

Research for REGI Committee – Tools to support the territorial and urban dimension in cohesion policy: Integrated Territorial Investment (ITI) and Community-Led Local Development (CLLD)

1. Introduction

For the 2014-2020 programming period the regulations encourage the usage of integrated and place-based oriented approaches to foster economic, social and territorial cohesion¹, at the same time putting a greater weight on urban development actions in order to attain the Europe 2020 Strategy goals. These territorial approaches can be implemented by using tools such as the **Integrated Territorial Investment (ITI)** and the **Community-Led Local Development (CLLD)**. The Partnership Agreements, between the Member States and the European Commission, should indicate how ITI and CLLD will be used by Member States and the types of areas and challenges that these mechanisms will address.

The EP Committee on Regional Development (REGI) requested the Policy Department for Structural and Cohesion Policies for this briefing in support of the own-initiative report "New territorial development tools in Cohesion Policy 2014-2020: Integrated Territorial Investment (ITI) and Community-Led Local Development" (Rapporteur: Ruža Tomašić).

2. The Role of the European Parliament

The European Parliament (EP) supports local and integrated development through CLLD and ITI, including a reinforced urban dimension of cohesion policy. CLLD has been perceived by the EP as an important element of the Common Provisions Regulation (CPR) (EU) No 1303/2013² with a focus on developing synergies between funds and as "an excellent way of encouraging bottom-up participation from a cross-section of local community actors working towards sustainable territorial objectives"³.

During the negotiations of the new regulations, the EP put a strong emphasis on the role played by local action groups in designing and implementing community-led local development strategies, adding an "explicit reference to 'fostering project management capabilities' of local actors". The Parliament contributed to the provisions of Article 35.1(a) by adding a provision that costs of preparatory support to local strategies can be covered by the ESI Funds (e.g. administrative costs, training, studies)⁴. Regarding ITI, the EP considered ITI as an opportunity for cities to meet their own specific needs⁵ and together with the Council, brought the possibility of complementing ITI with funding from EAFRD and EMFF⁶.

¹ Territorial cohesion is one of the EU goals introduced by the Treaty of Lisbon (TFEU, Title XVIII, Article 174)

² CPR Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013

³ EP Resolution on the Role of territorial development in cohesion policy, 15 January 2013, [P7_TA\(2013\)0002](#), 15 January 2013; EP Resolution on Common provisions on European funds, 20 November 2013, [P7_TA\(2013\)0482](#)

⁴ EP, European Union Cohesion Policy 2014-2020: A comprehensive presentation of the Legislative Package and the Role of the European Parliament, 2014

⁵ EP Resolution on the Role of territorial development in cohesion policy, 15 January 2013, [P7_TA\(2013\)0002](#), 15 January 2013

⁶ EP Resolution on Common provisions on European funds, 20 November 2013, [P7_TA\(2013\)0482](#)



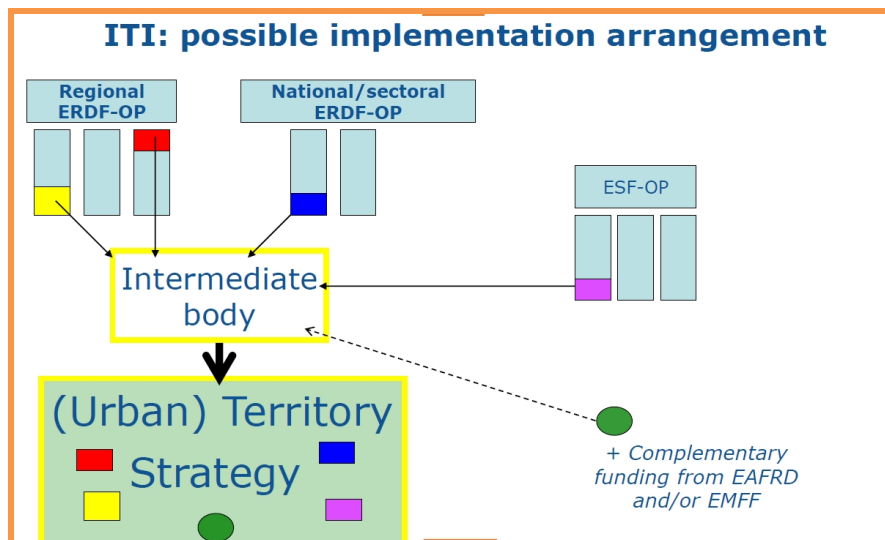
3. Integrated Territorial Investment (ITI)

ITI is a new and **optional delivery tool** introduced by the CPR (Art. 36) and allowing the **implementation of territorial development strategies** through investments from the European Social Fund (ESF), the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) or the Cohesion Fund. The funding should be combined from at least two priority axes⁷ of one or more operational programmes (OPs)⁸.

