



**NATIONAL RURAL NETWORK
RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME 2007-2013 – GREECE**



**SHORT VERSION
CONTRIBUTION – SYNTHESIS OF OPINIONS
FOR THE EUROPEAN RURAL DEVELOPMENT NETWORK
IN THE CONTEXT OF THE PUBLIC CONSULTATION
ON THE COMMON AGRICULTURAL POLICY (CAP) AFTER 2013**

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1. WHAT SHOULD BE THE OBJECTIVES OF THE FUTURE RURAL DEVELOPMENT POLICY?

► In the light of the future challenges for agriculture and rural areas, what should be the objectives of the rural development policy after 2013?

- **Sustainable development** of rural areas, including the **competitiveness** of the agricultural sector and the rural economy, **the environmental protection** and **the quality of life**,
- Sustainable management of natural resources and **“green” development strategies**,
- **Adjustment** of the European agriculture to the effects of **climate change**,
- **Job creation** through investment in new technologies for renewable energy,
- Development of high-productivity, environmentally-friendly activities based on certified **production systems using new technologies** and advanced organisational schemes for producers,
- Strengthening of the **multisectoral economy of the countryside**,
- **Social dimension** of the measures

- **Complementarity** of actions and interventions (public and private),
- **Provision of public goods through agriculture and rural development actions,**
- Awareness among **European citizens** about the need to **preserve and strengthen the CAP.**

As far as the target groups are concerned, the views diverge:

- some actors, representing the agricultural sector, argue that the actions should be addressed **solely to farmers,**
- other actors believe that rural development concerns **everyone living and working in rural areas,** regardless of their relationship to agriculture.

▶ What place should rural development occupy, within the future CAP and alongside the other EU policies, to make a meaningful contribution to the future EU?

- Rural development should be one of the **main objectives** in the context of the CAP and in relation with other EU policies, since **agriculture and rural areas** are interdependent concepts that will be called upon to **face** the new challenges.
- **Rural development policy** should be in accordance with the 2020 goals set up for European society and the European economy in the framework of the **Europe 2020 Strategy.**
- Concerning the role of rural development in the context of the CAP, views diverge as well:
 - ❖ On the one hand, the collective bodies of agricultural sector believe that a) rural development should **complement rather than replace the CAP,** and that the two pillars of the CAP should be complementary rather than antagonistic, and b) in the future CAP, any **further transfer** of resources from direct support to rural development should be **blocked.**
 - ❖ In opposite, the actors involved in broader rural development believe that rural development should occupy a **central place** as regards the production of quality products, the agri-food sector, the preservation of the rural landscape, the protection of biodiversity, climate change and the maintenance of viable communities in the countryside.
- Set **strict criteria** for the EU definition of rural areas (socio-economic and/or biophysical criteria).

2. HOW CAN THE POLICY INSTRUMENTS BE MADE MORE EFFECTIVE?

► How can support be better targeted to bring about the most efficient allocation of resources, and thus to maximise the added value of the policy in pursuit of the future EU?

- EU policy must continue to be defined through **guidelines**, which each member state will specify and adapt to its own needs, having the ability to choose from **a toolkit of optional measures**.
- The **area-based approach** and the **bottom-up approach** could constitute the basis for all the actions proposed in the framework of a rural development policy.
- The **efficiency and effectiveness** of the rural development actions than the complete financial absorbance.
- A **flexible year-end accounting mechanism**.
- The creation of **more simplified common agricultural policy-making instruments**.

► In the light of experience to date, is the existing toolkit of measures adequate for meeting the policy objectives? What role should be played by Leader in the future?

- It is considered to be adequate and sufficient at least for the objectives concerning the competitiveness of agriculture, the agri-food sector, and the local rural economy as well as the improvement of the quality of life in the countryside.
- A **re-evaluation of the existing rural development measures** is needed.
- Priority should be given to actions that contribute to a direct, annual boosting of **farmers income**.
- Measures **to protect the environment and biodiversity** must be **encouraged**.
- Additional measures providing technical and economic incentives to farmers, in order to **reduce the impact of farming to climate change**

In relation to LEADER

- Contribution to the **shaping of EU policies**, according to the needs and priorities of rural communities.
- **Re-examination** of the **implementation of the methodology** along with the role and function of the Local Action Groups.
- **Programming** in the context of **an area-base, targeted and coherent approach**.

► How can we develop and improve the evaluation methods and the underlying common indicators to best assess policy impact and render results visible without putting too much burden on Member States and beneficiaries?

- The new instruments (Common Monitoring and Evaluation Framework, on-going evaluation) are considered to be **useful** since they increase **the capacity of administrative bodies** in relation to monitoring and evaluation.
- The **evaluation milestones** should be re-examined.
- **Equal importance** should be given to qualitative characteristics of the evaluations and the relevant results.
- **Capitalisation of secondary data** emerged either from evaluations on the European level or regular reports of the member states.

3. HOW CAN THE MANAGEMENT OF THE POLICY BE IMPROVED?

► How can the policy be better managed, including better coordination with other policies, for the purpose of ensuring a coherent approach in rural areas?

- **Single programming procedures.**
- **Regular exchange and mapping of views**, from the strategic planning to the policy evaluation, among all the actors involved, **both within the same policy** and also at **the level of coordination** with other policies.
- **A small, flexible structure** on the member state level (task force), which could highlight failures and necessary re-adjustments for the coordination of rural development policy with other policies.
- Cooperation of **existing Networks** supporting the relevant policies.
- Contribution of the **Agricultural Organisations** to the dissemination of **information** to the rural actors.

► In what ways can both the content and delivery be simplified, so as to facilitate implementation and empower local actors, without compromising the objectives of the policy and sound financial management?

- **Simplification** of the regulatory provisions at all levels of governance.
- **Separation of competencies** and roles at the various levels of management and implementation,
- **Reinforcement** of the system of **local partnership** schemes.