

# THE REVIEW

of the French Rural network

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**EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITIES  
TERRITORIES WHICH ARE CHANGING THE GAME**

An issue in European policies since the Council of Europe in Lisbon in March 2000, equal opportunities constitutes a priority objective for the EAFRD initiative.

Equality of the sexes, combating discrimination, taking into account disability in rural areas, discrimination, integration of persons in difficulty or who are vulnerable, contribution of the rural areas to the accommodation of refugees, solidarity between the generations and so on. These are just some of the equal opportunities explored in this edition.

Equal opportunity is a key issue not only in the cohesion of a population within an area, but also for cohesion between territories. Constant worries in the rural world, accommodation and integration are given guidance and supported by EAFRD. Priority No. 6 in the 2014-2020 rural development programme, entitled "promoting social inclusion, poverty reduction and economic development" is devoted to these issues and one of the missions of the National Rural Network is to make a contribution to them within its action plan.

Apart from this file, the journal is also particularly packed with news, at the European level and also in the national life of the Network. To begin with the European level, after the Agri-Innovation summit in June in Lisieux and then in Poitiers in September hosted some twenty European countries, the Network is preparing the second LEADER National Cooperation Meetings in the current programming for 2020.

To move to the national plan, the future 2021-2027 CAP programme, which anticipates a broader field for the Network, together with the creation of the National Strategy Plan, will be brought up at the Network's General Assembly.

Of course, these discussions are included in the framework of the definition of the rural agenda and the implementation of the National Agency for Territorial Cohesion.

## **Valérie METRICH-HECQUET**

Director General for economic  
and environmental performance  
of enterprises (DGPE)

## **YVES LE BRETON**

Commissioner General for the equality  
of the territories (CGET)

## **JULES NYSSSEN**

Director General  
of Régions de France





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# THE INTERVIEW

## "Women change the representation and values of the world of agriculture"

At the Ministry of Agriculture, Agrifood, and Forestry, Françoise Liébert is the senior civil servant in charge of equality between women's and men's rights and diversity. She reconsiders the working context for women in agriculture, the issues, which they encounter and the initiatives undertaken to promote equality between women and men in the rural environment.



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### What brakes on equality are encountered by women in agriculture?

Although the situation has evolved in the last thirty or so years, the tasks in the agricultural industry remain very gender-oriented. Traditionally, the men take care of the sowing and harvesting, while the women are responsible for the livestock, the farm's accounting, household tasks and the upbringing of the children. Moreover, women in agriculture often work at their place of residence and are sometimes isolated from possibilities of creating social links. This may be the case, in particular, for women farmers, who bear the sole responsibility for their work, managing a small business where they do everything themselves (farming tasks, logistics, accounting, etc.)



*Work communities change the everyday lives of women farmers for the better*

For those who work with the family they may also be somewhat isolated as a couple or a family, there may be a lack of independence or difficulty in taking a break from work. As for employees, they are most frequently employed on fixed-term contracts and occupy the least well-paid posts. Globally, women farmers may ultimately come up against problems of access to a certain number of services, such as transport, child-minding or medical care.

### Are these difficulties specific to women in agriculture?

These issues are common to all women living in rural areas, but they are without doubt accentuated for women farmers, by virtue of the geographic or even social isolation, linked to their occupation; this is less true for women working in trade or commerce.

## What are the levers and initiatives undertaken to bring about change in this situation?

The women in agriculture themselves appropriate these matters. Increasingly, there is involvement in the creation of producers' associations, which make very positive changes in farming practice, in a more egalitarian dimension. These work communities allow isolated women farmers to benefit from the advantages of collective work (in particular expedited access to land, to bank loans and to certain subsidies). These women, who choose farming, often quite highly qualified, have very well constructed plans, to which they have given a lot of thought and they contribute towards changing the way female farmers are regarded.

Moreover, in farming couples, it is increasingly usual that the woman has another occupation outside the farm. This then changes the representation, the values and expectations within the couple. The farmer's spouse may long to have holidays or leisure activities in common with her partner, which may conflict with the dependence linked to the farm.

## In this context, what are your missions within the Ministry of Agriculture, Agrifood, and Forestry?

My task is to disseminate the interdepartmental policy on equality between women and men. The aim of this policy is to combat gender-stereotyping, to promote mixing, entrepreneurship and equality at work, to share the exercise of parental responsibilities better. One part also concerns the prevention of violence against women, in the knowledge that a separation may, for a woman in agriculture, be synonymous with loss of income and her home.

In this context the National Rural Network fulfills information and dissemination missions and provides training through support and guidance in the development of professional projects.

## Parity within the Ministry of Agriculture, Agrifood, and Forestry

In matters of parity of women and men, the campaign conducted within the Ministry complies with the 2013 memorandum of agreement for professional equality in public service, which was signed in 2018. The topics referred to include the reduction of the pay differential between women and men, access for women to posts of responsibility and also reconciliation between professional and private life. Moreover, these campaigns as a whole are the subject of an application to AFNOR, the French industrial standards authority, to be labelled, "Equality" and "Diversity" and are currently being assessed with this in mind.

“

*We want to restrict the status of colleague spouses, which offers little protection*

## What are your principal recent or current areas of work?

This year we have brought about change in maternity leave for women farmers in order to bring it into line with that of other women, for an equivalent period and with equivalent compensation. From now on, the state is financing in full the replacement of the mother-to-be and the CSG (supplementary social security tax) which results from that.

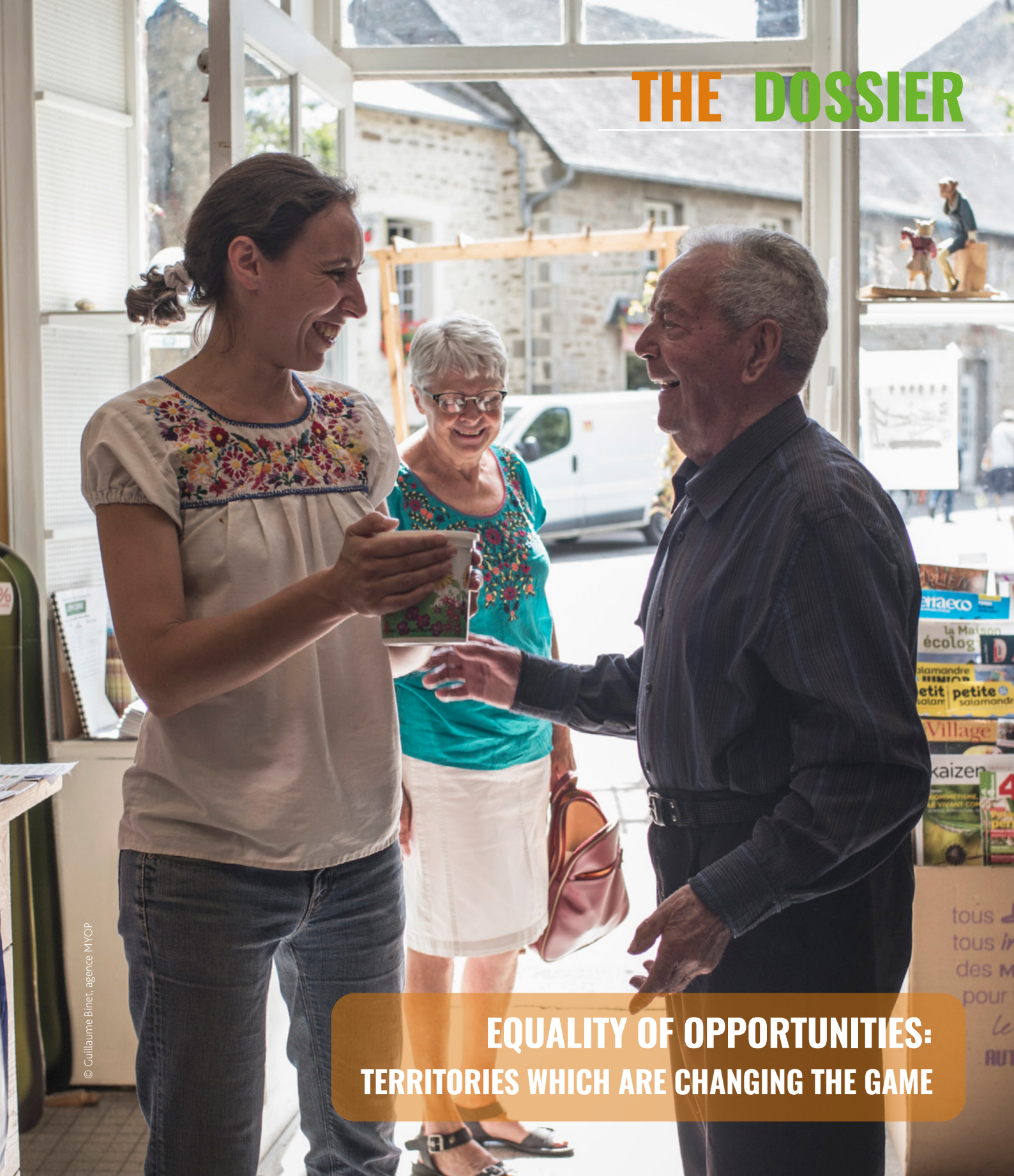
Moreover, we want to restrict the status of colleague spouses, which offers little protection; eventually it will be replaced by two statuses of employee or head of operation, guaranteeing better access to social security rights and training.

