

The Leader movement in Czechia in 2010

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(Consider that Czechia has 10 mil. people in 13 regions and is more an industrial than a rural country.)

By one (long) sentence: The Leader method is based on co-operation of local actors and bottom-up initiative and implemented in a rural area by a local cross-sector partnership (called local action group, LAG) through its own local development strategy that is funded mostly (but not only) by a national Rural Development Program managed by Ministry of Agriculture.

LAGs cover 78% of rural areas of the country with 73% of rural people and operate in 75% of small towns and villages.

Czech LAGs are smaller than the European average:

	inhabitants	area km ²	density: hab. per km ²
average of 132 LAGs in EU (except CZ)	62 672	1 877	33
average of 136 LAGs in CZ	27 842	352	76

In 2010, there are 145 „living“ LAGs, 112 of that have been supported for implementation of their development plans.

Most of the Czech LAGs (similar to the other EU countries):

- **help local actors** to prepare and fund their projects
- **implement development plans** by selecting and funding final beneficiaries
- **perform** interregional and international **co-operation of LAGs**
- **serve their regions** through training, consultancy etc.

National Network of LAGs

The first call for LAGs to join the network was published in June 2005. At present, **119 LAGs have been registered as the members.**

National Rural Observatory (a civil NGO)

Founded in 2005, the Observatory aims to

- **Support LAGs and other rural actors** and their networks by training, consultancy, research and information services
- **Provide service for the National Network of LAGs**
- **Inform the public, media and public administration** about rural issues and Leader principles
- **Cooperate with public authorities** at the national, regional and local level in addressing rural problems and needs
- **Influence rules and conditions for funding LAGs** from EAFRD (via the national Rural Development Program 2007-13)
- **Participate in activities of relevant international organisations and networks** (ELARD etc.)

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