www.aeidl.eu/en/news/what-s-new-at-aeidl/2040-aeidl-gets-environmental-label.html>



AEIDL Flash and website

The purpose of our fortnightly electronic newsletter, *AEIDL Flash*, is to draw attention to our activities and the news on our website. These news items from different sources are selected for the interest they may have for local development in Europe.

The “Latest News” and “What’s New at AEIDL?” sections of the website are being fuelled every day with information from various sources (European institutions, think-tanks, foundations, Eurostat, EurActiv, OECD, media...). This information work is “activated” by the *AEIDL Flash*.

The *AEIDL Flash* is sent every two Fridays to three main “circles”: 1) General Assembly members; 2) Team; 3) AEIDL’s experts, partners, “friends” (including the 120 people or so who attended the 2014 conference).

The AEIDL website attracts around 2,000 single visitors per month.



ADDED VALUE

The AEIDL Flash draws attention to the AEIDL's website, while promoting AEIDL's activities to members, team, and around 450 people (practitioners, experts, partners, networks...) involved in local development. Furthermore, the newsletter creates a “sense of belonging” to AEIDL, as shown by the large number of positive reactions and article suggestions received.

2016 ACTIVITIES AND RESULTS

- The website has been made “**responsive**” (user-friendly on PCs, tablets and smartphones).
- The “Refugees” section is fuelled at least every two weeks with new **citizen-led local initiatives for refugees** throughout Europe
- These initiatives are also published on the special refugee section of the SIE and now SIC platforms.
- We are now trying to expand the *AEIDL Flash* readership (currently around 450 subscribers).



Client: AEIDL

Duration: ongoing

Budget: -

Team: 1 person (Jean-Luc Janot) + graphic designer's punctual intervention (Daniel Renders)

Website: <http://www.aeidl.eu/>

Promoting citizens' initiatives for migrants and refugees

The current tragic migrant crisis has led AEIDL's Board to propose to give a special focus on this issue through collecting and presenting local initiatives dealing with the reception of refugees.

Jean-Luc Janot, in collaboration with Yves Champetier, has collected, edited and published such initiatives on AEIDL's [website](#) and our fortnightly newsletter, *AEIDL Flash*. Work started in September 2015 through two means:

- A repeating [advert](#) on the website, in the Flash and on social media (LinkedIn, Facebook and Twitter) calling for initiatives in favour of refugees,
- A general scanning of articles in quality newspapers and websites dealing with the migrant crisis.

24 initiatives have been published so far (December 2016). They come from Belgium, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, Sweden and the UK.

Cooperation AEIDL – Social Innovation Europe / Social Europe Community

These publications have led to cooperation with the previous SIE and current SIC platforms which have sections dedicated to migrants (<http://www.siceurope.eu/sic-themes/migration>). In this context, Jean-Luc Janot works with SIE/SIC - his articles are now published both on the AEIDL website and on the SIE/SIC platforms.

The last seminar of the SIE platform took place in March 2016 in Syracuse, Italy, on the theme of welcoming refugees and several AEIDL's refugee initiatives were used as examples of good practices. Several Directorates-Generals of the European Commission, including DG AGRI and DG MARE, are also interested to promote initiatives for refugees.

Working Group on the issue of migrants and refugees

On 26 February 2016, AEIDL organised an internal workshop on “The Challenge of the Migrant and Refugee Crisis – Promoting Citizens' Initiatives for Migrants, Refugees and Asylum-seekers”. The aim was to gain an overview of the issue and to better coordinate the work of AEIDL's various teams on this theme.

Most of AEIDL's current activities and contracts have contents that are directly or indirectly linked to the current migration crisis. The aim of the workshop was to gain an overview of the situation and to see how the teams working on AEIDL's various contracts could, each in their own way, act together to address the issue.

AEIDL's various teams (European Social Fund Transnational Platform, Contact Point for the European Network for Rural Development, FARNET, Social Innovation Community, LIFE, etc.) work relatively independently and it is important that they should come together to identify synergies and share knowledge of the refugee crisis.

Following this first workshop, a Working Group on the issue of migrants and refugees is being set up, with the ambition to continue to promote local citizen-led initiatives for refugees more systematically, which could ultimately lead to a special publication featuring a concept note as well as, ideally, 28 examples of such initiatives.