An ITI can have a complementary financial support from the European Agriculture Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) or the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) **and can be used to deliver Art. 7 of the ERDF Regulation (EU) 1301/2013** which states that "at least 5% of the ERDF resources allocated at national level under the Investment for growth and jobs goal shall be allocated to integrated actions for sustainable urban development".

ITIs concern **sub-national level areas** like regions, sub-regions, cities, rural municipalities and neighbourhoods which have a common territorial element and there are many possible implementation arrangements (See Figure 1). Member States' managing authorities have the final responsibility for managing and implementing an ITI but tasks can be delegated to intermediate bodies (e.g. local authorities, NGOs)⁹.

Figure 1: ITI - possible implementation arrangement



Source: EC Presentation: ITI and its urban dimension: sustainable urban development, Márton Matkó, October 2014

By using ITIs, Member States choose to address territorial challenges in a coordinated way, going beyond single actions of an Operational Programme and funding strategic activities of a given area. Although the ITI concept is flexible, its implementation seems to be rather challenging (see Section 6).

⁷ Priority axis (Structural Funds): CPR, Art. 88 - "As a general principle a priority axis should cover one thematic objective, one Fund and one category of region. Where appropriate and in order to increase the effectiveness in a thematically coherent integrated approach, it should be possible for a priority axis to relate to more than one category of region and combine one or more complementary investment priorities from the ERDF, ESF and the Cohesion Fund under one or more thematic objectives"

⁸ CPR Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013, Art. 36

⁹ For cooperation programmes, the intermediate bodies are defined in the Chapter III, Article 11 of the ETC Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013

4. Community-Led Local Development (CLLD)

Community-Led Local Development (CLLD) is a bottom-up approach, where local communities create and implement local integrated strategies. CLLD has been used by Community Initiatives such as URBAN (funded by the ERDF), LEADER¹⁰ (funded by the EAFRD), EQUAL (funded by the ESF) and for supporting Fisheries Local Action Groups (funded by the EMFF)¹¹.

The CPR (Art. 32, 33 and 34) encourages the usage of CLLD in **subregional level areas** (with not less than 10 000 and not more than 150 000 inhabitants). It foresees that **local action groups** (LAGs) prepare and carry out integrated and **multi-sectoral local development strategies** (i.e. serving local purposes and responding to local needs). CLLD strategies shall include innovative **features** (new products, processes, organisations and markets) and **networking** with other areas. They must include, among other elements, a definition of the area and population concerned; an analysis of the development needs and potential of the area (including a SWOT analysis: strengths, weaknesses opportunities and threats); an action plan; and a description of the management and monitoring arrangements of the strategy.

Local development strategies can be implemented by using one Fund (easiest solution from a management point of view but excludes broader strategies and limits the synergies between funds) or by combining several funds (which can be better in order to address more issues and sectors). CLLD is compulsory for the EAFRD (designated as LEADER local development) and optional for EMFF, ERDF and ESF.

Table 1: Advantages of using ITI and CLLD

ITI	CLLD
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An Instrument for an integrated and multisectoral use of Funds; • Can be mono-fund or multi-fund; • Is based on "single cohesive strategies" = strategic programming; • Does not need to cover an entire regional administrative level; • Possible delegation of management of ITIs to sub-regional actors; • As it has different funding streams defined at the beginning of the process there is more certainty in terms of funding for integrated actions; • Development of local potential; • Can be used in the context of ETC Cooperation Programmes¹²; • Can include elements implemented by CLLD. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involving and empowering local actors (territorial approach and participatory democracy); • Flexibility compared to other intervention methods (solutions can be adapted to the specific needs of different types of areas); • Broad thematic scope and broad territorial approach; • Promoting multiplier effects on local development (generating new ways of thinking, new markets, new services and products and social innovation); • Capitalisation on existing experience from previous LEADER Local Action Groups (LAGs); • Financially attractive (strategies can be delivered using several funds); • "research shows that participation of stakeholders in decisions that affect them makes policy more effective and efficient"¹³;

