European Commission

Synthesis of Mid-Term Evaluations of Rural Development Programmes 2007-2013

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- Evaluation of themes 1 – 7:
  - Implementation
  - Impacts
  - Complementarity
  - Delivery systems
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  - Conclusions and recommendations in the MTEs
- Overall conclusions and recommendations

Scope of the work: the objectives

- Scope of the work: synthesis of mid-term evaluations (MTEs) of the 88 national and regional Rural Development Programmes and 4 Network Programmes 2007-2013
- Synthesis focuses on outputs, results and impacts achieved
- Synthesis draws conclusions on functioning of Common Monitoring and Evaluation Framework (CMEF) and makes recommendations for improvements

Methodology: the data sources

- MTEs of the 88 national and regional RDPs and 4 Network Programmes 2007-2013
- RDPs as first approved and as after the Health Check/ERP modification
- Annual Progress Reports 2009
- National Strategy Plans for Rural Development
- Financial Implementation Reports 2009
- Triangulation/contextualisation of information with other statistical sources and general information on the socio-economic context of programmes

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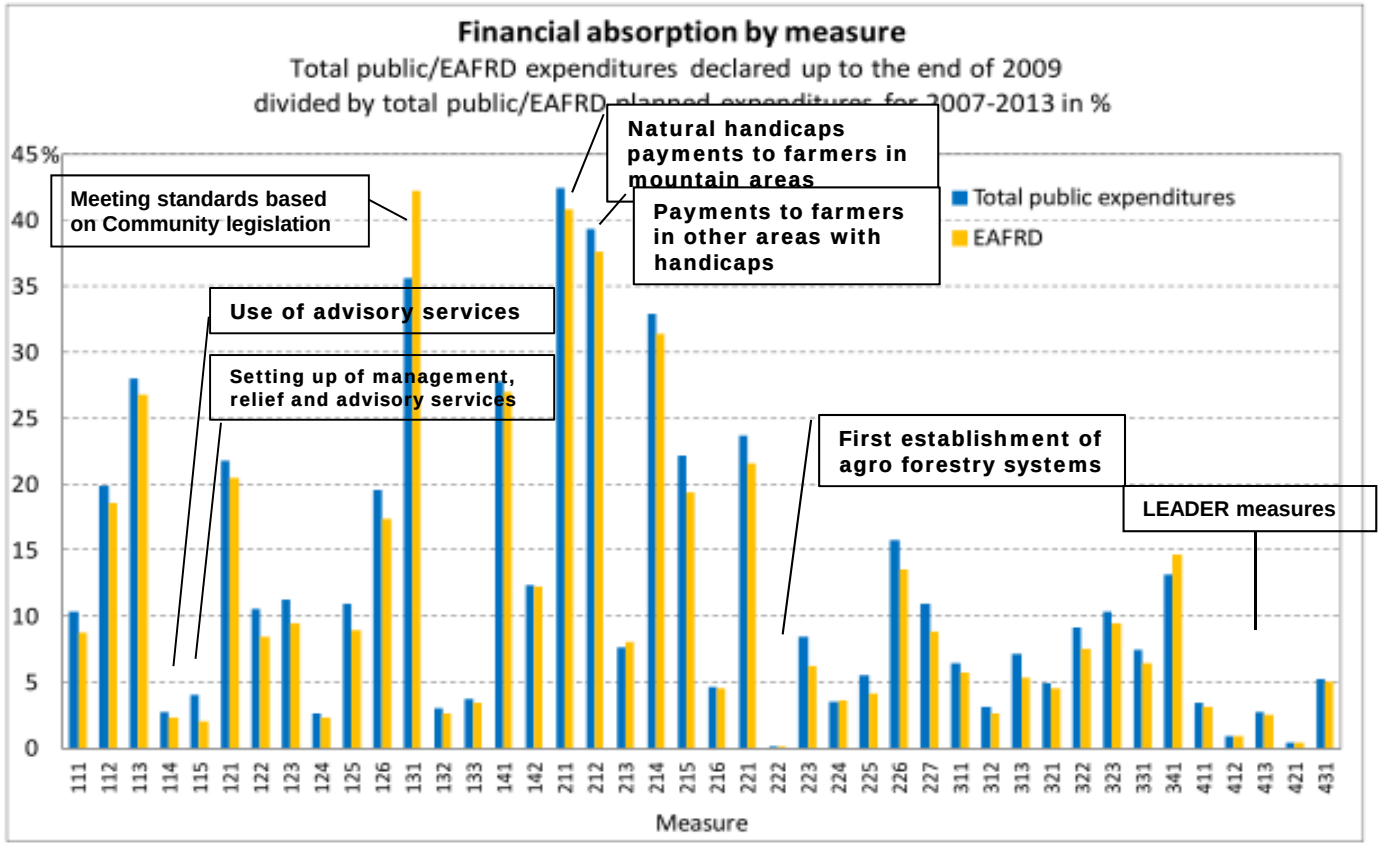
Theme 1: Implementation



