

**October 2016**

On 5 and 6 September 2016, a major European conference on rural development was held in Cork, Ireland, exactly twenty years after the first Cork conference which established the basis for the EU rural development policy. It brought together some 300 policy-makers, academics, NGOs and other stakeholders who discussed current and future challenges for farming and rural areas and explored possible policy options. The event concluded with the adoption of a new Cork declaration entitled 'A better life in rural areas' which sets out ten policy orientations for an innovative, integrated and inclusive EU rural and agricultural policy.

[EU rural development policy](#)

Briefing by Marie-Laure Augère-Granier, September 2015

The EU's rural development policy for 2014-2020 has evolved over recent decades to become a fully-fledged European policy. It has had to adapt to an enlarged Europe and to cope with important socio-economic and demographic changes affecting rural areas, including new challenges such as climate change, the production of renewable energy, and the need for a more competitive and sustainable agriculture. It forms an integral part of the present Common Agricultural Policy and relies on an EU budget of more than €99.3 billion.

[Common Agricultural Policy – Pillar II](#)

Briefing by Marie-Laure Augère-Granier and Gianluca Sgueo, July 2016.

Rural development, making up the second pillar of the Common Agricultural Policy, is financed under the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD). This fund is aimed at achieving the balanced territorial development of rural economies and at sustaining a farming sector that is environmentally sound as well as competitive and innovative.

[CAP simplification: State of play](#)

Briefing by Francesco Tropea, January 2016

CAP simplification is considered even more of a priority today than in the past. This EPRS briefing examines this issue and the prospects for taking it forward, including for a post 2020 CAP. In this regard, the role of the European Parliament, as co-legislator, is significant and will be of utmost importance for an effective simplification process.

[Farm diversification in the EU](#)

Briefing by Marie-Laure Augère-Granier, April 2016

The EU's rural development policy supports those farmers who wish to set up non-agricultural activities on their farms. These can include tourist accommodation, the production of renewable energies or the sale of handicrafts. Farmers can receive start-up aid to a maximum of €70 000 from the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development, with co-financing from their Member State, or support for investments in the creation of such activities.

[Supporting young farmers in the EU](#)

Briefing by Marie-Laure Augère-Granier, June 2015

The Common Agricultural Policy 2014-2020 offers various forms of support and incentives to facilitate young people's entry into farming. Under the first pillar of the CAP, young farmers receive a 25% supplement to the direct aid allocated to their farm, for a period of five years, as part of the 'Young Farmer Scheme'. Under the second pillar, they have access to support co-financed under the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development: a start-up grant and various economic, environmental, development and innovation measures which Member States can choose to include in their Rural Development Programmes.



[Bridging the rural-urban divide: Rural-urban partnerships in the EU](#)

Briefing by Marie-Laure Augère-Granier, January 2016

In today's EU, rural and urban areas are connected by a range of complex socio-economic linkages and their boundaries are becoming increasingly blurred. In all EU Member States, local and regional authorities have built rural-urban partnerships to better harness the potential of such regions. The EU Common strategic framework 2014-2020 provides for better coordination of Structural Funds and new territorial tools fostering integrated strategies, allowing Member States to invest in mixed areas in a more targeted way.

[Short food supply chains and local food systems in the EU](#)

Briefing by Marie-Laure Augère-Granier, September 2016

In the EU, a growing number of consumers choose to buy food directly from farmers or within food chains involving a minimum of intermediaries. Such systems enable farmers to retain a higher share of the final sales price, while consumers get fresh and seasonal products traceable to a known producer. Short food supply chains and local food systems are an explicit element of the EU rural policy 2014-2020, which provides for various support measures

Further reading - www.europarl.europa.eu/thinktank

[Public expectations and EU policies: Agriculture](#)

Briefing by James McEldowney, Matthew Parry and Alina Dobrevă, July 2016

[Technology options for feeding 10 billion people - Plant breeding and innovative agriculture](#)

Study by Rolf Meyer, Tomas Ratering and Kai Peter Voss-Fels, October 2013

[Technology options for feeding 10 billion people - Synthesis report - Options for sustainable food and agriculture in the EU](#)

Study by Evelyn Underwood; David Baldock; Harry Aiking; Allan Buckwell et al., November 2013

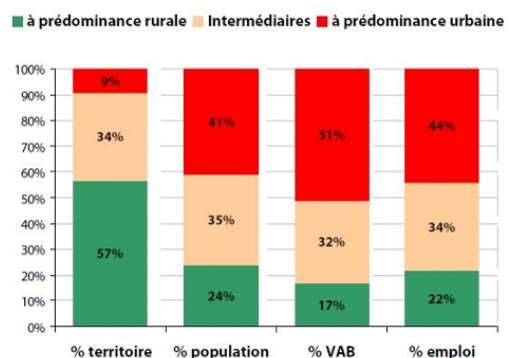
More in the [Graphics Warehouse](#)

Breakdown of EU support for rural development 2014-20, after transfer between Pillar I and Pillar II and reduction of payments



Source: Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013 as amended by Commission delegated regulation (EU) No 2015/791.

Importance des zones rurales EU27 (2009)



Source des données: [Rural Development in the EU 2012](#).

eprs@europarl.europa.eu | www.europarl.europa.eu/thinktank (Internet) | www.eprs.ep.parl.union.eu (Intranet)

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