A Syrian refugee family in Belgium.



Photo: Marion Janot

ESF Transnational Cooperation Platform

The European Commission's Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion (DG EMPL) has contracted AEIDL to provide technical assistance to the EU-level platform for transnational cooperation in the European Social Fund (ESF)

The goal of such transnational cooperation is to improve the quality of employment and inclusion policies and to deliver effective reforms. This relies on the sharing of information and good practice, and working together towards common solutions by bringing together administrations, social partners and non-governmental organisations. For project promoters, input from foreign partners may enable them to approach challenges in novel ways, to solve problems more efficiently, and to avoid pitfalls during processes of change. For public administrations, transnational cooperation provides a structure in which to pursue mutual learning.

To support this, AEIDL has established an EU-level platform to facilitate the exchange of experience, the making of transnational partnerships, capacity building and networking, and the dissemination of outcomes.

More specifically, AEIDL's technical support concerns:

- Animating and supporting nine thematic networks, respectively on employment, inclusion, youth employment, learning and skills, social economy, governance and public administration, simplification, partnership and migrants;
- Creating and managing a website which includes a database to enable ESF project promoters to find partners abroad;
- Publishing technical dossiers and good practices;
- Organising an annual event.

2016 ACTIVITIES AND RESULTS

The team was established in September 2015, and consists of a core team of six working from AEIDL's offices, supported by 14 freelance thematic experts and other specialists.

The mutual learning aspect of the job has developed satisfactorily. Our first year of work has seen 9 thematic networks established, each of which has now met 3 or 4 times. On average they involve 10 Member States and 5 other stakeholders (mostly NGOs). They have engaged in a variety of activities – such as problem analyses, surveys, good practice identification, study visits, peer reviews inspirational speakers, practice seminars, online learning and coaching – and produced outputs including logical frameworks, glossaries, maps, policy briefs and peer review reports. One took over part of an EU Presidency conference.

During 2016 we published the first two issues of our newsletter, a guide to transnationality, a dossier on networking and numerous web articles. In May we held a stakeholder panel, and in June our first annual seminar, which those attending counted a great success.

However the side of the job concerned with co-ordinating the calls for transnational projects has shown a poor outturn. Only 4 Managing Authorities (Finland, Flanders, Poland and Sweden) took part in the first round of co-ordinated calls for proposals, which closed at the end of September 2016. This generated around 100 project applications, worth about €14 million – less than 1/1000th of the ESF's annual



Photo: Toby Johnson

November 2016 seminar.

budget. Only 43 of these were subsequently approved for implementation. We have accordingly launched, at our own initiative but with the Commission's support, a 'calls marketing campaign'. This comprises capacity-building from the bottom up, coupled with an attempt to build political will from the top down. In November we staged a learning seminar on how to write transnational calls, which 10 MSs attended, and in December prepared a survey of ESF Managing authorities to establish whether they intend to support transnational projects. The result is that 17 countries have opted in, which we hope will lead to a successful second round of co-ordinated calls in 2018. Meanwhile, in January 2017 we established the Impact Task Force of Member States to achieve in-depth consensus on the procedures to be used.

ADDED VALUE

AEIDL has been involved in the ESF since 2001; from 2001 until 2008 it provided technical assistance to the entrepreneurship pillar of the EQUAL programme and from 2009 until 2013 it supported 17 thematic learning networks among ESF Managing Authorities.

Client: European Commission (DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion)
Duration: 2015-2019
Budget: €1.8m p.a.
Team (AEIDL): 11 FTE
Website: <http://ec.europa.eu/esf/transnationality>

LIFE at the service of the environment and climate

Informing, promoting, making known, publicising – since 2001 AEIDL has been the “Communications Team” for this major European environment programme.

ADDED VALUE

This contract strengthens AEIDL's position and reputation, combining its know-how in communications and European environmental and climate policy. It has also allowed AEIDL to establish and maintain contact with numerous experts throughout Europe in a wide range of fields linked with environment, climate, nature and biodiversity protection. The experience gained through LIFE demonstrates AEIDL's ability to produce high-quality information in a specialist area. This can be exploited in other fields linked to the environment, such as climate change, renewable energy, and more generally, sustainable development.



