



National Rural Network | 30 YEARS OF



# LEADER

*Learning from the Past, Looking to the Future*

## 15 November 2021



**#LEADERCLLD**



National Rural Network



Rialtas na hÉireann  
Government of Ireland



Ireland's European Structural and  
Investment Funds Programmes  
2014-2020

Co-funded by the Irish Government  
and the European Union



The European Agricultural Fund  
for Rural Development: Europe

# AGENDA

- 9am** Conference open
- 9.05** Welcome, Dr Maura Farrell (Conference Chair, NRN & NUIG) & James Claffey (NRN & IRL)
- 9.10** Minister of Rural and Community Development, Heather Humphreys, T.D
- 9.20** Keynote address, Professor Mark Shucksmith OBE (Newcastle University)
- 9.50** Panel discussion on the lessons learned from 30 years of LEADER
- Professor Mark Shucksmith (panel chair)
  - Dóirín Graham (CEO, Clare Local Development Company)
  - Terry Keenan (Chairperson, FORUM Connemara)
  - Sonya Kavanagh (Kildare County Council)
  - Mary Clarke (Caltra Community Development Association, LEADER recipient)
- 10.40** Coffee Break
- 10.50** The Future of LEADER, Iwona Lisztwan (EU Commission)
- 11.10** Breakout session (see page 2 for detail)
- 12.00** Feedback from breakout session
- 12.15** Panel discussion and Q&A facilitated by John Grieve (ENRD).  
Panel: Active Listeners (see page 2 for detail)
- 12.50** Conference round-up by Kevin McCarthy (Department of Rural and Community Development)
- 1pm** Conference close

# BREAKOUT SESSION - 11.10am

This session will include five workshops representing key areas of the LEADER Programme. Each workshop will have an overview of the topic from a key expert in the field, followed by a short LEADER project presentation relevant to the topic. Both short presentations will set the scene for the workshop before 2 key aspects of the topic will be discussed by the group. Each workshop will also be facilitated by a Rural Development Officer and an NRN representative will provide feedback to the broader group following the workshop.

At the start of this session, you will be presented with an opportunity to join on of the following workshops:

## **Workshop 1: LEADER and Social Inclusion**

- Workshop Moderator: Judy Dunne, Fingal LEADER Partnership
- Topic Expert: Anne Cassidy, Galway Rural Development
- Project Example: John MacNamara, ACM Community Development Society
- NRN Support: Niamh Nolan, IRL
- Note Taker: Louise Weir, NUI Galway

## **Workshop 2: Smart Villages**

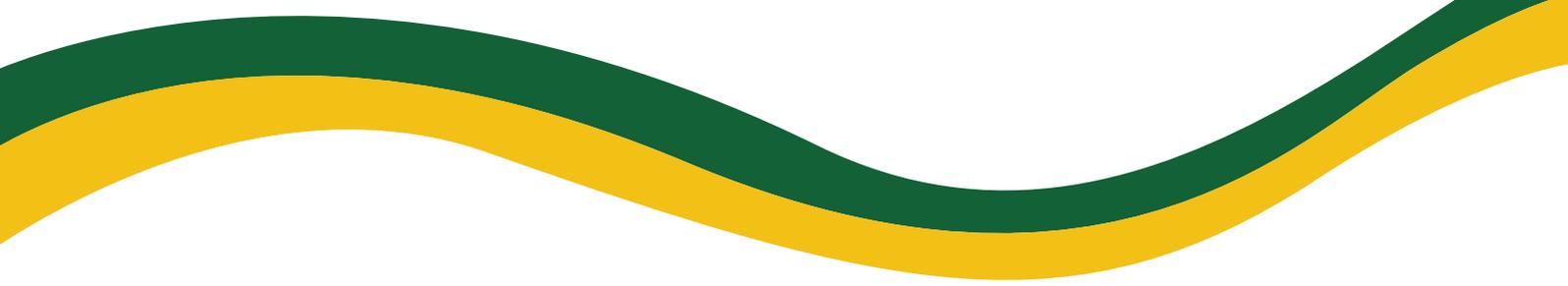
- Workshop Moderator: Conor Carty, Galway Rural Development
- Topic Expert: Pat Kennedy, eTownz
- Project Example: Collette McEntee, Innovating Communities Project
- NRN Support: Paddy Malone, IRL
- Note Taker: Shane Conway, NUI Galway