Sources: EC Draft Guidance Fiche for Desk Officers: ITI, 2014; EC Factsheet on ITI, 2014; EC Guidance on CLLD for Member States and Programme Authorities, 2014; Emerging Trends and Challenges in CLLD, Stephen Miller, EStIF, 2014.

¹⁰ The so called "LEADER approach" is the basis of the new CLLD for the 2014-2020 programming period and has 7 main elements: 1) area based local development strategies; 2) local public-private partnerships; 3) bottom-up decision making; 4) multi-sectoral design; 5) implementation of innovative approaches; 6) implementation of cooperation projects and 7) networking. The main element of this approach is the establishment of a Local Action Group (LAG)

¹¹ EC, CLLD: Factsheet, March 2014; EC, Guidance on CLLD in ESI Funds, June 2014

¹² For cooperation programmes the intermediate bodies are defined in Chapter III, Article 11 of the ETC Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013

¹³ Dan Owen and Jean-Pierre Vercruyse, CDD and CLLD, EStIF, 4/2014

Table 2: Comparison between ITI and CLLD - Summary

	ITI	CLLD
Relevant Provisions in the Regulations	CPR (EU) No 1303/2013, Art. 36 , Art. 15; Art. 96 ERDF (EU) No 1301/2013, Art. 7 ESF (EU) No 1304/2013, Art. 12 ETC (EU) No 1299/2013, Art. 11	CPR (EU) No 1303/2013, Art. 32-35 ERDF (EU) No 1301/2013 Art. 6 ESF (EU) No 1304/2013, Art.3 ETC (EU) No 1299/2013, Art. 10 EAFRD (EU) No 1305/2013 Art. 42-44 EMFF (EU) No 508/2014 Art. 58, 60-64
Funds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Optional – Can be mono-fund or combine ESF, ERDF and Cohesion Fund and may be complemented with EAFRD and EMFF – When it is mono-fund an ITI cannot be supported only from EAFRD or EMFF 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Compulsory 5% of EAFRD (for each MS and designated as LEADER local development; LEADER 2.5 % for Croatia) – Optional support by ERDF, ESF, EMFF (4 Funds)
Geographical areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Urban and non-urban – Any geographical area: Urban neighbourhoods, urban areas, metropolitan areas, urban-rural, sub-regional or inter-regional, cross-border, territories with specific geographic features (areas not corresponding necessarily to the administrative boundaries) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Subregional areas: neighbourhoods, cities, urban areas, rural areas with not less than 10 000 and not more than 150 000 inhabitants; derogations may be accepted by the Commission and these limits can be lowered or increased; (areas not corresponding necessarily to the administrative boundaries)
Decision-making	Top-down or bottom-up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Bottom-up approach (requirements: neither the public authorities or any interest group can have more than 49% of the voting rights); – Decisions should be from non-public authorities
Key elements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Combination of several priority axes (at least two) of one or more OPs; – Urban development strategy; territorial strategy or a territorial pact; – Tasks can be delegated (Managing Authorities or intermediary bodies); – Possible to set up new ITIs in the course of the programming period (if it alters the overall financial allocation to ITIs in the programmes concerned, an amendment is needed to the programmes); – Financial arrangements: can include non-repayable funds, repayable assistance and financial instruments. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Local development strategies need to be developed by local action groups (Deadline 2017); – Can be part of an ITI but not the opposite – Incentives (10 percentage points if an entire priority axis is delivered through CLLD); – Lead Fund (in multi-funded local development strategies a lead Fund may be designated to support all running and animation costs (e.g. personnel, training, evaluation costs).