Photo: LIFE09 NAT/PL/000263/Piotr Talaaj

The 'Polish Important Bird Areas' LIFE project restored wetlands in five national parks in Poland.

The LIFE programme is the EU's funding instrument for the environment and climate action. The general objective of LIFE is to contribute to the implementation, updating and development of EU environmental and climate policy and legislation by co-financing projects with European added value.

LIFE began in 1992 and to date there have been four complete phases of the programme (LIFE I: 1992-1995, LIFE II: 1996-1999, LIFE III: 2000-2006 and LIFE+: 2007-2013) for which AEIDL has been awarded communication contracts. During this period, LIFE has co-financed some **4 171 projects**, contributing approximately

€3.4 billion euros to the protection of the environment and climate.

The European Commission (DG Environment and DG Climate Action) manages the LIFE programme. The Commission has delegated the implementation of many components of the LIFE programme to the Executive Agency for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (EASME). External selection, monitoring and communication teams provide assistance to the Commission and EASME.

In October 2014, the European Commission signed a framework contract with NEEMO EEIG, which includes AEIDL, for services related to moni-

toring and communications for the new LIFE programme (2014-2020).

In the context of this partnership, AEIDL's task is to provide technical support and assistance to European-level communication activities.

As the Communications Team of LIFE, AEIDL is responsible for the following tasks on a permanent basis:

- LIFE website maintenance, updating and development
 - Updating the LIFE website (<http://ec.europa.eu/life>) on a daily basis
 - Feeding new content into the LIFE Video Player (<http://lifevideos.eu/videos/>)

- Managing LIFE's Facebook (facebook.com/LIFE.programme) and Twitter (twitter.com/LIFE_Programme) accounts)
- Summaries of completed projects (some 150 a year)
- Collections of new projects
- 3 collections (1 per thematic area) covering a total of more than 150 new projects selected each year
- The [LIFEnews](#) newsletter (10 issues a year)
- Thematic brochures (2 a year)
- Brochures on the [best LIFE projects](#) (2 a year) and organising the Best Project Award ceremony
- Thematic diffusion and dissemination of the results of LIFE projects to stakeholders and decision-makers
- "Country overviews" (summaries of the LIFE situation in each EU Member State)
- LIFE promotional material
- Multimedia [databases](#) (photos, videos, documents, publications, etc.)
- PR assistance for LIFE projects
- Review of PR activities

2016 ACTIVITIES AND RESULTS

Since the beginning of 2016, the publications of [LIFEnews](#) have covered the following themes:

- LIFE's contribution in the battle against climate change.
- LIFE as an investment catalyst: How the programme can help mobilise private financing for strategic investments.
- Selection of the first LIFE preparatory projects to be selected for co-financing.
- Wildlife poisoning: Methods used by LIFE projects to address the problem.
- Water pressures in urban areas: The potential for a 'step change' in



water management through LIFE Integrated Projects.

- Circular economy: How to improve LIFE projects' replicability and boost the market for secondary raw materials.
- EU Invasive Alien Species and the LIFE projects which have already taken action to address the problem.

The following thematic brochures were published or are being prepared:

- LIFE and circular economy
- LIFE and Coastal Habitats
- The Best LIFE Environment projects 2014
- The Best LIFE Nature projects 2014
- The Best LIFE Environment projects 2015
- The Best LIFE Nature projects 2015
- LIFE and new partnerships for nature conservation
- Three thematic compilations of projects in Environment and Resource Efficiency, Climate Action and Nature & Biodiversity

The team made the LIFE project results visible in a bit less than a 100 events across the EU.

The production of three videos to showcase the added value of LIFE Integrated Projects has started.

LIFE Platform in Athens (May 2016).



Photo: Guy Sherrack



Client: European Commission (DG Environment, DG Climate action & EASME)

Duration: 2014-2018

Budget: €2 400 000 (2013-2014) - €6 400 000 (2015-2018).

Team: 20 persons (14 FTEs)

Website: <http://ec.europa.eu/life>, <http://life.aeidl.eu>, <http://www.aeidl.eu/en/projects/environment/life.html>

FARNET: sustainable development in fisheries areas

Within the framework of DevNet GEIE, established in partnership with Grupo Alba (Spain), AEIDL is participating in the Support Unit for FARNET, the European Fisheries Areas Network.