Finally, we are conducting awareness campaigns with young people, jointly with the Ministry of National Education, in order to change the way agricultural education is generally viewed. Personally, I have contributed to the creation of a guide on the inequalities in life in the rural environment, published by the CGET.

## Equality between women and men, a condition for obtaining European funding

The European Union has made equality between women and men one of its founding principles. The European Commission therefore undertakes to integrate this issue into all its policies, and to promote it in its legislation and the projects it supports. For the 2014-2020 programme for European structural and investment funds (ESIF), it has retained three principles, known as "horizontal" principles, which include the "principle of equality between women and men". The aim of this is to ensure that equality of opportunity between women and men is taken into account in all the stages of use of European funds. In practical terms this means that when implemented, all the projects jointly funded by European funds must take into account this horizontal principle of equality between women and men.





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## EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITIES: TERRITORIES WHICH ARE CHANGING THE GAME

Equality between men and women, taking into account disability, integration of persons in difficulty, accommodation of refugees, solidarity between the generations... Equality of opportunity finds expression in many ways. Included in the six priorities in the Rural Development Programme 2014-2020, it is disseminated throughout the territories with the support of EAFRD and the Rural Network. Examples of actors and rural projects which are endeavouring to give the same opportunities to everyone, everywhere.

## Project Madame: for professional equality in rural areas

Piloted since October 2018 by CMA France, the MCDR Project Madame\* is intended to raise awareness of equality between women and men and to offer innovative solutions for improving the social mix in the rural environment.

"In one year we have drawn up a review of social mix and equality in trade and in farming companies," explains Marie Sergent, Operations Manager, Projects and Investment Policies at CMA France. Compiled through interviews with apprentices and business leaders in the PACA and Rhône-Alpes regions (the Drôme, Ardèche and Rhône departments), the statistical and qualitative data "are concerned both with the occupations considered as gender-oriented and those considered not to be gender-oriented". The **results of the surveys and statistical data**, which are in the process of being finalised, will provide information on the exercise of these occupations (brakes and levers) and on the gender mix in these sectors, where there is the issue of access to diplomas.

For the second year of the project, all the partners are working together to offer and implement **awareness-raising, guidance and support** to different audiences: primary school, secondary school and sixth form college pupils, apprentices, teachers, business leaders, integration organisations and guidance Networks for

businesses. "To raise awareness in pupils in Years 4 and 5, we intend to produce a career game, a quiz and a mystery presentation by a professional, who does what is usually considered masculine tasks. For the secondary school and sixth form college pupils we want to organise educational days in the CFA (Apprentice Training Centre) and discovery courses in companies. We would also like to put on role-play scenarios dealing with this issue for apprentices," states Marie Sergent. As far as the businesses are concerned, specific offers of help in putting a quality assurance measure on gender mix in place and extra support to women business leaders and employees will have to be designed and then tested in the months to come. The results of these initiatives will be analysed in the course of 2021, the third year of the project.

*\*To promote and accelerate the development of women's skills in agricultural crafts in the rural environment to ensure greater equality*



More information...

[www.facebook.com/groups/ProjetMadame/](https://www.facebook.com/groups/ProjetMadame/)

## Mayotte: women in rural areas become professional

"It is a fact: an increasing number of women are participating in our training courses to obtain professional agricultural qualifications," says a delighted Florence Caniparoli. "We work a great deal with training organisations, the Prefecture and the European services **to bring Mahorais women to the forefront in agriculture** by offering them themed events on setting up or the rights and duties of farmers," states the manager of the Rural Network in Mayotte. Launched one year ago, these initiatives are already bearing fruit: "Many women intend to turn towards agri-tourism projects: sale and tasting of local products (bananas, pineapples, medicinal plants, etc.), provision of guest rooms on the farm, crafts, etc."

How can family life and professional life be coordinated? This question was at the heart of a day offered last October on the occasion of the **week of equality at work between women and men**. This event is also linked to a trade fair for entrepreneurship for women, a symposium "Women made in Mayotte" and the exhibition "Mix in Occupations". Organised by the Chic On Arts Association at the harbour of Mamoudzou, this presented a series of portraits of women, some of whom work in activities traditionally reserved for men in this overseas department: fishing, slaughter of animals, preparation of agricultural land, welcoming the public, etc. The purpose was: "Showing that occupations do not have gender."



### Two tools from the CGET for combating sexual and territorial inequalities

#### A practical guide "Promoting access to employment for women in rural areas"

Published in March 2019, this document is aimed at actors in employment, training, integration and economic development, to local elected representatives, etc. It lists tools, good practice and testimonies, in order to support the development of specific initiatives.

[www.cget.gouv.fr](http://www.cget.gouv.fr)

#### Application Sofie

is an acronym for "System for observing women and information on employment". Sofie provides data at the inter-communal level. This tool helps to produce diagnostics territory by territory in order to improve women's access to employment and to take control of the issue in local politics.

<http://outils.observatoire-des-territoires.gouv.fr/sofie/>



## Poverty and lack of security in rural areas: actions to be undertaken at the local and regional level

Major topics in social cohesion in the territories, poverty and lack of security are at the heart of a regional project piloted by Cap Rural, the Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes Regional Network, in partnership with the Laboratory for Rural Studies at the University of Lyon 2. The aim is to encourage the actors in local development and social initiatives to come together to devise avenues for initiatives promoting social inclusion.

Lack of employment, financial difficulties, poor housing, isolation. The different forms of poverty and lack of security constitute "a reality poorly defined by the actors in rural development," confirms Patrick Grimault, at Cap Rural. "We know that 14% of French people are living in poverty and have an income lower than 60% of the average income and that rural areas are no exception. There is a lack of connection between the strategies of the territories and this topic, which affects young people, persons living alone or elderly persons, is seldom tackled in rural development programmes." Faced with this finding, the Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes Rural Network has started up a regional dynamic intended **"to promote better mutual consciousness between the rural actors and to work on networking skills with the organisations responsible for social initiatives: CAF (Family allowances Fund), MSA (Social agricultural health insurance fund), the Departments, CCAS (communal social welfare centre), social centres, etc."** This desire is expressed, for example, in the organisation of sessions for exploring and exchanging practice and experiences.

What are the major characteristics of poverty and lack of security in the rural environment? How can we guide young people as they enter the working world? How can we combat the malaise in farming? Last March in Marcoux (42) a first day's event, which brought together researchers, elected representative and professionals in local and social development, invited some

hundred participants to draw up an inventory and to **discuss issues of mobility, living conditions, employment, creation of activities**, etc. "We want to offer a regional dynamic, the outlines of which are yet to be defined with the actors concerned," stresses Patrick Grimault. Cap Rural will therefore offer a regional working party on the subject of poverty and is providing a draft thesis project with its partners on the subject of the difficulties of access to foodstuffs in the rural environment: "You might think that it is easier to have access to a high-quality diet in rural areas, but this is not the case for those inhabitants living in poverty with lack of security."

More information...