## **Workshop 3: LEADER and Cooperation**

- Workshop Moderator: Claire Connors, Waterford LEADER Partnership
- Topic Expert: Frank Kelly, former Rural Development Manager Donegal Local Development CLG
- Project Example: Frank Kelly
- NRN Support: Louise Lennon, IRL
- Note Taker: James Claffey, NRN

## **Workshop 4: LEADER and the Rural Environment**

- Workshop Moderator: Peter Ormond, Westmeath Community Development
- Topic Expert: Fran Igoe, Local Authorities Waters Programme (LAWPRO)
- Project Example: Rebekah Keaveny, Green Offaly
- NRN Support: Declan Phelan, NRN
- Note Taker: Aoife Smith, NRN



### **Workshop 5: LEADER and the Rural Economy**

- Workshop Moderator: Donna Cleary, SECAD
- Topic Expert: Mary O'Shaughnessy, Department of Food Business and Development, UCC
- Project Example: Peter Johnson, St Vincent de Paul North East and Midlands Region
- NRN Support: Johnny Sheehan, NRN
- Note Taker: Daniel Bennett, NRN

## **PANEL DISCUSSION - 12.15pm**

Panel chaired by John Grieve, European Network For Rural Development (ENRD)

Active Listeners:

- Dr Aisling Murtagh, NUI Galway
  - Michael Kenny, NUI Maynooth
  - Dr Brian Leonard, UCD
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# SPEAKERS & CONTRIBUTORS



**Dr Anne Cassidy** has recently been appointed as Galway Rural Development's SICAP Team Leader and previously worked on the programme as a Rural Resource Officer. She holds an MA in Community Development and a PhD in rural sociology from NUI, Galway.



**Dr Maura Farrell (conference chair)** is a Senior Lecturer in the School of Geography, Archaeology and Irish Studies at NUI Galway. Maura's teaching reflects her research specialism, which revolves around Rural and Agricultural Geography and her interests focus on processes of social, cultural and economic change for rural inhabitants. Maura is the lead researcher in NUI Galway for the National Rural Network project and the Horizon 2020 RURALIZATION Project. Dr Farrell has published and presented her research work extensively on a national and international basis and participated in numerous national and international rural conferences and seminar sessions, in addition to being an invited guest on numerous occasions for rural events and conferences.



**Dóirín Graham** is CEO of Clare Local Development Company, a community-led local development organisation established in 2009 to deliver a range of rural development, social inclusion and enterprise supports and training to communities in Co. Clare.



**John Grieve** has a professional background in farm management and rural development. He is the former Team Leader for the European Network for Rural Development (ENRD) Contact Point. John is a founding director in The Rural Development Company (RDC), one of the members of the RURANET EEIG, which managed the 2014 – 2020 ENRD Contact Point and which has been appointed to support the 2021 - 2030 CAP Network. John now acts as the senior advisor to the project contributing to the planning, management, delivery and reporting of the project and for liaison with DG AGRI. He has led successive EU networking capacity-building and thematic support roles including specific responsibility for LEADER and CLLD. His earlier wider networking experience includes senior contributions to the former ENRD Contact Point, the ENRD Evaluation Helpdesk and FARNET, the European Fisheries Areas Network.



**Heather Humphreys TD** was appointed Minister of Justice, Social Protection, Community and Rural Development and the Islands on 27 June 2020. She previously served as Minister for Business, Enterprise, and Innovation from November 30, 2017 to June 27, 2020, and Minister for Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht. She previously served as Minister for Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs from 6 May 2016, and from July 2014. She was elected to the Dáil on February 2011 for the constituency of Cavan Monaghan. She was re-elected to Monaghan County council in June 2009 and during her time she was Chair of the Council's Strategic Policy Committee on Planning and Economic Development. She was chairperson of Monaghan County Council from 09-10.