ADDED VALUE

FARNET represents an opportunity for AEIDL to apply its experience in rural development (gained in the context of LEADER) in a different context, as well as to exploit its expertise in communications relating to European programmes. It also ensures that AEIDL is associated with an initiative which has become a key feature of European fisheries policy.



Photo: Jean-Luc Janot

Trap net fishing in the Gulf of Finland.

The FARNET Support Unit (FSU) is the technical assistance team contracted by the European Commission to assist in the implementation of Community-Led Local Development (CLLD) under the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF). It works closely with DG MARE, the Member State managing authorities (MAs), the national fisheries networks and with the FARNET Local Action Groups (FLAGs) and others involved in the

implementation of CLLD, building a “learning network” that connects the growing knowledge and experience in CLLD from across Europe. It consists of a permanent team of 12 people, based in Brussels, assisted by 18 regional experts.

The FARNET Support Unit (FSU) is responsible for the following activities:

- Build knowledge and capacity in Community-Led Local development

- Identify and disseminate successful responses to key challenges for coastal, fisheries and aquaculture areas across Europe
- Ensure the flow of information among stakeholders involved in Community-Led Local Development
- Support cooperation between FLAGs and with other local development partnerships throughout Europe and beyond.
- How we do it:

mpment of Europe's

- Expert advice and assistance to FLAGs and administrations
- Events: capacity-building events, transnational seminars, conferences
- Cooperation with other local development networks
- Identification of CLLD Good Practices
- Publications: regular electronic FARNET Flash, a yearly FARNET Magazine, thematic and methodological guides and other technical reports
- The FARNET website and social media: Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and the FARNET YouTube Channel.
- The development of support itineraries for ES, HR, IT, PL and RO.
- The co-organisation of capacity-building events for FLAGs and MAs in ES, FR, HR, IT, LT, PL, PT and SE.
- The organisation and facilitation of two **Managing Authorities meetings**.
- The organisation and facilitation of two **transnational seminars**:
 - "Results-oriented CLLD in fisheries areas", in Helsinki on 24-26 May 2016
 - "Boosting business along the fisheries supply chain" in Thessaloniki on 18-20 October 2016
- Ten issues per year of the **FARNET Flash**
- The publication of **FARNET Magazine** n° 13 in DE, EN, ES, FR and PL and 14 in DE, EN, ES, FR and IT.
- The publication of two **FARNET Guides**:
 - Guide #10: "Starting CLLD implementation in practice" in DE, EL, EN, ES, FR, IT and PL

2016 ACTIVITIES AND RESULTS

Activities focused on:

- An analysis of the needs of the FARNET stakeholders for the programming period 2014-2020.
- The development of a Communication Strategy



- Guide #11: "Results-oriented CLLD in fisheries areas: six practical factsheets" in DE, EL, EN, ES, FR, HR and PL
- The publication of a series of project examples.

Painted wall in the port of Mahón (Menorca, Spain).



Photo: Jean-Luc Janot



Client: European Commission (DG Maritime Affairs and Fisheries)
Duration: 2015-2020
Budget: €1 890 000
Team (AEIDL): 5 persons
Website: www.farnet.eu

Contact Point of the European Network for Rural Development (ENRD)

The Directorate-General for Agriculture of the European Commission (DG AGRI) has contracted the RURANET EEIG, made up of four partner organisations including AEIDL, to manage the Contact Point of the European Network for Rural Development (ENRD) during the 2014-2020 period.

ADDED VALUE

After LEADER (1992-2001) and the Helpdesk of the European Evaluation Network for Rural Development (2008-2013), this contract allows AEIDL to continue to be a key actor in the field of rural development.

The purpose of the ENRD is to increase the involvement of all stakeholders (in particular in agriculture, forestry and rural development) in the implementation of the EU rural development policy; to improve the quality of rural development programmes; and to play a role in informing the broader public on the benefits of rural development policy.

RURANET is an equal partnership of four organisations with complementary skills and expertise: AEIDL,

Grupo Alba, IEEP (Institute for European Environmental Policy), and the Rural Development Company.

A permanent team of 20 full-time equivalents work for the ENRD Contact Point, the first activities of which began in July 2014.

