

Transitional LEADER Programme 2021-2022 Summary

Relevant Dates

- Starts 1 April 2021
- Final date for allocation of budget 31 December 2022
- Final date for projects to be completed 31 December 2023
- Final project claims must be paid by 30 June 2024

Four Aims

1. Work closely with communities, and particularly those who have not previously benefited from LEADER funding, to build their capacity in preparation for the next programming period and ensure that weaker communities are not left behind.
2. Promote projects which support communities in a post-COVID-19 environment.
3. Support job creation, entrepreneurship, enterprise development and innovation in a post-COVID-19 and/or post-Brexit environment.
4. Explore and develop projects for funding in thematic areas which are likely to feature strongly in the next EU-funded programme. In this regard, projects which address the climate agenda, digital transformation and projects that utilise the Smart Village¹ approach to local area development should be encouraged.

Six Priorities

1. Supports to rural businesses seeking to reach new markets, expand, innovate and/or diversify in response to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and/or Brexit, with a particular emphasis on providing support to businesses in the food sector.
2. Community based projects that seek to address the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.
3. Supports and capacity building for communities that have not previously received assistance under LEADER or other rural programmes, using the Transitional Programme for the LAGs and Implementing Partners to engage directly with new applicants to develop projects and enhance collaboration within communities.
4. Support for new and innovative projects in the areas of climate change, environmental protection and the green economy.
5. Maximising the potential of broadband and the digital economy in communities, including through skills development and building awareness and usage of available remote working facilities.
6. Projects that develop the concept of the Smart Village initiative or Rural Economic Development Zones (REDZs) which could serve as proof-of-concept for more substantial proposals in the context of the next EU-funded LEADER Programme.

Rules

The current LEADER Operating Rules, EU Regulations and any subsequent circulars apply to the delivery of the Transitional LEADER Programme. The ***rate of aid for businesses has been increased from 50% to 75%***. Mayo LAG has confirmed that private promoters must prove that they need the higher rate of aid, otherwise the 50% rate of aid will apply.

Maximum Grant Amounts that will apply in County Mayo (as at 24/03/2021)

- €150,000 for private businesses
- €50,000 for tourism accommodation projects (€62,500 on the off-shore Islands)
- €200,000 for community projects (reduced from €300,000 under LEADER 2014-2020)
- €75,000 for playgrounds

¹ Smart Villages are rural areas and communities, which build on, and enhance their existing strengths and assets through creative thinking and by embracing innovation to create desirable places for rural people to live and work.