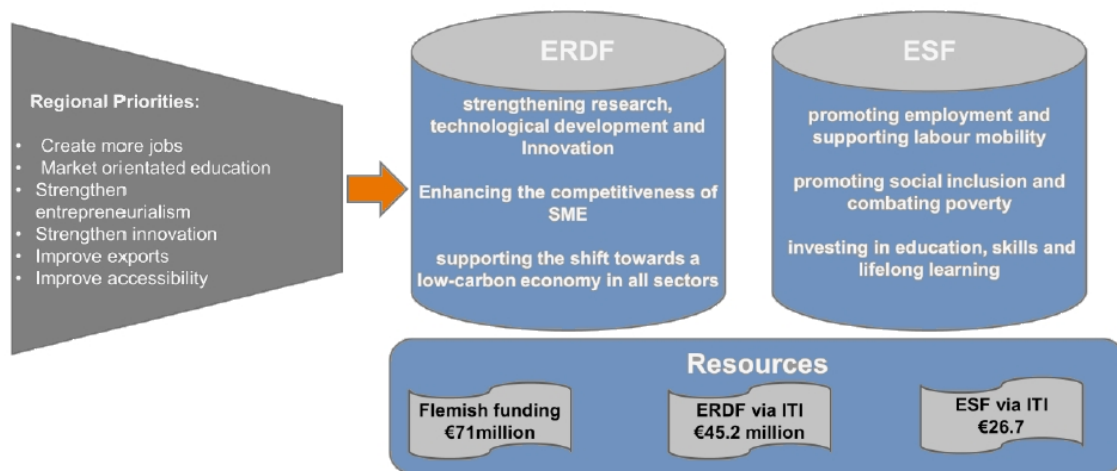
Sources: EC Draft Guidance Fiche for Desk Officers: ITI, 2014; EC Factsheet on ITI, 2014; EC Guidance on CLLD for Member States and Programme Authorities, 2014; Emerging Trends and Challenges in CLLD, Stephen Miller, EStIF, 2014.

5. How ITI and CLLD are being used by Member States

In budgetary terms, around 5% of the cohesion budget will be allocated to ITIs and CLLD (approximately EUR 16 billion)¹⁴. A total of 20 Member States will use ITIs (EUR 13.6 billion), 17 Member States plan to use ITIs in order to deliver sustainable urban development actions (EUR 7 billion), as stated in Art. 7 of the ERDF Regulation. Some countries will use ITIs for rural or mixed areas (e.g. France, Greece, Portugal, Romania, UK)¹⁵.

ITIs are geographically flexible and preliminary reports indicate that Member States will use ITIs in deprived urban neighbourhoods (Netherlands), in territories with poor access to services and isolated population (Romania, Greece), in lower income provinces and where new employment opportunities are needed. ITIs will cover different thematic objectives (TO) depending on the Member states. In some countries transport (TO7), environment (TO6), climate change (TO5) and education systems (TO10) will be targeted, in other countries employment (TO8, e.g. Portugal, Netherlands) and information and communication technologies (TO2 e.g. Finland). ITIs will be mainly co-financed by the ERDF and the ESF (e.g. Netherlands, Poland and Romania). In the province of Limburg, in north-east Belgium¹⁶, an ITI will be used to support the implementation of the pre-existing regional strategic plan prepared in 2013 and containing actions connected with the TOs of the ERDF OP and ESF OP for Flanders. The ERDF funding will support measures linked to manufacturing, energy, technology and the ESF will support measures linked to promoting employment, social inclusion and investing in education (See Fig. 2).

Figure 2: ITI - Limburg, Belgium



Source: Adapted from: IQ-Net ITI Limburg - Targeting Economic Recovery, presentation Cheshire, November 2014, EPRC

In Poland, 24 territories will use ITIs and in France a majority of regions (59 %, 16 regions) will implement Art.7 of the ERDF Regulation through ITIs.

Countries such as Austria, Denmark, Estonia, and Ireland will not use ITIs. Ireland, for example, will deliver sustainable urban development via urban and local authorities and mainly through a separate priority axis under TO 6 (EUR 40 million of ERDF). In the Czech Republic ITIs will be implemented in metropolitan areas with 300,000 or more inhabitants (ERDF, ESF and Cohesion Fund). Finland will implement Art. 7 of the ERDF through a single ITI covering the six largest cities in the country: Helsinki, Espoo, Vantaa, Tampere, Turku and Oulu, matching the 5% of the Finnish ERDF budget (EUR 39.46 million). Similarly, in the Netherlands, the ITI will be used in the 4 largest cities: Amsterdam, Rotterdam, The Hague and Utrecht, and within the context of sustainable urban development, aiming at jointly using ESF and ERDF to improve the labour supply and employment opportunities in certain problematic districts.