[www.caprural.org](http://www.caprural.org)



## When inclusion goes hand in hand with rural development



*"Our objective is to support social inclusion by economic activity, while bringing new services to the population," declares Amélie Boucly-Closse, director of the SEI (Solidarity Environment Inclusion) Association in Saint-Sauvant. In this rural municipality located 40 km from Poitiers, the inhabitants wanted to do something for the economic development of their village and the social and professional inclusion of persons in difficulty. "In 2011 this will become reality with the creation of SEI, whose activity is organised around two integration projects: the first concerns the construction trades, the ecological renovation of the built heritage and the maintenance of natural spaces, the second concentrates on careers in the hotel and catering trade".*

The first construction site for employees in on-the-job training was the renovation, from 2012 to 2016, of an old ruined

building in the village. They turned it into a modern gîte with accommodation for 40 persons, accessible to disabled persons: the Aigail. "We have been granted the demanding label 'Tourism and Disability'," says a delighted Amélie Boucly-Closse. In 2013 they also renovated a municipal building to create the Ô Poirion! restaurant, named after a small pear, endemic to the village. "As for the reception and the care-taking of the gîte and the service for the restaurant, all this is handled by employees on the path to employment integration." Today, the association has a dynamic rate of output\* of 65%, more than 150 persons in difficulty have been guided, the restaurant counts about 5,200 covers per year and the gîte broke even in 2018 with a rate of occupancy of 25%. And SEI does not intend to stop there. Apart from the daily activity of its teams in hotel and catering and on construction sites in progress for the construction team, it wants to create a rural caretaker's lodge or even a social and cultural centre.

\* Output of the courses in permanent contracts, 6-month fixed-term contracts or admission to training offering diplomas



## "Developing local projects providing social inclusion takes time"

Sociologist and Research Director at the École supérieure du travail social, Philippe Lyet has analysed the processes of poverty and exclusion with groups of local actors, in particular in four territories in Burgundy. He reconsiders the question of inclusion and support for the territorial dynamics responding to these issues.



### What are the difficulties encountered by excluded persons and/or persons lacking security in the rural environment?

For these persons there is a sort of "double penalty". In addition to the problems inherent in poverty, they are often a long way from resources, which could help them, such as social services and administrations. In fact they experience a geographic relegation, for their lack of material means often makes mobility difficult for them (no vehicle available, no driving licence, etc.). To overcome these difficulties, the social assistance organisations send assistants directly to their home, but this may result in a sort of stigmatisation in the local community, who then see these persons as "assisted persons", a status, which is held in low esteem.

### Which levers are useful for launching or sustaining an inclusion dynamic for these persons?

Projects, which contribute to creating social links, are valuable for triggering an inclusion process. I am thinking, for instance, of a person, who found himself entrusted with the maintenance of the green spaces in the Val-de-Saône federation of municipalities, in the form of a fixed-term contract; he has once again found a social role giving him esteem at the local level. Elsewhere in Morvan, the launching of a cultural festival has allowed large numbers of the inhabitants to work together as volunteers and to get to know each other better by contributing to a joint project.



### *The local actors hold the keys to the development of their territory*

In addition to these examples, projects of this type are not created to order. It is the local actors, who hold the keys to their own territory, in terms of the particular social, economic and cultural features of the territory, the strengths available and the history of the territory. For this reason there is also no "miracle recipe", which can be transposed from one territory to another. Each region creates its own networks, project and practices. It is essential that the public authorities and the elected representatives support these measures by allowing them the time to grow and to take root; this may take several decades in some cases.

### How do you envisage the development of the rural territories in the future?

At present we are seeing a generation renewal in rural areas: young people aged 20 or more are very able to organise themselves into networks. They are at the origin of innovative initiatives, which, to start with, may avoid the institutions. In this case also, it seems to me essential that we allow the local actors to develop at their pace.

## The third places, new places for social cohesion

Meeting places, places for sharing, for a mixed audience, for integration and equality of opportunities, the third places promote social links in the rural territories. Decoding with Eric Rossi, coordinator of the MCDR PORT@IL project.



"A third place, two thirds solidarity and mixing of the generations". The sub-title of the MCDR PORT@IL project translates the social purpose of third places perfectly. *"Especially in rural areas these are places for exchanging and sharing, which make it possible to create links between persons from different backgrounds"* confirms Eric Rossi. This Europe et Territoires à Familles rurales councillor coordinates PORT@IL, a MCDR project, which is based on the analysis of the opening of 25 third places in France. His purpose is to *"make recommendations to the public authorities for a development policy for the third places and to create innovative tools, specifically for rural areas, for the project providers."*

In what way do the third places contribute to developing social links in the territories? The first part of the reply: collective management and many actors in these structures. *"The model is involvement, rather than consumption, which promotes social cohesion,"* explains Eric Rossi. *The third places work with what the people bring and are very often run by a group of actors with different profiles: newly-arrived rural entrepreneurs, farmers, retired people, young parents, etc."* This organisation contributes to offering a wide range of activities, which encourage a mixed audience; *"A third place, which includes a co-working space, neighbourhood services, leisure activities, extracurricular facilities or else guidance in computing*

*activities will attract all kinds of populations: entrepreneurs, tele-workers, children, unemployed young people, retired persons, etc."* explains Eric Rossi. He also stresses that the "social non-connotation" of third places offers a new opportunity to attract, to identify and to support the most fragile audiences. *"For example we believe that third places make it possible to introduce a system for identifying NEET\* young people in rural areas through activities other than those of professional or social integration, in order to offer them guidance or training at a later stage."*

*"The development of third places in the last few years offers to a greater number faster access to services, to a work space, to advice, to leisure activities or even to the Internet. This promotes equality of opportunity,"* confirms Eric Rossi. To support this *"background movement, which is transforming our territories"*, last year the State launched the inter-departmental "New places, new links" programme. Intended to *promote the finest possible meshing of the territories in third places"*, the plan notably provides 15 million euros to support the creation of rural third places.

\* Not in Education, Employment or Training

More information...

<https://tiers-lieux.famillesrurales.org/le-projet-portail>

### "Do things together in order to live together better"



Signed by Patrick Levy-Waitz the President of the Travailler autrement (work differently) Foundation; with the support of the CGET, the report of the Mission Coworking Do things together in order to live together better sets out in particular 28 propositions "to make third places actors in territorial cohesion". Material for the national programme, "New places, new links", this 264 page document has been written as the result of six months of visits, meetings and exchanges with the actors in third places, the local authorities, the elected representatives, the economic and social actors throughout the national territory.

More information...

[www.fondation-travailler-autrement.org](http://www.fondation-travailler-autrement.org)



## LEADER and the integration of migrants: European examples to monitor

How do Finland, Austria, Sweden and Germany promote the integration of migrants, refugees and asylum-seekers in their rural territories? What good practice do they have to share? The response is to be found in the final report on the transnational project, *Immigrant integration in rural areas (IIRA)*, conducted by sixteen Local Action Groups (LAGs).

The project originated from an analysis, drawn up in 2015. In that year more than one million Syrian, Afghani and Iraqi migrants and refugees arrived in Europe. How could this inflow be managed in the different European countries? How could the LEADER programme be mobilised to facilitate the integration of these persons in search of a new life and to transform this phenomenon into opportunities for rural areas? These were the questions posed by the LAGs, which met on the occasion of the European Rural Parliament organised in Austria in 2015. The transnational Immigrant Integration in Rural Areas project, conducted by 16 Finnish, Austrian, Swedish and German LAGs, was born from their discussions. Their goals? To identify and exchange the integration experiences of the immigrants and the implementation of local projects, to form a European Network of actors in local integration and also to promote immigration as a driving force in rural development.

Four years later, after a number of conferences, work in compiling a list of initiatives and many collaborations with public and private actors, the project partners are now sharing their recommendations and the good practice identified in a report,

which can be downloaded. This 48-page guide details more than 50 projects deployed in the rural territories: an escape room to put yourself into the position of a new arrival, "integrating" hikes, work placements, a community garden, help with homework for the children of refugees, information meetings on the local employment market, etc. As many activities reported in order to encourage the creation of new projects and to show *"the power of civil society and what can be accomplished, when the public organisations and volunteers join forces"*.



In Finland, the Karkku community garden advocates nature as an integration tool. It brings together the asylum-seekers and the inhabitants on matters of growing strawberries, artichokes, potatoes, etc.

More information...