The ENRD Contact Point is in charge of three major tasks:

- Knowledge development
- Knowledge sharing
- Exchange and cooperation

2016 ACTIVITIES AND RESULTS

Knowledge development: key achievements

In the second contractual year (July 2015-July 2016):

- Completion of a full set of **112 national and regional RDPs**
- 12 Focus Area fiches (out of 18)
- **16 reports** of RDP measures and sub-measures based on screening of all RDPs
- Organisation and support to two Thematic Groups (on **Smart and Competitive Rural Areas** and **Promoting the transition to a green economy**)
- 100 good practices

In the period 16 July-10 December 2016 (of the third contractual year):

- 1st meeting and 2nd meeting of the Thematic Group (TG) on '**Smart & Competitive Rural Businesses**' held
- 1st meeting of the Thematic Group (TG) on '**Resource-Efficient Rural Economy**' held
- Additional 25 good practices published online (cumulative total: 125)

Knowledge Sharing: key achievements

In the second contractual year (July 2015-July 2016):

- Continuous updating of ENRD website

Silage in the Leader Mitland Plus LAG area, Sweden.



Photo: Erika Larsson

e European Network for Rural

- Animation of social media channels (Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube)
- 2 editions of the EU Rural Review ('Rural Responses to Challenges in Europe' and 'Smart and Competitive Food and Drink Supply Chains')
- 2 EAFRD Projects Brochures ('Smart and Competitive Rural Areas' and 'Migrant and Refugee Integration')
- 2 editions of Rural Connections (the ENRD networking magazine): Autumn 2015 and Spring 2016
- 12 Newsletters
- Update of the ENRD presentation booklet
- Communication users' survey and update of ENRD CP Communication Strategy

In the period 16 July-10 December 2016 (of the third contractual year):

- New 'look' of the ENRD website, with improved visuals and more user-friendly functionalities
- Continuous updating and translation of content (in FR and DE)
- Animation of social media channels
- 5 additional newsletters, of which one dedicated to the [major Cork 2.0 European Conference on Rural Development](#)

Exchange and cooperation: key achievements

In the second contractual year (July 2015-July 2016):

- 2nd meeting of the RN Rural Assembly
- 3 meetings of the RN Steering Group

- 3 NRN meetings in Milan, Bled, Amsterdam
- Update of NRN toolkit
- 25 NRN profiles finalised
- 1 LEADER seminar (Milan)
- 1 LEADER Sub-group
- Update of LEADER Toolkit
- Design of LAG/CLLD database in collaboration with 4 DGs
- Design of cooperation partner search tool
- 10 pilot cooperation fiches
- 2 LEADER task forces supported, 1 initiated
- 2 ENRD Seminars ('Connecting RDP support to the food and drink supply chain' and 'Changing our mindsets - seizing opportunities in the green economy')

In the period 16 July-10 December 2016 (of the third contractual year):

- 3rd meeting of the RN Rural Assembly
- 1 RN Steering Group meeting
- 1 NRN meeting (Slovakia)

Additional Tasks

In the second contractual year (July 2015-July 2016):

- 1 Seminar for 150 people (Unlocking the potential of the RDPs)
- 9 workshops for 70 people each
- 3 workshops for 30 people (Rural Networks Self-Assessment; Simplifying CLLD delivery; and Umbrella Projects)
- A photo shoot of EAFRD projects to support migrants and the creation of a tool for the CP photo database

- Tailoring of Good Practice project examples for their inclusion in DG BUDG database
- Preparatory work for the 'Cork 2.0' Rural Development conference to be held in September 2016

In the period 16 July-10 December 2016 (of the third contractual year):

- 1 LEADER/CLLD Seminar for 150 participants (Sweden)
- Workshops on ANC (Areas facing natural or other specific constraints), AECM (Agri-environment-climate measures)



Client: European Commission (DG Agriculture)
Duration: 2014-2020
Budget: € 3 000 000
Team (AEIDL): 2,5 FTEs
Website: <http://www.enrd.eu>

Social Innovation

Funded by the EU's Horizon 2020 programme, and managed by a consortium of 12 leading organisations in the field of social innovation, the Social Innovation Community (SIC) will engage, strengthen and connect existing social innovation networks, including public sector innovators, digital social innovators, social economy actors and more. It builds on the work of Social Innovation Europe (SIE), a project dedicated to promoting the development of social innovation in Europe, which ran from 2011 until July 2016.