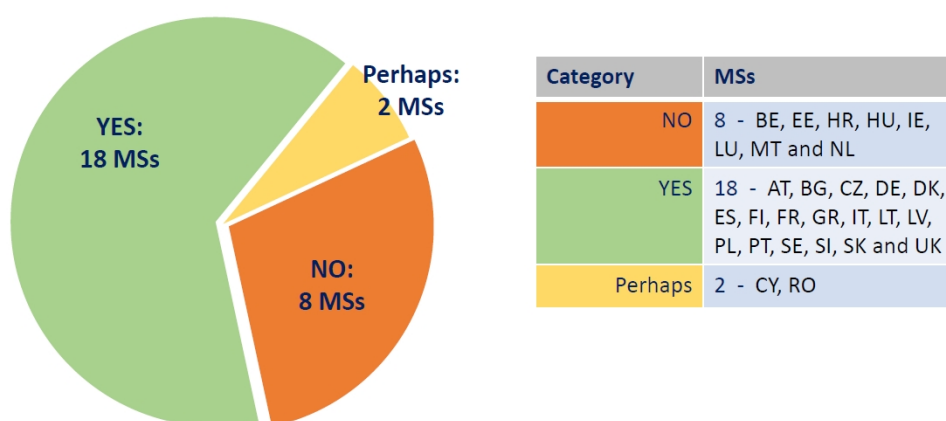
¹⁴ EC, [Effectiveness and Added Value of Cohesion Policy, Non-paper assessing the implementation of the reform in the programming for cohesion policy 2014-2020](#), 2015

¹⁵ Jürgen Pucher, et al., Metis GmbH, [Review of the Adopted Partnership Agreements](#), European Parliament, 2015

¹⁶ Versatility and Ambiguity: First Experiences with Integrated territorial Investment Tool, Arno van der Zwet, ESTIF, 4/2014

All Member States shall support CLLD/LEADER through EAFRD and a majority of Member States will support multi-funded strategies (see Fig. 3). In this case, several funds are combined into a single strategy where coordination management structures, joint calls and selection procedures are needed. However, the decision of combining the funds or not is made by the local action groups and not by national or regional authorities and should be indicated in the Partnership Agreements as well. In twelve Member States CLLD will be financed by ERDF and ESF¹⁷ (TO 9), four Member States will finance CLLD with ERDF only. Most CLLD will be incorporated in multiple Operational Programmes, generally in the regional OPs (e.g. mainland Portugal and targeting rural, urban and coastal areas). In France, CLLD will be financed by EMFF (TO 8) and EAFRD only and in certain areas there will be an articulation with an ITI - ERDF¹⁸. In Ireland, for example, there will be no multi-fund CLLD (i.e. CLLD will be used in the delivery of the LEADER Programme under the EAFRD and the funding of Fisheries Local Action Groups (FLAGs) in the delivery of the EMFF but not under ERDF or ESF).

Figure 3: MS planning to support multi-funded or single-funded CLLD strategies



Source: Elena Maccioni, [CLLD planning in 2014-2020 & LEADER Cooperation](#), ENRD CP -Screening of 28 approved Partnership Agreements, 30 June 2015

6. Challenges and recommendations

The overall impact of ITIs and CLLDs for the 2014-2020 programming period cannot be evaluated yet but some challenges and recommendations have already been identified by the Committee of the Regions (CoR), the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC), the OECD, researchers, Managing authorities, and local actors. These are summarised below in sets of challenges for CLLD alone, ITI alone; and challenges affecting both. The challenges are followed by recommendations on CLLD and on ITI.