<https://ruralintegration.eu>

## Making tourism and leisure activities accessible to everyone



Simulation exercise organised in partnership with APF Handicap France

The sensory discovery of a work of art, introduction to electric quad-bikes for persons with mental disabilities, a hiking trail accessible to persons in wheelchairs, etc. In the south-west of Haute-Vienne the Châtaigneraie Limousine Local Action Group is the driving force in adapting the range of tourist and leisure

activities for persons with disabilities. Considered as a strategic axis for the territory, this initiative is supported in particular by Europe through the LEADER system. In this way the Local Action Group offers technical assistance and support to the public or private project providers: elected representatives, hosts, tourism professionals, activity or site managers, etc. *"Having tried out initiatives between 2011 and 2015, we extended the system to the whole territory, 73 municipalities, grouped into six federations of municipalities,"* explains Christophe Lambert, operations manager at the Châtaigneraie Limousine federation.

Today the LAG is developing the range of tourist and leisure activities accessible for everyone, is ensuring that these are promoted with the actors in the territory and are making the elected representatives more aware of taking into account disability in public policy. It is leading initiatives in simulation exercises and raising awareness in able-bodied persons, in providing technical advice and support for the adaptation of accommodation, visits and activities, etc. *"We are currently in a phase of training courses for professional employees and volunteers in tourist and leisure organisations, facilities and cultural and sports activities"* specifies Emmanuelle Bonnet, manager of the federation. These training courses concern four themes: knowledge of the main types of disability, management of those with a disability when undertaking activities in the open air, introduction to sign language and recourse to sensory mediation. *"With some forty participants and the prospect of continuation, this initiative is a success",* says a delighted Emmanuelle Bonnet.

More information...

[www.chataigneraielimousine.fr](http://www.chataigneraielimousine.fr)

## LEADER France honours innovation and experimentation in rural environment



*"There is no such thing as a minor project, when the project can change the everyday life of a village. That is why I am committed to making access to European funds simpler for the local actors".* This was the message conveyed by Amélie de Montchalin, Secretary of State for European Affairs during a round table organised at the General Assembly of the Leader France Association on 25th November in Narbonne. Before more than a hundred representatives from rural territories, the Secretary of State announced, in notably, the launch of a **dialogue in order to simplify the procedures and to allow better mobilisation of European funds**, in particular LEADER. *"This desire to simplify is a strong message addressed to the local actors and an important sign of support,"* is the assessment of Thibaut Guignard, President of Leader France.

Grand finale of this Assembly General: the **first ceremony for the LEADER Award for Innovation and Experimentation in**

**the Rural Environment.** Intended to reward innovative projects funded by the LEADER programme, this initiative underlines the dynamic in the rural territories in France by rewarding exemplary projects. Pre-selected from among more than 200 projects from every region in France, five LAG projects were singled out: "Voiture partagée communale" (Communal shared car), "NECT'ARTS: artistes et vignerons, partageons les passions de nos territoires" (artists and winegrowers, let us share the passions of our territories), "Villa Gregam: création d'un centre culturel éphémère" (creation of a temporary cultural centre), "Dioré, la forêt des plantes médicinales" (the forest of medicinal plants) and finally "De la Terre à l'assiette" (From the Earth to the plate). Provided by the Grand Pic Saint Loup Local Action Group (Occitanie), this last has led to the creation of a *"school group restaurant unit, which favours supplying local organic, seasonal products and is managed by a company and a professional inclusion workshop"*. Bringing together actors in agriculture, social inclusion, professional training and collective catering, this study-initiative project was also rewarded with the prize from the audience.



Employed in the municipality of Villeneuve-termenès (Aude), the "communal shared car" project provided by the Local Action Group from Est-Audois was singled out in the "Make the rural territories into new forms of service to the public" category.

## Second LEADER cooperation meetings on 10th to 12th February in Tours



For the second time during this programme, the National Rural Network is organising a LEADER cooperation meeting at the French and European level on 10th, 11th and 12th February 2020 in the territory of Touraine. The debates will be held at Vinci, the Congress Centre in Tours and visits will also be offered in the adjoining territories, Loire Nature Local Action Group and Loire Touraine Local Action Group. As in 2017 at Grau-du-Roi, the main objective of these days is to allow the actors and Local Action Groups concerned to exchange ideas on the reality of cooperation, as it has been implemented during this programme both on the thematic and on the technical level.

The goal is to identify interesting, inspiring initiatives, as well as to see how some of those involved have overcome obstacles to move on more quickly to new targets elsewhere.

The plenary sessions will give room for debate on the issue of cooperation with regard to the major problems of keeping up to date for rural territories: transitions in progress, territorial splits, etc. Economic development, social innovations, local development, territorial marketing, tourism, culture, agriculture, mobility, youth, digital and public services will be the key words for the meetings, at which almost 300 persons are expected, about fifty of whom will be Europeans.

More information...

[www.reseaurural.fr/centre-de-ressources/evenements/2emes-rencontres-nationales-de-la-cooperation-leader](http://www.reseaurural.fr/centre-de-ressources/evenements/2emes-rencontres-nationales-de-la-cooperation-leader)



## "Rural life is at the heart of the response to be given to contemporary challenges"

On 15th and 16th October 2019 at the Circuit of Nevers Magny-Cours, the National Association of New Rural Areas (ANNR) organised the first session of the French Rural Parliament. The President of the ANNR, Patrice Joly, the Senator from Nièvre revisited the objectives and the prospects for this new body.



### In what context, was the French Rural Parliament launched?

The starting point for the creation of this body is the fact that at the present moment there are no real political projects for the rural areas. Whereas the question of metropolisation has been a central issue in French society for twenty or thirty years, no thought has been given to rural life. In this context, the action of public authorities principally comprises interventions, labelled "in compensation". However rural life is at the heart of the responses to be given to contemporary challenges, especially in the areas of agriculture and the quality and sovereignty of food systems. It is also essential for the social cohesion of our country to allow these territories to develop their potential to the full.

In 2015 we created the National Association of New Rural Areas (ANNR) which brings together the elected representatives, the socio-economic actors and those in the associations. Our aim is to make the voice of the rural areas to be better heard. With this in mind we laid the first stone of the French Rural Parliament, at the "Let's countrify!" event, a day of discussion and meetings organised in Paris in June 2019.

### What are the ambitions of this Parliament?

We want to attract the attention of the public authorities, to invite them to discuss and to build together in a positive process. The Parliament is at one and the same time a place of protest and debate, an influence group and a think tank. With our partners we believe that it is time to have sufficient humility to come away from the prejudices and the classic paradigms, in order to exchange ideas and head towards a shared vision, concerning in particular the economic potential of the rural areas, which is still unrecognised.

At our first session we discussed measures, which could supplement the Government's Rural Agenda. For example, the creation of an investment fund for innovation dedicated to the rural area, which would take account of their particular features, especially demographic features, would be required.

### What are the Parliament's next appointments?

We will meet in session in the autumn of every year and we have also made provision for a recess each spring. In May 2020 we shall hold discussions concerning the long-term European Union funding programme for 2021-2027, with the risk of a reduction in the cohesion funds and in the second pillar of the CAP, dedicated to rural development.

In parallel, we are creating permanent committees, which will make it possible to debate current topics throughout the year. Moreover, we wish to strengthen our links with certain actors in rural life, whom we regard as natural partners, including the National Rural Network.



The 1st session of the French Rural Parliament brought together more than 300 rural parliamentarians on 15th and 16th October at the Circuit of Nevers-Magny-Cours.

## TransAgriDom accelerates agro-ecological transition in the Overseas Departments and Territories

From the four corners of the earth, the actors from RITA (Agricultural Innovation and Transfer Networks), including operation groups from the EIP, met for one week in French Guiana for the TransAgriDom meetings. Invited to participate in themed workshops, site visits and discussion sessions, they shared their experiences and good practice with a joint aim: to respond more easily and more quickly to the agronomic challenges encountered by farmers in the overseas territories.



A MDCR initiative supported by the Rural Network and the continuation of the AgroEcoDom project undertaken from 2015 to 2018, TransAgriDom brought together more than 100 researchers, engineers, technicians, agricultural advisers and representatives of farming cooperatives and associations from the 21st to 26th of October in French Guiana. Hosted by the Cirad (French agricultural research and international cooperation organisation) and the project partners, these participants from the five Overseas Departments, from Metropolitan France and also from French Polynesia and New Caledonia met for one week to discuss a fundamental question: how can we accelerate innovations and their acceptance by farmers and promote ecological farming practices? *"These meetings offer the opportunity for technicians to share their expertise, to meet producers, to draw up recommendations and to create links, especially between the EIP operational groups in the different territories"* explains **Jean-Marc Thevenin, joint leader of RITA and TransAgriDom Project Manager**. *"They contribute to providing collective response to the agronomic problems in farming in French overseas territories."*

Created at the end of 2011 under the impetus of the minister responsible for agriculture, the RITA today is a federation of more than 150 organisations: actors in research, trials, education, training, agricultural development, etc. These tools for regional support for innovation in farming in the Overseas Departments share a large number of themes of interest: service plants, soil fertility, management of grassland, animal health and well-being, agro- forestry, agro- tourism, etc. The work and ideas from the workshops and farm visits offered by TransAgriDom will give rise to consultancy, training and communication materials: videos, data sheets, methodological collections, databases, etc. These materials will be shared on Catis, the RITA Network's information system and will be supplemented at the next TransAgriDom

appointments, in particular the International Agricultural Trade Fair 2020.

