

## **The contribution of Slovakia to the debate on the future of the RD policy**

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### **What should be the objectives of the future rural development policy?**

The questionable is the relationship between rural development policy and common agricultural policy. Do the rural development policy and the agricultural sector have so much in common, that we can include the RD policy as II. pillar of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP)? Rural development policy is too tied to farming and therefore current situation might limit the development potential of rural areas. Future rural development policy should strengthen the integrated development of all rural regions and all sectors involved in this development. Rural development policy after 2013 should focus on maintaining the rural population in typical rural areas, to prevent the aging rural population and the gradual displacement of rural areas, to maintain the traditional use of the land and to improve the international competitiveness of rural areas through diversification of activities in all sectors of the rural economy. The new approach on the basis of subsidiarity should be applied. Particular attention deserves the environmental aspect of rural development and support schemes for rural communities in the effort to transform the rural areas to the recreational and resting place. Country needs a new systemic approach based on the diversified local economy and on the multifunctional integrated approach, and to complete the social and technical infrastructure. Besides the support to those rural activities directly or indirectly linked to agriculture or rural infrastructural facilities, it is necessary to orient assistance towards non-profit and business activities in rural areas that generate jobs and stabilize the rural population. If a decision is that the rural development policy remains as the II. pillar of the CAP, it will be necessary after the 2013 to review the proportion of EU funds for financing II. pillar and raise money allocated at the expense of I. pillar.

### **How can the RD policy instruments be made more effective?**

In search of effective policy instruments for rural development it is necessary to meet new views on the EU regional and rural development. Rural development policy can be viewed in isolation, since the rural areas are always part of a region (SWOT analysis of the region). It is necessary to synchronize the financing of development activities from the structural funds with funding from the EAFRD. RDP measures should be in main position not only a complement to direct payments to landowners.

Removing unnecessary administrative and bureaucratic obstacles simplify the access for small businesses and small municipalities to financing from the Community funds through the clearer and simplified legislation. Possibility to set the measures for each member state depending on the specific needs e.g. the effects of climate change or natural disasters. To establish the blacklist of violators and the principle of two times and fairly this would be linked to information systems across the EU (funding from the EU funds and in violation of the conditions). To develop a common system at EU level that would be common for all Member States to accelerate the payment to the final beneficiary without jeopardizing solvency.

### **How can the management of RD policy be improved?**

Management of rural development policy can be improved by making the rural development policy at EU level and setting up the basic frameworks and priorities, i.e. which way the policy will evolve after 2013. But specific solutions, tools and measures will be set up according to the SWOT analyses by the Member States and local action groups. This will ensure a more targeted and flexible approach to rural development in the Member State. And therefore each Member State would protect the Community interests. It should be clearly defined responsibility for funding. Along with that should be established tools for co-financing.