

DG AGRICULTURE

Non-exhaustive list of issues and questions to facilitate preparations for bilateral meetings

RURAL DEVELOPMENT POLICY AND STRUCTURAL/ ENVIRONMENTAL MEASURES

I. RURAL DEVELOPMENT POLICY AND ACTIVITIES

Detailed information is required on existing rural development policy as described below.

Information should be provided on :

- the existence of a national rural development strategy. information should cover the preparation and adoption procedure, including an indication of the ministerial departments and regional bodies involved, and of whether the strategy is adopted following consultations with stakeholders (principle of partnership), and the main priorities for the strategy.
- all publicly funded rural development activities, whether these are implemented as part of integrated programmes, or as stand-alone schemes, and should include activities financed both nationally and regionally. The information should cover the legal basis, design, objectives, content, financing, implementation, monitoring, control and evaluation of the programmes or schemes. Any selection criteria used for the definition of areas targeted by specific activities should also be described, and the bodies responsible for the programmes or schemes should be listed.

Rural development activities may include, but are not limited to:

- Increasing the competitiveness of the agricultural sector through support for investment and restructuring, including investments on farms, support for processing and marketing, land improvement, re-parcelling, irrigation and water management, early retirement, vocational training, provision of advisory and extension services, establishment of producer groups, and establishment and operation of quality schemes for agricultural products;
- Enhancing the environment and countryside through support for sustainable land management, including supporting farming in mountain areas or other areas with particular natural handicaps, schemes to protect biodiversity, habitats and landscapes, support for environmentally friendly farming and forestry methods, including organic farming (please provide details of the certification system for organic farming);
- Enhancing the quality of life in rural areas and promoting diversification of economic activities, including the provision of basic services (e.g. roads, electricity, water, sewerage)

for the rural population, the renovation and development of villages, development of new economic activities to diversify the rural economy;

- support for local participative development activities.

The description of each measure/activity should include the following information:

- name of the policy measure;
- legislative basis (name and reference of the relevant legal act);
- objectives, rationale, and general description;
- beneficiaries and eligibility criteria;
- details of support provided (payment levels etc.);
- amount spent per year since 1999, and budget foreseen for future years;
- number of beneficiaries and average support per beneficiary;
- administration of the scheme (body responsible etc.).

II. RURAL DEVELOPMENT STATISTICS

1. Rural areas:

Please indicate whether a classification/definition of rural areas exists, and if so, please describe the basis for the classification, and the results across the country indicating the importance of rural areas for the country.

Please give the following information for each region of the country :

- a) per capita GDP;
- b) population density per km² and trends since 1998 of population development (net migration and natural development): i.e. is the rural population falling?;
- c) economic development of non-agricultural sectors;
- d) unemployment figures (if available at regional level);
- e) land use (agriculture, forestry, nature area...)

- f) % of total workforce employed in agriculture and trends since 1998 (preferably based on the Labour Force Survey);
- g) environmental protected areas (%UAA and % forest area under environmental protection regime
- h) water use in agriculture (%irrigated UAA).

Please indicate the percentage of the total population which lives in rural areas, and the percentages of the total and rural population having:

- piped water;
- mains electricity;
- a connection to a sewage system;
- a fixed telephone network, or coverage by a mobile telephone network;
- accessibility (density of roads and railways (km/square km)
- elementary school education;
- secondary school education;
- advanced level education.

2. National statistics concerning agricultural structures

a) Hill and mountain areas, other areas:

- i) Hill and mountain areas: number of holdings, Utilised Agricultural Area (UAA) and the number of livestock units (LUs*) : indicate altitude and slope criteria used to identify these disadvantaged areas;
- ii) Other areas with significant handicaps:
 - (1) Areas where the yields of grass or cereal are < 80 % of the national average: number of holdings, total UAA and total LUs*;
 - (2) Areas where key economic indicators (e.g. value added, farmers' gross and net earnings, earned income, etc.) are below the national average: number of farmers, total UAA and total LU*s.

- b) Investment: Number and proportion of holdings where the income earned per annual man-work unit is < 1.2 times the average of non-agricultural workers in the area and which provide at least 50% of the holder's total farm income.
- c) Young farmers and early retirement: Age profile of farm holders by five-year bands, including the number under 40 years old.
- d) Producer associations:
- i) % of production by value that is handled by producer associations for each of the main sectors of production. Give details for the fruit and vegetable sector.
 - ii) % of holdings that are members of producer associations in each sector. Give details for the fruit and vegetable sector.
- e) Marketing and processing:
- i) for each of the main sectors give:
 - (1) % of output that is processed and existing processing capacity;
 - (2) forecast increase in the proportion processed and in capacity over the next ten years.
 - ii) for each of the main sectors specify: capacity in need of modernisation.

* For definition of LUs, see Article 131.2.(a) of Council Regulation (EC) N° 1782/03:

‘The number of animals shall be converted to LU by reference to the following conversion table:

Male bovine animals and heifers older than 24 months, suckler cows, dairy cows:	1.0 LU
Male bovine animals and heifers from six months to 24 months:	0.6 LU
Sheep	0.15 LU
Goats	0.15 LU.’