The purpose of this is to give a specific response to the needs of the farmers and to contribute to the different farming development plans and programmes, whether they are regional or national.

More information...

<https://coatis.rita-dom.fr>

### "An incentive to intensify our work"

**Pascale Achard, organiser of RITA Animal in La Réunion**



*"These meetings are very important for maintaining a dynamic within the Overseas Departments, strengthening links and for taking forward our projects, such as the epidemiological surveillance in bee-keeping employed in La Réunion, the basics of which have been launched in Mayotte, Guiana and Guadeloupe with the creation of health checks for bee colonies. Sharing experiences, problems and protocols makes us aware of the necessity to intensify our work, especially on animal welfare and pasture, in order to respond to the needs of the farmers in matters of technical support, research and training. At one and the same time protected and fragile, our islands share similar farming practices and problems: use of service plants, management of open air poultry farms, etc. The good practice in ecological farming trialled by the Guyanese breeders could very well be adapted for our territories, despite a different climate and different weed growth."*



## "For local solutions adapted to the reality of our overseas territories"



**Xavier Xande**, Director of the Technical Agricultural Institute for Livestock-breeding (ITEL) in Guadeloupe

"Like the AgroEcoDom days before them, the TransAgriDom meetings are proof of the importance of exchanging ideas among the Overseas Departments. Because, despite their distance from each other, our overseas territories share similar

challenges and situations: no cereal production, dependence on inputs, many storms which impact crops, soils polluted by chlordecone in Guadeloupe and in Martinique. The strategies and concepts applied in Europe do not always work with us here. The real situation in our island territories is therefore the starting point for providing the incentive for an agro-ecological dynamic on a smaller scale and with local solutions. For the pig-rearing sector for example, we are heavily dependent on imported concentrated foodstuffs, based on cereals such as soya. We are therefore working on new strategies to provide a supply of proteins from

local resources, especially in the Karibiopor EIP operational group scheme, which is endeavouring to improve food value in the pork industry. Another problem shared by the overseas territories and mentioned during the TransAgriDom workshops is animal welfare. Because of cultural traditions and different climatic conditions, the breeders do not have a high awareness on this topic. Consideration still needs to be given and initiatives need to be undertaken in order to explain the new regulations and to bring about change in farming practices.

What is the most effective way to translate the innovations of the researchers and development workers in the territories? How can we improve the appropriation by the farmers of procedures or techniques? Since it was the tenth anniversary of RITA, TransAgriDom was also the moment to take stock of our progress and to specify the concepts of transfer and guidance. These meetings are the opportunity for quality discussion between specialists, which allow us to remove obstacles or to make progress in our projects and sometimes, paradoxically, to learn more about our own territory."

More information...

<https://coatis.rita-dom.fr/guadeloupe>

## "Disseminating ecological farming methods for pest and disease control"

**Juliette Soulezelle**, Head of the Transfert mission at the Coconi EPN, Mayotte

"The six intensive, informative days of TransAgriDom allowed us to discuss our practices with our colleagues from the Overseas Departments and to explore more deeply themes, such as service plants, organic pesticides and the good results achieved by the Guyafer operational group on the use of organic matter, such as charcoal to improve soil quality. On the scale of my Overseas Department, I am involved in the Ecophyto plan and the INNOVEG project undertaken by the Mayotte RITA. In particular I organise workshops for recognising vegetable diseases and pests. In order to disseminate the results of our trials more effectively to the producers, these technical days are provided in small groups on the farmland and are translated into the local language (Shimaore or Shibushi, depending on the villages). They deal, for example, with the use of nets against solanum fruit flies, species which can cause considerable damage to vegetable crops. Undertaken in partnership with the Cirad, the Coconi Agricultural College, the Chamber of Agriculture and a farming cooperative (COOPAC), this initiative is contributing to raising the awareness of farmers to reducing the use of insecticides, which are used sometimes to a ridiculous extent, by showing them the benefits of this method

of agro-ecological pest control. Similarly, we are encouraging producers to adopt innovative techniques such as out-of-season production of pineapples, thanks to FIT (Floral Induction Treatment) and the production of healthy banana seedlings from the SSF (Seedlings from Stalk Fragments) technique. Our guidance and the discussions on the ground are contributing to joint design and monitoring or improved crop system performance."

More information...

[www.ecophytopic.fr](http://www.ecophytopic.fr)



Tomato growing under net protection against solanaceous flies by a farmer monitored in Mayotte.

## "The EIP projects reflect the challenges in our territory"



**Delphine Pinault**, coordinator of the Guyanese Rural Network and the RITA in Guiana

"Promoting agro forestry, giving the farmers professional skills, developing the use of as yet little used natural resources, etc. The Guyanese European Innovation

Partnership (EIP) projects "for productive, sustainable farming" reflect the challenges in our territory. In Guiana the farming sector is in need of being developed in many aspects, particular, in the context of an increasing population, as regards food autonomy and the training of populations in farming techniques, which are more suitable for their lifestyle and are more respectful of the environment.

Often known by the name of "RITA Projects", the EIP operational groups in Guiana bring together a very wide range of different

actors: research institutes, farmers from several communities, (Hmongs, Creoles, Amerindians...), local institutions, etc. Predominantly they contribute to studying the feasibility of projects and launching trials. For example, the EIP operational group in Iracoubo led by the Guyane Forest Initiative is developing a Living Lab project intended to test agro-forestry techniques with farmers. For its part, the EIP operational group provided by the town hall in Maripasoula, a municipality in Haut-Maronie, is studying the possibility of creating a farming cluster with the aim of giving the farmers of this isolated territory professional skills. Finally, the EIP FEG (Guiana Experimental Farm) operational group of Guyane Développement Innovation is consulting various actors, in order to create new development sectors for local organic resources."

**More information...**

[delphine.pinault@ctguyane.fr](mailto:delphine.pinault@ctguyane.fr)

## Guya Pâtur Project: to improve management of fodder crop land

Developing fodder crop autonomy for the livestock-breeders of Guiana by disseminating the practice of dynamic grassland rotation. This is the objective of the Guya Pâtur EIP operational group 2017-2021 supported by the Guiana Chamber of Agriculture. "Because they are ignorant of the practice, most of the breeders allow their animals to graze freely all year round. The consequences? This results either in over-grazing or under-grazing. In the first case the grasslands quickly degenerate and in the second case the grass grows to a length greater than 30 cm and by virtue of ageing, becomes of poor quality, which results in areas, where the animals refuse to graze. In both cases the weeds take over and the fodder available for the livestock is reduced," explains Cédric Peret, Guya Pâtur Project Manager and livestock-breeding advisor at the Guiana Chamber of Agriculture. Another consequence of the way the fodder crop land is currently managed is loss of weight in the livestock, particularly in the dry season.

"The principle of dynamic grassland rotation is to divide the total land available for fodder crops into paddocks and then to organise a rotation system for these in order that the grass offered is always at the optimum stage. This is achieved by alternating the grazing period and the fallow period for the plots of land depending on the demand on them (the number of animals per hectare), the quantity of grass available and the climatic conditions. We also want to encourage the breeders to anticipate critical periods, by building up stocks of fodder. Hay is easy to produce in our territory." In order to disseminate the practice, the operational group has selected three pilot farms on the coast and in the west of Guiana in order to "organise demonstrations and training days for the other breeders throughout the territory," stresses Cédric Peret. These pilot sites will also make it possible to collect data on the quality and growth of the grass, as well as on the optimum fallow period for the paddocks, in order to define the best rotation cycle.



