The Rural Development Programme (RDP) 2014-2022 for Mainland (Portugal) includes the support for investments for the development of efficient irrigation systems. According to the Regulation 2013/1305 (Rural Development Regulation, RDR) ‘it should be possible for the EAFRD\(^1\) to support investments in irrigation to provide economic and environmental benefits, provided that the sustainability of the irrigation concerned is ensured’\(^2\). Article 46 of the RDR sets out the conditions, which must be met if an investment is to be supported by the EAFRD.

The Rural Development Programmes approved by the Commission include the general framework and provide for the necessary EU budgetary resources for the implementation of concrete measures. Based on the shared responsibilities between the EU and the Member States in the use of EU Funds, the national authorities are responsible for the design and implementation of the RDP including the definition of the eligibility conditions, the publication of calls for proposals and the selection of projects (namely their territorial location), including for investments in irrigation, based on the needs and priorities identified in the correspondent Rural Development Programmes.

Finally, on the administrative constraints referred to in the question, the Commission invites the Honourable Member to contact the competent national Managing Authority\(^3\) for additional information and recall that any discrepancies in the implementation of the RDP could always be resolved by bringing an action based on legislation in force at national level.

As for the future period 2023-2027 the possibilities to support investment in irrigation are kept by the new Common Agriculture Policy Strategic Plan Regulation 2021/2115\(^4\).

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\(^1\) European Agricultural Fund for Rural development.


\(^4\) Regulation (EU) 2021/2115 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 2 December 2021 establishing rules on support for strategic plans to be drawn up by Member States under the common agricultural policy (CAP Strategic Plans) and financed by the European Agricultural Guarantee Fund (EAGF) and by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) and repealing Regulations (EU) No 1305/2013 and (EU) No 1307/2013, OJ L 435, 6.12.2021.