**Fran Igoe** is Southern Regional Coordinator with the Local Authority Waters Programme (LAWPRO) in Ireland. His responsibilities include the coordination of agencies, community outreach and animation, citizen science, invasives species control, river restoration, and promoting good environmental stewardship amongst all stakeholders including the public. The LEADER Programme is a strategic partner in this area and LAWPRO has worked closely with the Rural Development Companies, the ILDN and the LCDCs to support community participation in the Rural Theme, especially with regards to Water, Biodiversity and Climate. He wrote the "Working with Water, biodiversity and climate – A guide for community groups" for LEADER in response to a request from the RDCs for more guidance in this area and worked with the DCRD to address blockages to community participation. He also worked with Inland Fisheries Ireland for 15 years, primarily on River Restoration, Research, Catchment Management and enforcement and has a PhD in Zoology.



**Sonya Kavanagh** is a Kildare native who has spent the last 27 years working in Local Government. She was recently appointed Interim Chief Executive of Kildare County Council. Sonya has previously worked in key delivery roles in Economic, Community & Cultural Development, Roads, Transportation & Public Safety, Housing and Corporate Services. She has acted as Chief Officer of Kildare LCDC and has represented the CCMA (County & City Managers Association) on working groups and forums with a focus on the LEADER Programme, the LECP (Local Economic and Community Plan) and the SICAP Programme.



**Terry Keenan** Terry Keenan is Chairperson of FORUM Connemara, a partnership company that promotes, assists and engages in social and enterprise development in the Connemara region. Terry is also the Irish Local Development Network's (ILDN) representative on the European LEADER Association for Rural Development (ELARD) Governing Council, since his election in December 2020. ELARD is an international non-profit association set up to improve the quality of life in rural areas and to maintain their population through sustainable, integrated local development.



**Frank Kelly** has over 30 years of experience in supporting Rural and Community Development, including the farming community. He was responsible for the management and implementation in Donegal of several EU Funded and national LEADER Programmes, enabling €24M in funding to some 600 projects. This in turn has enabled a total investment of over €40 Million investment by both private and community project promoters. He has extensive experience in the development and implementation of several Co-operation Projects, both Inter-territorial and Transnational, including the Donegal section of the "International Appalachian Trail", "Colabora" (Remote Working) and several others including the Transnational "Tri-surf" project encouraging rural youth to develop a healthier lifestyle while also affording local water-based enterprises located along the coastline a chance to ensure year-round sustainability.



**Pat Kennedy** is CEO of eTownz. Over the past 10 years, Pat has been involved in a number of research and local development projects related to smart villages concepts. eTownz are at the forefront of Smart Village development in Ireland and this year were commissioned by a group of LDCs to prepare a six-module curriculum on "Smart Villages" which is near completion. Pat and his team are also expert partners and national representatives for Ireland on the pan EU research project "Smart Rural 21" and "Smart Rural 27".



**Michael Kenny** is a lecturer at the Department of Adult and Community Education, Maynooth University. He is an Adult and Community Educator with a particular interest in engaged participation. His upbringing is farming and rural within a West of Ireland migrant family. Michael's higher education is an agricultural science degree (BAgrSc 1980), rural development Masters (MAgrSc 1990), and Higher Diploma in Higher Education (HDHE1998). His experience is youth work, community work in Ireland and Africa (Africa 7 years), and extensive engagement with formal, non-formal and voluntary rural and urban organisations. He is currently course director of the post-graduate Higher Diploma in Further Education and the Postgraduate Certificate in Programme Design and Validation.



**Dr Brian Leonard** is an Assistant Professor in the School of Agriculture and Food Science at University College Dublin. Within the discipline of Agri-Business and Rural Development, Brian currently lectures on Food Economics and Business Innovation. Prior to joining UCD he held a role within the Economic, Rural and Community Development section of Galway County Council where he worked on the Atlantic Economic Corridor project. In addition, Brian has worked for Teagasc in roles related to interactive innovation and farm diversification. His research focuses on farm succession and inheritance, and rural development.