ADDED VALUE

This three-year contract reinforces the links AEIDL has built up in recent years with some of Europe's leading organisations in the field of social innovation. It is also an opportunity to develop AEIDL's expertise in social innovation and the social economy, to reinforce our identity as a key player in these fields, and to create connections and synergies with other projects, programmes and colleagues from AEIDL, such as the social innovation dimension of the ESF Transnational Cooperation networks, the SI approach to the migration crisis, LEADER and FARNET groups in relation to the SIC's Community-led innovation network, SIRCle, etc.

Launched in February 2016, SIC is coordinated by AEIDL, which is responsible for the financial and administrative aspects of the project.

The SIC consortium includes: AEIDL, SIX (Social Innovation eXchange, UK), YF (the Young Foundation, UK), Nesta (Innovation Foundation, UK), TUDO (Dortmund University), UNIBO (University of Bologna), SIL (Social Innovation Lab, Croatia), DRIFT (Dutch Research Institute for Transitions), SINNERGIAC UPV/EHU (social innovation research centre, University of the Basque Country),

ZSI (Centre for Social Innovation, Austria), REVES (European Network for Cities and Regions for the Social Economy) and the Danish Technological Institute.

Eight networks (cities and regional development; the collaborative and sharing economy; community-led innovation; corporate social innovation; digital social innovation; intermediaries; public sector innovators; and the social economy) will be supported for a three-year period through dedicated work packages, focusing on: engagement and disse-

mination; research; experimentation; learning; and policy.

The overarching aim of the project is to create a 'network of networks' of social innovation actors. SIC aims to deepen and strengthen existing networks, forge new connections between networks, and create new links to actors and networks which hitherto have not been included in the field of social innovation. The aims of such a community are to generate new social innovations, develop and scale up successful ideas, and to share and spread

SIC Summer School 2016.



Photo: SIC

Community (SIC)

knowledge more effectively in order to improve research, practice and policy-making. By creating an enabling environment for social innovation, the project will improve the overall framework conditions for social innovation in Europe. This in turn will support the creation of opportunities for growth and for overcoming the current social and economic crisis affecting much of Europe.

2016 ACTIVITIES AND RESULTS

The contract started in February 2016, with a kick-off meeting in Brussels involving all partners. Since then, a lot has happened, starting with the recruitment of Patricia Martinez in March 2016 to assist the Project Coordinator in this work.

- The new SIC website was first tested internally by all partners and networks, and then officially launched in September, ensuring a smooth transition from the SIE website (most of the content has been transferred to the new SIC website, ensuring capitalisation, and all SIE users have become SIC users).
- The first edition of the SIC Summer School took place in Tilburg, the Netherlands (20-23 September 2016), organised in collaboration



Launch of SIC (26-27 September 2016).

with the 'European Social Innovation Week' - ESIW 2016. It included top-class lectures on the topics of 'Municipalities and cultural change', 'The role of intermediaries on urban social innovation', 'Development of urban social innovation ecosystems' and 'Governance of social innovation', as well as presentations of good practice examples and break-out sessions to provide the opportunity to discuss experiences and develop solutions.

- On September 26-27, the SIC was officially launched in Brussels, with a big event that attracted around 160 participants from across Europe.

Since February, several deliverables have been produced and uploaded to the REA (Research Executive Agency) website, ranging from management issues (Intellectual Property Guide, Quality Assurance Guide, Progress Report) to IS Landscape mapping, IS Networks map.

Registration to the [Newsletter](#) is available on the website, and SIC developments can be followed on [Facebook](#) and on [Twitter](#).



Client: European Commission (DG Research & Innovation and European Research Executive Agency, Horizon 2020 programme)
Duration: 02/2016-02/2019 (36 months)
Budget: EUR 2,991,906.25 (AEIDL: EUR 140 311.25)
Team (AEIDL): 3 persons concerned
Website: <https://www.siceurope.eu/>

SIRClE: Social Innovation

Funded by Erasmus+, the Social Innovation for Resilient Communities (SIRClE) project uses adult education to address one of the most pressing needs of our time, namely how to combine effective grassroots responses to climate and social change with the capacity to make a sustainable living in a challenging economic environment.