Challenges CLLD

- Very complex concept;
- Many practical challenges (mainly linked to the capacity of the actors on the ground);
- Resistance to moving away from top-down approaches and giving "power" to local groups;
- Seen as not necessary in some MS and regions because considered that consultation with local actors is already being used and no added value;
- CLLD when supported by ERDF and ESF is perceived as an administrative burden for local authorities and local actors;
- Member states having used LEADER have a considerable experience with CLLD compared to others;

Challenges ITI

- Questions in terms of governance frameworks, administrative and institutional capacities and the way the results orientation and thematic concentration obligations are applied¹⁹;

¹⁷ EC, [Effectiveness and Added Value of Cohesion Policy, Non-paper assessing the implementation of the reform in the programming for cohesion policy 2014-2020](#), 2015

¹⁸ Accord de Partenariat, pp. 305

¹⁹ Arno van der Zwet, [A First Stock Take: Integrated Territorial Approaches in Cohesion Policy 2014-2020](#), EPRC

- Responsibilities for implementation are delegated to local bodies which often have limited expertise or resources to implement projects;
- New tool and there is still no expertise at local level leading to delays (implementation difficulties);
- Little guidance provided by the EC (But as ITI is a very flexible tool, not all possible arrangements can be detailed);
- Duplication of administrative structures, lack of flexibility, funding being tied up for the whole programming period and lack of alignment with other development strategies. Implementation too complex if the funding available is small²⁰.

Challenges relevant to both CLLD and ITI:

- Complexity of regulations and concepts and increase administrative burden [the scale of administrative organisation that is required might have prevented some countries of using ITI (e.g. Ireland) or using multi-funded CLLDs (e.g. Luxembourg)]²¹;
- There are several possible approaches to CLLD and this takes time and financial commitment to implement in terms of administrative structures;
- Member States fearing local influence in territorial development;
- Limited budget attributed to ITI and CLLD;
- Integration of multiple funds is considered as a challenge;
- linkages between both are subject to several debates between regional authorities;

CoR Opinion No. 6248/2014:

- "On paper, many countries and regions are considering using these instruments, however the [CoR] is concerned that the regulatory differences across the funds, and the reticence by Managing Authorities to delegate at the local level, remain an issue that limits the potential on these new instruments for integrated territorial development";
- "Combining different funding sources and different tools for a single project may offer significant advantages only if different funding sources and tools entail equivalent reporting and eligibility requirements, making this combination work by reducing implementation errors as well as costs incurred through dealing with additional administrative procedures";
- "In some Member States new tools have been met with scepticism and will not be widely implemented where they would be useful, and that in some cases the national level has impeded LRAs use of new tools".

CoR Opinion No. 6248/2014

OECD division for local economic and employment development (LEED)

- "The local dimension of Cohesion Policy remains under-utilised and under-valued by many Member States. The types of barrier that may be preventing uptake are: a) A lack of conceptual understanding at the national level as to how the fulfilment of local potential can help to build national economic prosperity; b) Prior integration of EU funding into mainstream national policy frameworks, which means that new forms of local level implementation would mean loss of power and resource to the national level, while being seen as disruptive to efficient policy delivery; c) Lack of flexibility in national policy frameworks which means that local community-led initiatives have limited capacity to produce change and would rather exist 'in parallel' to the broader policy system; d) Low levels of trust at the national level as to capacities on the ground and a lack of understanding as to the current utilisation and impacts of EU Structural Funds at this level; e) Limited administrative and accountability mechanisms locally; and f) difficulties establishing a balance between policy makers and politicians locally."

OECD division for local economic and employment development (LEED)

²⁰ Stefan Kah, et. al, Strategic coherence of Cohesion Policy: Comparison of the 2007-13 and the 2014-20 programming periods, European Parliament, Policy Department B: Structural and Cohesion Policies, 2015

²¹ Jürgen Pucher, et al., Metis GmbH, Review of the Adopted Partnership Agreements, European Parliament, 2015