Source: RDIS Annual Financial Implementation (2010): European Agricultural Funds for Rural Development EAFRD. Financial Implementation report 2009. 88 programmes included.

Theme 2: Impacts

- Economic impact indicators (growth/value added, employment, labour productivity):
  - 2/3 of MTEs: net positive impact on GVA/job creation
  - mixed outcomes for labour productivity
- Environmental impact indicators (biodiversity, HNV, water quality, climate change):
  - positive impact inferred from results plus expert judgement/prediction, but only for Axis 2 measures
- Social benefits stated in 14 MTEs
- Overall few convincing methods for assessing impacts in the MTEs

Theme 3: Complementarity

- Coordination carried out by subcommittees or advisory boards within ministries of agriculture
- Assessment varies substantially between MTEs: from "significant" to "very low" levels of coordination
- Analysis of general nature, results based on expert knowledge or random social investigations

Theme 4: Delivery systems

- Not obligatory issue for consideration in MTEs, but considered by 74%
- "Delivery burden" mentioned by 72% of MTEs
- Factors explaining delivery problems: changes, overlaps of legal procedures, inadequate staff and organization of Managing Authorities

Theme 5: Monitoring and evaluation

- Overall performance of the system:
  - M&E system assessed as good (58%) but complex
  - Data gaps (e.g. use of set of baseline indicators)
- Findings on output indicators:
  - On average 38% of target values achieved, with differences between axis 1 (30%), 2 (40%) and 3 (20%)
  - LEADER met 20% of targets
- Findings on result indicators:
  - 30% of MTEs report on targets as well as achieved values
  - Average achievements vary between axes: axis 1 (24%), axis 2 (90%) and axis 3 (48%)

Theme 7: Networks

- Broad range of methods used for evaluation
- Impacts of NRNs identified:
  - exchange and distribution of best practices/experience
  - enhancement of capacities of actors/partnerships
  - raising awareness on RDPs
  - improving and supporting networking and cooperation
- No clear common patterns or problems and challenges identified

Theme 6: Conclusions and recomendations in MTEs

- Frequently mentioned issues:
  - delays in implementation
  - budget reallocations: 76% of MTEs recommend revisions
  - inefficiencies in delivery systems
  - functioning of the axis: LEADER most often criticised
  - improve coherence of actions with strategic objectives, e.g. eliminate 3 axis structure of RDPs
  - timing of the MTEs: too early for well founded assessment

Overall conclusions

- Timing of MTEs:
  - Insufficient data to come to reliable assessment on programme impacts and performance
  - Change timing or character of MTEs
- CMEF:
  - Weaknesses in common indicator set – too many indicators and EQs and limited common understanding
  - Reduce complexity of CMEF and provide improved guidance
- Future EAFRD:
  - LEADER principles not well incorporated
  - Reduction in number of measures beneficial

Thank you
for your attention