Practical work on grassland rotation with the students at the Agricultural College of Matiti (Guiana)

© Guya Patur



## Guyafer Project: promoting the use of organic fertilisers in Guiana

*"In Guiana we are behind the times in matters of organic soil fertilisation, which is a paradox, because we have no lack of organic matter, which can be exploited in farming," recalls William Montaigne, a research engineer at Solicaz. In order to respond to the high demand from the Guyanese farmers to find ways to stop using chemicals, the Solicaz private research institute has since 2013 been piloting a RITA Guiana project designed to promote the use of local organic fertilisers: Guyafer. The project brings together scientists (Solicaz, Cirad (French agricultural research and international cooperation organisation), INRA (National Institute of Agricultural Research), UMR EcoFoG (Joint Research Unit Ecology of Guyanese Forests) and a large number of farmers and farming groups. "This is the third year of the Guyafer project," points out William Montaigne. During the two previous years, the partners studied in particular the quality of various types of organic matter available in Guiana and their impact on soil fertility: ramial chipped wood (RCW), different types of compost, service plants – and more particularly nitrogen-fixing legumes and also charcoal. "Although the latter is not an enriching agent providing nutrients to the crops, we have discovered that it makes a considerable and sustainable improvement to the physical, chemical and biological properties of the soil. For example, carbon provides a niche for the soil micro-organisms and thus promotes the mineralisation of organic matter."*

Two methodological guides, technical workshops and training sessions now make it possible to pass on the results to the farmers.

The partners are also developing software designed to help the farmers to determine the quality of organic matter to use to meet the needs of their crops. *"This is a tool, which has existed since 2007 in La Réunion (Ferti-Run) and which we came across at the AgroEcoDom meetings in 2017. We are now working in collaboration with this Overseas Department's Chamber of Agriculture, which has agreed to share the tool. We will implement our data from this on the soils, the organic matter and crops in Guiana."*



Experimental system for including organic matter in market gardening

## "Producing a video with your Smartphone": an extremely popular form of training

Among the many activities programmed by TransAgriDom, during the last two days the participants were invited to learn how to make videos. The purpose of this is to learn how to use videos as innovative, effective tools for transfer and development. Testimony from one of the participants.



*"Videos let us send messages more quickly and to reach more people, especially those who are illiterate or by adding subtitles, those who do not speak French. Moreover, the farmers are very keen on this kind of content"* confirms Audrey Giraud. This inter-sector organiser and webmaster at the Martinique Chamber of Agriculture is one of 28 participants in the training course for video production using a Smartphone offered during TransAgriDom. Funded by the Rural Network, it was held in a traditional wooden lodge close to the Matiti Agricultural College. On the programme: theory and technique as well as practical filming and editing sessions. Led by Thierry Baillet and Augustin Galliaerde, two YouTubers popular in the farming world, the training was also based on three web conferences programmed in November and December. *"It was very interesting and wide-ranging. We learned to use our Smartphone and a piece of free editing software to make short, simple, quality videos to communicate with farmers, to hold tutorials, get the best out of our projects and results or our technical days."* Another strong point of the training was that the participants all left with equipment (a tripod, a lapel microphone and a kit for affixing the Smartphone anywhere). *"I am definitely more at ease with filming and editing videos. We are going to gain a great deal of time,"* says a delighted Audrey Giraud. The first productions will soon be ready for viewing on the RITA platform: [Coatis](#).

## Trial tests for territorial community agro-ecology



Sowing maize using the strip-till method on the Lot pilot site: the Pech d'amont Producers Association in Labathude

For three years the MCDR ECLAT project has been giving the opportunity to five pilot sites to become involved in a jointly -constructed, concerted agro-ecological transition, rooted in their territory.

"Because agro-ecological transition in the anticipated form is systematic and complex, because agro-ecology involves managing an eco-system in all its inter-relationships and finally, because progress is made by sharing experiences and dialogue between peers, an **agro-ecological transition must be managed collectively by the territory**," confirms Agnès Le Foulgoc, Head of the mission for guidance and promotion of innovation at the FNCUMA (National Federation of Cooperatives for the Use of Agricultural Material).

To promote this territorial, collective vision of agro-ecological transition, the FNCUMA, the TRAME Networks, CIVAM (Initiative Centres for the Development of Agriculture and the Rural Environment), FADEAR (Federation of Associations for the Development of Agricultural and Rural Employment), the Pays de la Loire FRCIVAM and France Nature Environnement have founded ECLAT (Expérimenter avec des Collectifs Locaux une Agroécologie Territoriale : Testing territorial agro-ecology with local groups). The objective of this MCDR project for 2019-2021 is to "find the right conditions for the success and reproduction of an agro-ecological transition collectively implemented and adapted to the territories and their particular features."

The partners selected five pilot sites for "their capacity to mobilise the various actors (farmers, local authorities businesses, associations, citizens, etc.) and to design an agro-ecological project for the region." Located in the Ardennes, Indre, the Loire, Lot and Vendée, their purpose is to spend three years running trials on systems

for dialogue and the joint design of multi-actor agro-ecological transitions policies, ways of collective management of agro-environmental assets held in common (bio-diversity, water, air, and soil quality, etc.) and methods for monitoring and evaluating the commitments. "With these pilot sites we also want to test new forms of contractual links, particularly the MAEC (agro-environmental and climatic measures) collectives. Currently, this type of public policy package gives support only to individual systems." The purpose of these multiple trials is "to have these recommendations accepted further up the line in public policies." Some solutions have already been identified, such as the recognition of the post of farmer-researcher, the right to experimentation, and also the taking into account of the length of time required for an agro-ecological transition.

Whether they are already involved in multi-actor projects or whether the farmers' group has yet to be fleshed out, the pilot sites are able to benefit from guidance in the implementation of processes of dialogue, from being made aware of information technology or else they can benefit from methods to be acquired from the human and social sciences field. **Three study trips, including**

**one to a European country, are also on the programme.** The first took place in November on the pilot site in Indre. "This was a chance for the other sites to participate in a cross-roads of agricultural multi- functionality, a regional method for dialogue provided by the ADAR CIVAM," points out Agnès Le Foulgoc. Finally, the partners are going to organise two national seminars each year. "The first one is intended for the pilot sites, in June. And at the end of the year, a study day to discuss the lessons learnt from the local trials and to put them into perspective."

**"We want to run trials on new contractual links, such as the MAEC"**

More information...

[www.cuma.fr](http://www.cuma.fr)



## TRESSONS paints the portrait of the social and solidarity economy in rural areas

On 24th September 2019 Avise organised a "Breakfast" on the theme, "What is the place for and what are the characteristics of the social and solidarity-based economy in rural areas?" On the programme, the presentation of a statistical overview drawn up in the context of the MCDR TRESSONS project, together with regional studies and a testimony.

Bringing together some hundred participants, the Avise "Breakfast" conference-debate began by giving a survey of the quantitative study on the social and solidarity-based economy (ESS) carried out as part of TRESSONS. This sector seems particularly dynamic in the rural environment, where it **represents 13.8% of wage-earners**, as compared with 10.5% for France as a whole. The ESS thus provides employment for 161,900 wage-earners and 22,500 employer's establishments, 19.4% of which are cooperatives. It shows itself to be particularly resilient in times of crises, since it has made it possible to create 7,500 rural employment posts between 2008 and 2015, 84% of which are in the community sector. In detail or in summary, all these key data can be found online on the Avise site (see link at the foot of the article).

Anne-Laure Federici, delegate-general of the RTES (Network of local authorities for a solidarity-based economy), Val d'Ille-Aubigné federation of municipalities, Pays Terres de Lorraine, Pays Périgord Vert and the Vercors Regional Natural Park, in progress). In these different territories the ESS plays a vital role in the cooperation between local actors and contributes to agro-ecological, energy and digital transition. The organisations, which come under the umbrella of the solidarity economy, actually create **jobs directed towards social innovation and service to the person**, including in regions, where trade services are losing momentum. The question of guidance for these organisations and



the public authorities and of their place within local development strategies therefore is still crucial.

**Xavier Stephan, Economic Development Manager for the Haute Vallée de Chevreuse National Park**



"Our Park Plan 2011-2023 includes a strategic axis dedicated to guidance for the ESS, entitled *Innov' Rural*. This puts the emphasis on developing local services and short distribution chains, reconciling economic utility and strengthening of the social link between the 150,000 inhabitants of the territory. We have supported the opening of the first participative grocer's shop, in accordance with a model, which has spread throughout the Park. We are also supporting the creation of a resource centre, a solar energy plant organised by volunteers and various third places. Finally, we are supporting the development of a local citizen currency and a local social Network, initiatives, which promote the feeling of belonging to the same territory, in order to avoid the "dormitory village" effect.