**Iwona Lisztwan** is coordinating the LEADER/CLLD approach in the European Commission in DG AGRI. She likes looking for new and better ways of doing things in rural development and beyond. She believes that people, their skills and motivation are at the centre of development process. Previously, Iwona had been working on rural development in Poland and Turkey for more than 15 years. Her PhD on cohesion aspects of rural development (from Newcastle University) alongside degrees in Linguistics (Poznan University) and an MBA serve her well in daily work.



**Kevin McCarthy** is Secretary General of the Department of Rural and Community Development since December 2017. He previously served as an Assistant Secretary-General in the Department of Education from 2008 to 2017, where he held a number of senior leadership roles, and has also worked in the Departments of Health and Finance and in the health sector. As Secretary General of the Department of Rural and Community Development, he has overall responsibility for the effective operation of the Department and for providing advice to the Minister in delivering on the Department's mission and mandate, including its objectives for supporting the economic and social development of rural areas. The LEADER Programme is one of a number of programmes of support that is developed and delivered by the Department.



**Dr Aisling Murtagh** is a Postdoctoral Researcher with the RURALIZATION project at the Rural Studies Centre, Discipline of Geography, NUI Galway. Her current research examines the issues of rural regeneration and generational renewal. She has worked on a number of rural development related national and European research projects in areas including creative industries, short food supply chains and food cooperatives. She also worked with the National Rural Network as Research and Development Officer where her work particularly focused on the LEADER programme.



**Dr Mary O'Shaughnessy** is Head, Department of Food Business and Development and Senior Lecturer at Cork University Business School, College of Business and Law, University College Cork. Her teaching and research interests include sustainable, place-based rural development and the rural (social) economy. She contributes to national and European policy on social enterprise and rural development, is a former director of Micro Finance Ireland, member of the National Social Enterprise Task Force and a founding member of EMES (International university research network on comparative research, social enterprise, social entrepreneurship, social and solidarity economy, and social innovation).



**Mark Shucksmith (keynote)** is Professor of Planning at Newcastle University, where he was also Director of the Institute for Social Renewal from 2012-18, and is Visiting Professor at Ruralis, Trondheim. His main areas of research include social exclusion in rural areas, rural housing and rural development. He has published 17 books (including editing the Routledge International Handbook of Rural Studies with David Brown) and over 120 learned papers, as well as coordinating several EU research projects. He is currently writing up a new study of social exclusion and financial vulnerability in rural Britain. Mark served recently as Specialist Adviser to two House of Lords Select Committees, a role he held previously in the Scottish Parliament. He was Chair of the Scottish Government's Committee of Inquiry into Crofting (2007-08) and a Board member of England's Countryside Agency and Commission for Rural Communities (2005-13), as well as directing the Joseph Rowntree Foundation's Action in Rural Areas programme. Mark was Vice President of the International Rural Sociological Association during 2004-08 and Programme Chair for the XI World Rural Sociology Congress in Trondheim, Norway in 2004. He was awarded the honour of OBE in 2009 for services to rural development and to crofting. He is a Trustee of the Carnegie UK Trust and of ACRE (Action with Communities in Rural England), and a Fellow of the Academy of Social Sciences. Mark evaluated several LEADER1 and LEADER2 programmes, was a member of a LEADER2 LAG and has written numerous papers on the LEADER experience.

# ABOUT THE NRN

Ireland's National Rural Network (NRN) is a membership network for farmers, agricultural advisors, rural communities and others interested in rural development.

It provides up-to-date information, case studies, seminars and conferences to maximise the beneficial outcomes of Ireland's Rural Development Programme 2014-2020 for rural stakeholders.

The NRN is managed by a consortium led by Irish Rural Link in partnership with The Wheel, NUI Galway and Philip Farrelly & Co.

The NRN aims to:

- increase the involvement of stakeholders in the implementation of rural development;
- improve the quality of implementation of rural development programmes;
- foster innovation in agriculture, food production, forestry and rural areas.

The NRN is focusing on specific themed areas:

- the LEADER Programme
- Biodiversity
- Climate change
- EU Life
- EIP-AGRI
- Viability and competitiveness of Farming communities

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