Recommendations on CLLD by the EESC and the OECD

- Multi-fund financing – monitoring and strengthening the CLLD approach within multi-fund financing across Europe and in EU programmes and working to launch the next programming period as quickly as possible;
- Unification procedures and approaches – supporting the high quality of CLLD in the EU, standardising LAG operations and pooling best practice; lending support for filling in gaps on the map so that the LEADER approach can be extended geographically and thematically, which is necessary if the LEADER/CLLD approach is to operate successfully within various EU programmes;
- Networking and collaboration – an essential condition for the CLLD approach to work well; implementation of cooperation projects in existing networks and creation of networks at regional, national and European level and the need for expenditure on creating and operation of networks to be eligible, including the contributions made by members;
- Extending the approach – supporting the use of the CLLD method beyond Europe, for example in pre-accession negotiations and development policy;
- Simplifying the process – making sure these small entities at local level are not engulfed in excessive red tape; where possible, reducing reporting requirements to the minimum reliable level; preventing the responsible bodies from changing the rules while ESIFs are in operation, and immediately and everywhere launching programmes providing information and seminars where best practices can be exchanged and local public and private stakeholders supported;
- Building up the capacities of social and economic partners, along with civil society stakeholders, so that as many partners as possible can propose an active CLLD approach before the deadline for proposals (31 December 2017).

EESC Opinion No. 366/2014

- "While some countries have effective local governance structures, in others there will be a need to foster governance innovation. This will mean both identifying new forms of collaboration, but also the fostering of flexibility in policy and programme delivery at the level of functional economic areas. The OECD, through its LEED Programme, could provide targeted policy advice and technical assistance to increase local capacities."

OECD division for local economic and employment development (LEED)

Recommendations on ITI

Results of the CoR online survey, 2015

- Making more efficient use of IT tools and creating less paperwork (e.g. Latvia, Lithuania);
- Introducing more flexible rules for countries/regions with very low allocations (e.g. Sweden, Netherlands);
- Improving the co-financing mechanisms in the Member States (e.g. Poland);
- Providing more training to those responsible for the management and absorption of funds, including elected politicians (e.g. Ireland)

Results of the CoR online survey, March 2015

7. Other Local Development Initiatives by International Organisations

In 2000, the World Bank established the Community-Driven Development programme (CDD). CDD is defined as "an approach that gives **control over planning decisions** and **investment resources** for **local development projects** to **community groups**" across developing countries and mainly in weak or fragile states, notably in post-conflict areas or in areas with poor service delivery. CDD actions are considered "important elements of an effective **poverty reduction and sustainable development strategy**", supporting basic services such as water supply, nutrition programs for mothers and children and rural infrastructures²².

A World Bank study²³ on the impacts of CDD indicates that from 2003 to 2012 CDD investments represented between 5 and 10% of the overall World Bank lending portfolio. However, monitoring and impact evaluation of CDD is a challenge - quantitative goals (e.g. infrastructures) are easier to measure than qualitative goals (e.g. capacity building)²⁴. Nevertheless, the same study suggests that this approach had positive impacts on poverty welfare reduction, poverty targeting, and increased access to services; evidence is limited and mixed, on governance, social capital spillovers, and conflict impacts.

The OECD Programme on Local Economic and Employment Development (LEED) has existed since 1982 and its mission has been to **advise governments and communities** and "to contribute to the **creation of** more and better quality **jobs** through more effective policy implementation, innovative practices, stronger capacities and **integrated strategies at the local level**"²⁵. The LEED Programme carries out policy innovation projects, cross-country comparative projects and capacity building activities²⁶, supporting employment creation and economic development. LEED has a Directing Committee composed of the OECD countries and a Partners Club which is a worldwide network of sub-national governments, agencies, business organisations and private sector foundations.

Main References

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²² The World Bank, [CDD website](#), 2015

²³ Wong, Susan, What have been the impacts of World Bank Community-Driven Development Programs? CDD impact evaluation review and operational and research implications, 2012

²⁴ Dan Owen and Jean-Pierre Vercauteren, CDD and CLLD, EStIF, 4/2014

²⁵ OECD, [LEED website](#), 2015

²⁶ Example of the latest LEED Programme Publication on how to create more and better quality jobs: [Job Creation and Local Economic Development](#), 2014

List of Abbreviations

CPR	Common Provisions Regulation
EAFRD	European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development
EMFF	European Maritime and Fisheries Fund
ERDF	European Regional Development Fund
ESF	European Social Fund
ESI Funds	European Structural and Investment Funds
MS	Member States
OP	Operational Programme
PA	Partnership Agreement
REGI	Committee on Regional Development
TO	Thematic Objective

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