

# **THE GOVERNANCE OF COOPERATION – POLICY IMPLICATIONS FOR RURAL CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE**

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## **Abstract**

The newly acceded Central and Eastern European states find their rural development strategy should fit into the European Union's (EU) framework and policy for rural development. The EU's approach is based on using rural networks for policy implementation, or building networks where they are missing in a participatory manner. This principle has been expounded in the new Rural Development Regulation for the period 2007-2013. Such an approach requires cooperation between individuals, or the coordinated action and collaboration of individuals within a group. Thus governance structures are instituted within these groups. This paper explores the governance of cooperation using case studies conducted in rural CEE. The case studies were undertaken within the IDARI project (Integrated Development of Agriculture and Rural Institutions in Central and Eastern European Countries). An evaluation tool was developed to classify the effect of policy on cooperation between agents. Policy can have a direct or indirect effect on existing networks, both of which should be understood at the policy design stage.