

Future of CAP after 2013 – Results from the survey conducted by Latvian National Rural Network

The target group for the questionnaire, developed by Latvian National Rural Network (NRN) were rural inhabitants. Latvian NRN chose two ways to collect the necessary information – via questionnaire on NRN's internet home page www.laukutikls.lv (264 respondents) and by organising open discussions in different regions of Latvia (48 discussions). In total opinions of 954 rural inhabitants were collected.

Statistical information:

Males - 324	Females - 630
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Age group
Younger than 30 – 71
30 to 60 - 787
Older than 60 - 96

Represented sectors
Agriculture – 549
Forestry – 32
Management of environment – 25
Non-agricultural entrepreneurship – 59
Municipalities – 85
LAGs –LEADER implementers - 38
Rural inhabitants – 165

Why do we need a European common agricultural policy?

There were different opinions on the necessity of CAP, however the main conclusions for the future development of CAP are listed below:

- ✓ Providing of equal conditions, rights and requirements for farmers from all EU member states, including fair and equal competition possibilities for producers of agricultural products from all EU member states, considering differences of EU regions;
- ✓ Sustainability and diversity of agriculture (big-small agricultural enterprises, possibilities of diversifications)
- ✓ Ensuring inhabitants of EU with safe and high quality food for reasonable prices;
- ✓ Development of rural areas as space for working and living, accessibility of services;
- ✓ Stimulation of forestry development;
- ✓ Conservation of environment;

Few interesting opinions:

- ✓ CAP is needed, to be able to see differences between EU regions and to take these differences into an account, trying not to coordinate them by the same guidelines;
- ✓ Ecological and safe production and services;
- ✓ To develop rural areas by integrating different sustainable production sectors while in the same time adapting to climate changes.

- ✓ Aim – to stop ageing and decreasing of population density in rural areas.

What do citizens expect from agriculture?

- ✓ Ensuring of safe and high quality food;
- ✓ Diversification of agricultural sector, development of cooperation;
- ✓ Environmentally friendly production;
- ✓ Development of rural living space

Why reform the CAP?

Almost 98% of respondents hold a view, that reform of CAP is needed.

During the discussion about synergy of CAP with other politics, most of rural inhabitants point out, that synergy of different policies is necessary, especially for those, which are targeted on rural areas. However the synergy does not have to happen on the costs of CAP. This position can be explained by the fact that in Latvia the second pillar of CAP is often in general the only available financing for development of rural areas. Other policies are not interested in investing in territories, with large areas and low population density, compared with e.g. towns. There were several proposals, that other policies should have a fixed minimal percentage of financial amounts that should be invested in development of rural areas. Additionally the intensity of support must be higher in territories, which are further away from development centres/central areas.

What tools do we need for the CAP of tomorrow?

Respondents proposed activities, which should be included in CAP after 2013:

- ✓ Abatement of bureaucracy;
- ✓ Balanced (unified) Direct payments in all EU member states;
- ✓ Different activities for diversifying the agriculture, support for development of processing in the farms (e.g. processing of organic products);
- ✓ Support for education, consultations and information dissemination for farmers and foresters;
- ✓ Support for research and science – in order to develop new products in agricultural sector;
- ✓ Support for producing safe and high quality food;
- ✓ Support for environmentally friendly agriculture and forestry;
- ✓ Support for cooperation of different sectors;
- ✓ Activities for setting up and development of family farms/enterprises ;
- ✓ Support for young families (in order to keep them in rural areas);
- ✓ Basic services to rural economy and population ;
- ✓ CAP should include LEADER activities, in the same time facilitating conditions, comparing to this planning period;
- ✓ Support for production of sustainable energy.