ADDED VALUE

This project allows AEIDL to focus on the specific role of social entrepreneurs as innovators in local development, as well as being an opportunity to further broaden AEIDL's training offer.



Photo: SIRClE

SIRClE seminar.

Adult learners will acquire the skills needed to set up and run a social enterprise and sustainable business that contributes to the sustainability of their region. In this way they will be supporting the development of a new economy based on the creation and distribution of the goods and services needed to deliver a sustainable and resilient future.

SIRClE brings together a diverse range of organisations from Austria

(Plenum), Belgium (AEIDL and Still Consulting), Portugal (FFCUL), Romania (Asociatia Romania in Transizie), Spain (Altekio), and the UK (Findhorn Foundation and Global Ecovillage Network UK) to implement the project.

AEIDL's main roles in the project are to contribute through its local development expertise to creating the curriculum, the online tools, as well as making connections and engaging NGOs

and social enterprise networks in Belgium in two pilot training seminars and a final conference in Brussels.

2016 ACTIVITIES AND RESULTS

The partners in the project have developed a comprehensive 'learning journey' for social entrepreneurs to engage in when planning, creating, developing and implementing their projects.

n for Resilient Communities

The **Evoneers' Journey**, as the curriculum is named, is composed of nine stepping stones and includes supporting patterns, which provide references to key tools, learning models and methodologies that can support social entrepreneurs in both their 'being' and their actions. 2016 has seen the finalisation of the curriculum during meetings between partners, who tested the tools through train the trainer and transnational meetings, each bringing their specific angle and contribution.

The **project website** has been developed by AEIDL and is being maintained and adapted according to changes in the curriculum.

The pilot trainings were launched in all countries during 2016. AEIDL organised an Open Day which successfully attracted over 20 participants, eager to engage in the journey either to bring to life an idea of a project or to further develop an existing initiative. As a result, two trainings with Still Consulting were organised in May and November 2016 in Brussels.

In May 2016, the Evoneers' Journey accompanied 13 social entrepreneurs wishing to set up urban hubs for debate on sustainability, events on art and sustainable living, creating a service within the Belgian public administration in support of social entrepreneurship initiatives, working with migrants and refugees to improve sustainability of living conditions, creating online tools to spread information on transition initiatives...

The training in November 2016 attracted no less than 23 participants, whose projects ranged from creating spaces for self-development



The nine stepping stones of the Evoneers' Journey.

activities in the Brussels area, to reconverting unused religious buildings into social and cultural spaces, launching campaigns on the right to birth in dignity and in respect of life values, starting up a sustainable textile and clothes production respectful of the environment, holistic healing practices, introducing transition principles in education and many more. Representatives from France also attended, looking at how to revitalise villages in remote rural areas and empowering older generations as well as sharing and disseminating know-how on organic bread production, both locally and world-wide.

Both trainings proved very successful and created great synergies between participants who have initiated networking exchanges to

maintain the momentum of the pilots and support each other in taking forward their projects.

The Evoneers' Journey trainings have received enthusiastic feedback from participants. AEIDL is now looking at possibilities of offering similar trainings in the future in Belgium, and is giving visibility to the Journey at public events such as fairs.



Client: AEIDL
Duration: 2014-2017

Budget: €446 000 (AEIDL: €50 575)

Team (AEIDL): Patrizia Brandellero (coordinator/trainer)
Eveline Durieux (trainer) and Fabrice Wagner (webmaster)

Website: <http://www.sircle-project.eu/>

AEIDL in 2016



© Fabrice Wagner

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AEIDL PROFILE

Name: Association Européenne pour l'Information sur le Développement Local (AEIDL) / European Association for Information on Local Development

Legal status: asbl (non-profit organization).

Founded: 1988

Purpose: To contribute to a Europe based on solidarity and citizen involvement, founded on sustainable development and equal opportunities, by offering a wide range of services to local development and civil society stakeholders, as well as various institutions, including the European Commission.

Services: Managing networks and technical assistance; evaluation and advice; information, communications and publishing; training.

Fields of activity: Territorial development (local, regional, rural, urban); the environment and sustainable development; employment and social development; citizenship.

Partner institutions: European institutions; local, regional, national and European authorities, decision-makers and “developers”; development agencies; citizen groups; professional organisations; non-governmental organisations (NGOs).

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