



First European fi-compass conference

## Financial Instruments

under the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development

Sustainable investments in agriculture and rural areas

**Dublin, Ireland**  
23 - 24 June 2015

Programme



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## Context

The Europe 2020 strategy for growth and jobs called for a stronger role of financial instruments in 2014 - 2020. The European Council subsequently gave a mandate to the European Commission that the programming of the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) should be used to significantly increase the overall EU support from these funds to leverage-based financial instruments, in particular for SMEs. An increase of the use of ESIF financial instruments, to a level almost double that of the 2007-2013 programming period, is also set out in the Investment Plan for Europe. To achieve this, the new legal and policy framework has widened the scope of financial instruments to include all thematic objectives and all five ESI funds. The framework also gives more implementation options to Member States.

Within this framework, the European Commission Directorate General for Agriculture and Rural Development (DG AGRI) has the objective to increase the use of financial instruments under the EAFRD in terms of budget, territorial coverage and types of investment. To support the achievement of this objective, DG AGRI undertook a set of activities such as:

- the setting up, together with other Commission Services responsible for ESIF, the *fi-compass* integrated advisory platform on financial instruments, which provides comprehensive advice and learning opportunities to the benefit of Member States, their Managing Authorities but also for the wider public. The *fi-compass* platform has been set up in partnership with the European Investment Bank (EIB).
- the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the EC and the EIB on co-operation in the field of agriculture and rural development within the EU. This MoU paves the way for closer co-operation between the two institutions in various fields, including financial instruments and research & innovation.

Financial instruments can be co-funded by the EAFRD to support the investment priorities outlined in the Rural Development Programmes (RDPs) of the Member States. They can potentially support the implementation of many measures covered by the EAFRD, provided that they address an identified market gap, i.e. areas where banks are unwilling to lend and/or where the private sector is unwilling to invest or finds access to financing difficult, for instance in young farmers, new agricultural businesses without sufficient credit history or assets as collateral, new technologies and products entering the market, energy and climate efficient investments, etc.

To allow the use of EAFRD resources for financial instruments, Member States have to programme these in their RDPs and implement them in their programme areas. Financial instruments may have various forms (such as loans, guarantees, equity) and cover either all economic sectors supported by the programmes or those parts of them, or types of investments, which face restricted access and/or unfavourable conditions for funding from private resources.

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## Audience

The target audience for this conference are EAFRD Managing Authorities, bodies implementing or considering implementing financial instruments in agriculture and rural development, financial intermediaries, EAFRD stakeholders, Civil Dialogue Group on rural development, public authorities, chambers of commerce, farm and business associations, business angels, EIB Group staff, and other actors supporting financial instruments' implementation.

## Venue

The Forum, Convention Centre Dublin (CCD), Ireland.

## Language / Costs

Conference language is English with French and German interpretation available. For day one until 15:00, Polish and Irish are also available.

Registration and entry is free. Participants are expected to finance their own travel and accommodation costs.

### What will the conference offer?

This conference is the first and largest EAFRD *fi-compass* event in 2015. In Autumn, one day *fi-compass* EAFRD regional events in Vienna, Riga and Barcelona are also foreseen.

#### **The purpose of this Dublin conference is to:**

- Outline the major EU rural development policy objectives in relation to use and implementation of financial instruments under the EAFRD;
- Stimulate among managing authorities, financial institutions and rural development stakeholders:
  - Exchange and discussion on advantages, features, and the general suitability of financial instruments in delivering Rural Development Programme objectives.
  - An increased awareness on the programming and implementation approaches applied in the EU in the field of financial instruments in 2014-2020.
- Inform stakeholders on the general current and forthcoming *fi-compass* advisory platform support to Member States and Managing Authorities underpinning their efforts to implement EAFRD financial instruments and identify emerging support needs; and
- Inform stakeholders on the further support available from the EC – EIB co-operation in agriculture and rural development.