More information...

[www.avise.org/ressources/less-dans-les-territoires-ruraux-etude-tressons](http://www.avise.org/ressources/less-dans-les-territoires-ruraux-etude-tressons)



## Supporting farmers and local authorities in adapting to climate change

How can we encourage farms and the territories to adopt new practices promoting the reduction of greenhouse gases and the adaptation to climate change? This question is at the heart of the Mobilisation d'un réseau d'acteurs pour accompagner la transition climatique (Mobilisation of a Network of participants to support climate transition) piloted by the National Organic Farming Federation (FNAB).

"There is an urgent need to encourage farms and local authorities to act in the face of climate change and to experiment," states Didier Jammes, Manager of the Agro-environment Energy Climate Centre for the PACA (84) Bio Network, the organisation responsible for the technical coordination of the MDCR Mobilisation of a Network of participants to support climate transition project. Provided by the FNAB, the national organic farming federation and eleven technical partners and financiers\*, the aim of this project is **to develop a national network of plots of land and local authorities**, in order to promote extremely effective, innovative actions with respect to adaptation to climate change. The purpose of this is to show the economic, agronomic, environmental and climatic importance linked to the development of practices, production systems and regional procedures or approaches. The action plan prepared by the partners is disseminated across 6 regions in PACA, Hauts de France, the Greater East and Pays de Loire. It is divided into three axes designed to mobilise networks of actors around common objectives.

Entitled Soils, Organic, Climate, the aim of the first axis is to constitute a network of plots of land, in order to **study the carbon storage capacity of the soil** and to improve its fertility. "If it were possible to store 4 parts per 1000 of carbon in all soils, we would compensate for the carbon emitted by human beings," stresses Didier Jammes. "This is impossible in practical terms, but it is part

of the solution." The second axis of the project, Farms, Organic, Climate, concentrates on the resilience of the farms: optimised management of inputs, energy savings. Lastly, Territories, Organic, Climate, the third and final axis, is for its part devoted to renewable energy production and sustainable food on the scale of the EPCI (public establishments for cooperation between local authorities).

To guide the farmers and the local authorities through these trials, the FNAB is proceeding by stages. In particular, it is offering **training courses to bring farmers up to date and to improve their skills**, to draft an inventory (soil analysis, the farm's carbon footprint, diagnostic survey of the energy aspects of the region) and organise site visits in the company of experts. These days invite farmers, whether organic or non-organic, elected representatives, local authority managers and technicians to design together proposals for initiatives. Eventually, in the form of methodological specifications, summary sheets and practical guides, the partners will share the results of the actions undertaken, in order to "incite farms and the local authorities to appropriate and to increase favourable practices".

\* Bio de Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur, GABB32, Bio 46, Civambio53, Bio en Grand Est, Bio en Hauts-de-France, InterAfocg, Réseau Action Climat, GERES, Énergie Partagée, Greater East Regional Network

### More information...

[www.eauetbio.org](http://www.eauetbio.org) / [www.produire-bio.fr](http://www.produire-bio.fr)

Discussion group on agronomic practices in Mayenne



© Civam Bio 53



## The 15th meeting of the National Rural Networks examines concepts of networks and territorial strategies



In September, the 15th meeting of the National Rural Networks in Poitiers enjoyed a wealth of meetings and fruitful discussions between the French National and Regional Networks, the ENRD and the Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development (DG AGRI). At the heart of the discussions lay the concept of local strategies and projects, the concept of a network and the issues to come under the new CAP in the future.

Both technical and convivial, the 15th meeting of the National Rural Networks was held on the 19th and 20th of September in Poitiers. Organised in France for the first time, it brought together more than 80 persons: representatives of the National Rural Networks from 20 Member States, as well as seven French Regional Rural Networks (Nouvelle-Aquitaine, Normandy, Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes, Martinique, Mayotte, Bourgogne Franche-Comté, Brittany and Greater East).

A specialist in internal geo-politics and in town and country planning, Giuseppe Bettoni opened the discussions by warning of the risk of labelling territories rural: *"The territory must not become confined within this labelling. They have no vocation, they have potential,"* confirmed the expert, while inviting the audience also not to think in terms of opposition between urban and rural. Discussions followed with the presentation of examples of territorial and partnership strategies, such as the "Inner Areas" in Italy and from France, the Collective Mobilisation for Rural

Development (MCDR) projects. Divided into small groups, the participants then dealt with different subjects in greater depth: the Tressons and Territoires apprenants (Learner Territories) MCDR projects, the organisation of the Latvian Rural Network and its 26 offices, the Greek strategy for involving the farmers in the EIP and also the results of applying the SWOT method to the future AKIS system (Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation System).

A strong sign of crosscutting and transversality across different sectors, the merger of the rural Networks and the EIP within the future CAP, common to the two pillars, gave food for thought in most of the discussions during the second day. The participants commented on the opportunities opened up by this single Network as well as discussing the points for vigilance, arising from it. *"This is a chance to make further progress in the cooperation with farmers, to reach a larger population and to see to it that the Network becomes better known and more powerful,"* stressed some participants, who also indicated their desire to retain the name, "Rural Network". Others also reiterated their anxiety at seeing, with the coming together of the two pillars of the CAP, *"a dilution of rural issues into farming issues"*. At the end of this 15th meeting, the participants were finally invited to the municipality of Saint-Sauvant to visit a tourist gîte and a restaurant renovated and managed by employees on a SEI (Solidarity Environment Integration) Association professional integration course.

More information...

[www.reseaurural.fr/15eme-rencontre-des-reseaux-ruraux-nationaux](http://www.reseaurural.fr/15eme-rencontre-des-reseaux-ruraux-nationaux)



*"I was captivated by the MCDR approach. Working on transverse themes and weaving links between the territories is a very interesting approach."*

**Helen Williams,**  
Director-General for Agriculture  
and Rural Development (DG AGRI)



*"These meetings allow us to see how other countries work, how they manage problems, what success they encounter and so on. It is also an excellent opportunity to pass the information up the line to the ENRD and the European Commission."*

**Pawel Krzeczunowicz,** Director of the Polish Rural Network

# NEWS FROM THE REGIONAL RURAL NETWORKS

## Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes

## Innov'Rural: for collective management of natural resources

In our globalised society, tensions concerning the appropriation of resources and assets are multiplying. By choosing the "common" as the central theme for its annual event, Cap Rural has highlighted the alternatives to shared management of resources, in a context of transition.

Reinvesting in empty shops in a street in Saint-Nineth, developing village plants to produce energy in the Quint Valley, creating a participative eco-habitat in the Drôme, etc. These are a few examples of "common" projects presented at the 8th edition of the Innov'Rural meetings on 6th September in Monistrol-sur-Loire (43). Intended to create a unifying event and to deal with subjects which are to do with local and rural development, this annual seminar was offered by Cap Rural, the Rural Network in Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes. In 2019 its theme was intended to shed light on the issue of transition in the rural territories in the prism of the ordinary people: how do they restore a sense of initiative and incite the actors in the rural territories to renew and revisit local development practices? Why the subject of ordinary people? **"The issues and the tensions concerning resources and the exploitation of resources and assets are increasing,"** explains Patrick Grimault, operations manager at Cap Rural. **"What we want to examine today is how the issues in common make it possible to re-mobilise the actors in the territories around a resource, with the purpose of developing and conserving it, in a collective dynamic, where it is not a group from outside who appropriates the matter."**

"A mixture of the words of the actors and the distanced view of the four researchers, the day offered time to imagine, to invent the future, to question the practices of the professionals and the local

development actors, in order to find out how our rural territories will be constructed and will live in tomorrow's world. The discussions were organised around three axes. The first consisted of explaining how the ordinary people represent at one and the same time a resource, a community and the rules of management. Second axis: the ordinary people and transition linked to social, economic and ecological crises. And finally, the link, or lack of a link, of the ordinary people with the public authorities and market logic. *"Collective projects sometimes run counter to the project from the public institution. Some ordinary people disagree with the private market. On water, for example, there are tensions between those who think that it is an asset like any other, that it has a value and that they can therefore appropriate it, buy it and resell it, while other think the opposite."*

In order to discuss subjects as vast as agriculture, forestry, local energy production, local currency and even third places, Cap Rural brought together 110 persons: intercommunal, local authority and association development workers, rural development professionals, local politicians, providers of collective projects and so on. Together, they arrived at a common conclusion: **"We cannot simply continue to do what we were doing before. The ordinary people offer the possibility of becoming collectively involved with respect to two subjects: the definition of a common future to be wished for the populations and specific methods for implementing this."** It is now possible to consult videos, exhibition panels and detailed leaflets on Cap Rural's site to familiarise yourself with the subject and to find out about the experiences.

More information...

<http://caprural.org/telechargements/send/4-les-formations-du-crdp/1731-innov-rural-2019-programme-du-6-septembre>

How do the ordinary people restore a sense of initiative and renew practices?  
This question mobilised some hundred researchers and actors in rural development.





# NEWS FROM THE REGIONAL RURAL NETWORKS

## Normandie



On the 16th of October in Caen, the Rural Network for Normandy organised a day of discussion designed for the better understanding of the links between skills, human resources and the development of the territories, on the scale of a town or a small community.

How do we turn a territory into a place of training and learning? What new skills in the workforce should we develop in a context of economic change? What is the role of public policies and of EAFRD in particular? These questions provided food for thought at the "Learner territories: issues and realities" day, organised by the Norman Rural Network and the Sol et Civilisation think tank in the context of the MCDR "Learner territories" project. The

## Learner territories: challenges and key concepts

meeting brought together some hundred persons wanting to discover or share *"a different vision of the rural territories at a time of increased metropolisation, of the arrival of new populations and, more globally, of profound changes to the economy and society."* Rich and varied, the testimonies of the day made it possible to illustrate the concept of a learner territory. These are defined by Sol et Civilisation as *"territories in which every individual can build up and share his knowledge with others, document what he has learned, dispose of the resources, places and support necessary to be able to progress and also to allow others to be inspired by this and to improve their practices"*.

The federation of the municipalities of Erdre et Gesvres, Pays de Fougères and the conglomeration of Loire-Forez: three territories set out the importance of cooperation between actors for true success by a learner territory. Three initiatives in Normandy also illustrated the link between computer technology and learner territory, together with collective dynamics in progress: an educational eco-system in Vire, the Elabo third place in Bellême and the "Badgeons la Normandie" (Let's badge Normandy) Network. For his part, the economist and statistician, René Caspar stressed the elements of context recurrent in the learner territories: a territory, which *"creates links"*, *"cooperates in order to find tomorrow's solutions"*, *"anticipates"*, *"attaches importance to each person's culture"* or *"considers generational change an opportunity"*.

More information... <https://territapp.eu>

## Mayotte

*"Support Networks, farmers, unions... All the actors able to benefit from EAFRD were invited to make a point, to talk of the future and the directions to be taken, relates David Armellini, the organiser of the National Rural Network on his return from the Assembly General of the Mayotte Rural Network. Organized on the 10th of October in Mamoudzou in the amphitheatre of the Departmental Council, the day was useful in particular for "bringing together actors, who do not usually work together," says Cécile Morelli, the organiser of the Rural Network of this overseas department. On the agenda: the report on the Network's activities, a point on the implementation of the RDP, discussions on CAP strategy post-2020 and the showing of a video presenting the operations of the Mahorais Rural Network. Moreover, the grant of funds dedicated to local issues was explained: 38% of the sums allocated are thus intended for improving the viability of the farms, 33% for economic development, 18% for the conservation of the eco-systems and 11% for the promotion of the structuring of the food chain. Project providers were also invited to present their initiatives in progress in the fields of raising awareness of the environment, the social and solidarity-based economy and the creation of media libraries, libraries, covered markets, hiking trails, etc. "Take inspiration as*

## Feedback on the Assembly General of the Rural Network

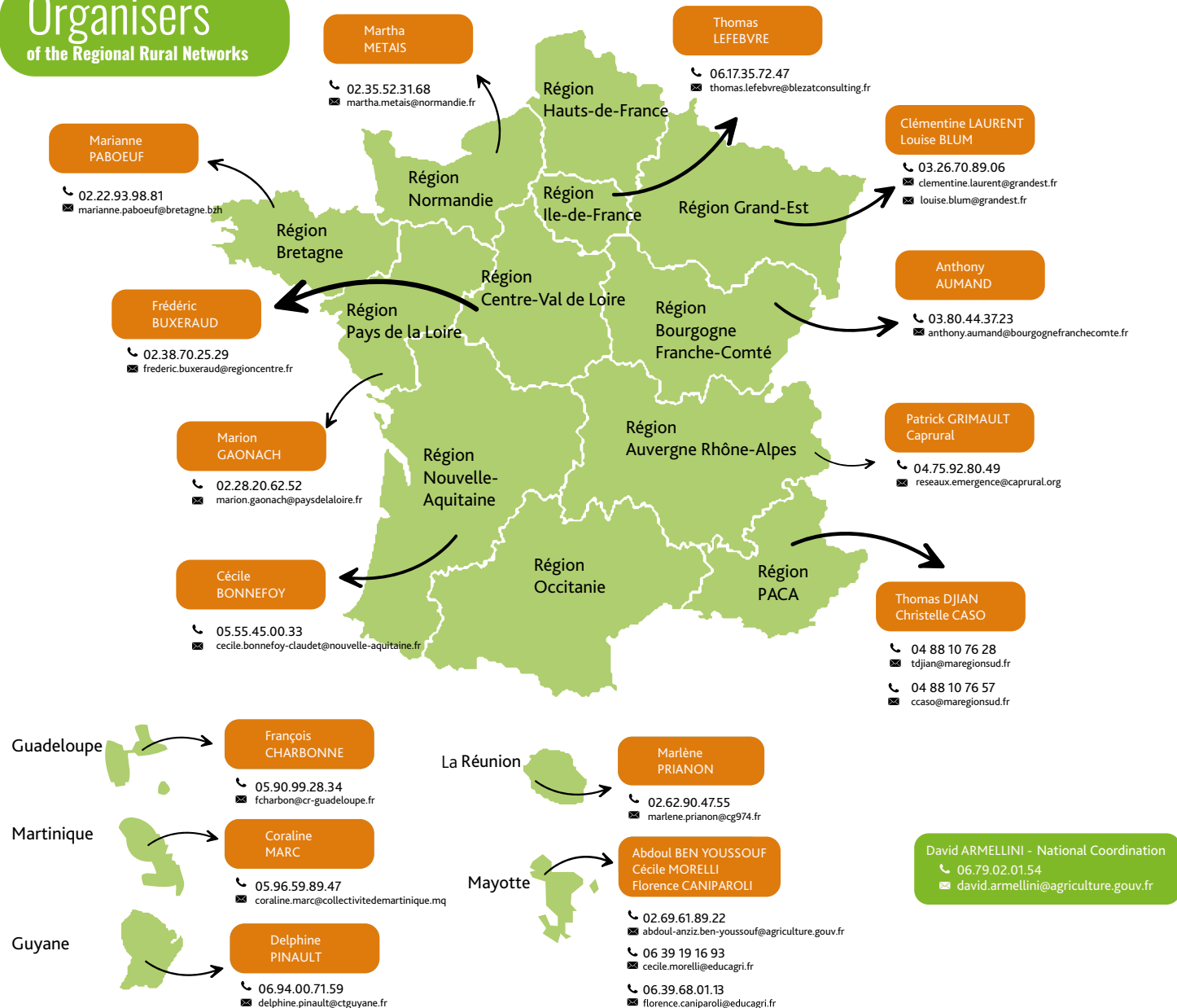


*well from other Networks," encouraged Abdoul Ben Yousseuf, from the Mahorais Network, in order to provide incentives for opening up and sharing projects. Words, which were supported by David Armellini: "Solutions may be found among very distant regions. In particular, Mayotte may follow the example of la Creuse in order to solve the problem of the departure of its young people."*

More information... [www.reseaurural.fr/region/mayotte](http://www.reseaurural.fr/region/mayotte)

The French Rural Network brings together all the stakeholders in the rural world at the national and regional level to enable them to exchange and work together. The objective is to facilitate the implementation of projects linking agriculture, forestry, trade and commerce, tourism, the environment, services, etc. In the course of its work, the Rural Network offers tools, methods, analyses and recommendations.

## Organisers of the Regional Rural Networks



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