## DAY 1

Conference Tuesday 23 June 2015

The Forum, Convention Centre Dublin (CCD), Ireland

12:00

Doors open, registration and lunch

Welcome and opening statements

13:30

Welcome statement from **Mr Enda Kenny T.D.**,  
Taoiseach of Ireland (Prime Minister of Ireland)

13:45

Opening statements from:

**Mr Phil Hogan,**European Commissioner for Agriculture and  
Rural Development**Mr Wilhelm Molterer,**

Vice-President of the European Investment Bank

**Mr Czesław Adam Siekierski,**Chair of the Committee on Agriculture and  
Rural Development, European Parliament

14:15

Introductory statement from **Mr Simon Coveney T.D.**,  
Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine*Followed by Q&A*

14:45

Coffee and networking

The future of Europe's agriculture and rural areas

15:15

EU rural development policy boosting growth and jobs in  
agriculture and rural areas with EAFRD financial instruments  
**Mr Jerzy Plewa**, Director-General, Agriculture and Rural  
Development, European Commission

15:30

The investment needs in Europe's agriculture and  
agri-food industry**Mr Pekka Pesonen**, Secretary General COPA - COGECA

15:45

The challenges in front of Europe's young farmers  
and access to credit**Mr Matteo Bartolini**, President, CEJA

16:00

EIB advisory services: strengthening and  
accelerating investments in the EU**Mr Simon Barnes**, Head of Advisory,  
European Investment Bank*Followed by brief Q&A*

16:30

Day 1 closing remarks from **Mr Aldo Longo**,  
Director, Agriculture and Rural Development,  
European Commission*Followed immediately by a networking opportunity*Chair and moderator:  
**Mrs Cathy Smith**

## DAY 2

Conference Wednesday 24 June 2015

The Forum, Convention Centre Dublin (CCD), Ireland

**08:00**

Doors open, registration and coffee

**09:00**

Welcome from **Mr Aldo Longo**,  
Director, Agriculture and Rural Development,  
European Commission

[EC - EIB co-operation in agriculture and rural development](#)

**09:10**

Memorandum of Understanding between the EC  
and the EIB on co-operation in agriculture and rural  
development within the EU and its work programme

**Mr Nivelin Noev**,  
Agriculture and Rural Development, European Commission

**09:20**

Loan Guarantee Instrument for Agriculture under the EAFRD

**Mr Ioannis Tsakiris**, European Investment Fund

**09:30**

Co-financing RDPs 2014-2020 and lending for  
agriculture and agri-food businesses

**Mr Werner Schmidt**, Director, European Investment Bank

*Followed by Q&A*

[Programming and implementing EAFRD  
financial instruments in 2014 - 2020](#)

**10:00**

Programming of FIs in RDPs 2014 - 2020  
and future policy steps

**Mr Martin Scheele**, Agriculture and Rural Development,  
European Commission

**10:15**

*fi-compass* advisory platform support for financial  
instruments under the EAFRD: overview of new  
products and future work programme

**Mr Kieran Kearney**,  
Advisory Services, European Investment Bank

**10:30**

Ex-ante assessment methodology for financial  
instruments in agriculture under the EAFRD

**Mr Bernd Schuh**, Austrian Institute for Regional Studies  
and Spatial Planning

**10:45**

Coffee and networking

**11:15**

Experience in managing financial instruments  
under shared management and the challenges ahead

**Mr Frank Lee**, European Investment Bank

**11:30**

Making investment opportunities for farmers  
and rural businesses with EAFRD FIs

**Ms Szilvia Bencze**, Ministry of Agriculture, Hungary  
**Ms Cindy Schultz**, Directorate of Rural Affairs, Agriculture  
and Coastal Economy, Languedoc Roussillon Region, France  
**Ms Merle Saaliste**, Ministry of Agriculture, Estonia

**12:30**

Discussion and Q&A

**13:30**

Closing remarks from **Mr Martin Scheele**,  
Agriculture and Rural Development,  
European Commission

**13:45**

Lunch and networking

**14:30**

Close of the conference

Chair and moderator:  
**Mrs Cathy Smith**

