

Member State/Region **Italy / Marche**

Title: **Rural Development Programme 2007-2013 for
Region Marche (Italy) – CCI N° 2007IT06RPO008**

I. DESCRIPTION OF THE RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

1. TITLE OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

Regione Marche – Programma di sviluppo rurale per il periodo 2007-2013

2. MEMBER STATE AND ADMINISTRATIVE REGION

The plan covers the entire territory of the Region Marche (NUTS 2). The region is not a "convergence" objective.

3. CURRENT SITUATION, CHOSEN STRATEGY AND EX-ANTE EVALUATION

3.1. Situation in terms of strengths and weaknesses

- *General socio-economic context of the geographical area*

Marche has a total surface of 9,693 km² and a population of 1,471,000 inhabitants. Population density is 152 inhabitants/km². The territory is characterized by a mountainous internal area and by hills. Plain areas are rare and mainly localized near the Adriatic coast or along the rivers.

Urban areas (A) coincides with the 4 main towns of the Region. They cover approx. 5% of regional surface and 19% of population (284.000 inhabitants); population density is 567 inhabitants/km².

Rural areas have been identified according to the methodology set up in the national strategy. Rural areas B (areas with intensive and specialized agriculture) can't be individuated. Only rural areas C (intermediate rural areas) and D (areas with development gaps) are therefore present. Overall, they cover 95% of the regional surface and have 81% of the population. On average, the population density is 129 inhabitants/km². In order to better describe the regional characteristics, and to set up a more elaborate territorial strategy, a sub-classification of rural area C has been introduced. Rural area C1 is localized along the coast. This area contributes significantly to the regional VA and is characterized by the presence of industries and by intensive agriculture. It has a surface of 1,537 km² (16%), a population of 621.000 inhabitants and a density of 404 inhabitants/km². Rural area C2 covers the hills between the coast and the internal

mountains and is characterized by the greater importance of agriculture and a lower population density. It has a surface of 3.413 km² (35%), a population of 382.000 inhabitants and a density of 112 inhabitants/km². Rural area C3 covers the hills between the coast and the internal mountains. In this area, which comprises the municipalities whose territory is mountainous, the agriculture is more extensive, the weight of the industrial is lower and the population density is small. It has a surface of 1.221 km² (13%), a population of 72.000 inhabitants and a density of 59 inhabitants/km². Finally, rural area D occupies the internal and mountainous part of the region and has an surface of 3.022 km² (31%), a population of 112.000 inhabitants and a density of 37 inhabitants/km²

Population is slightly increasing, mainly because of the migration from other countries. The population ageing ratio is elevated, and higher than the national one. In rural area D, young people tend to move to the coast or to the main towns, thus determining ageing and depopulation phenomena.

In the last decade, the **economic structure** of the region has faced a de-industrialization process, and an increase of services. Still, the industrial sector, characterized by the importance of the SME, is relevant. In 2004, GDP per capita was 23.800 Euro, in line with the Italian average and slightly above the European one (111%). In relative terms, the economic structure is the following: primary sector = 2,4%, industrial sector = 30,6%, tertiary sector = 67%.

The regional **employment** rate (64%) is higher than the Italian and the UE-25 one. In 2005, the unemployment rate was 4,7%. Like in the rest of the country, there are some disparities concerning age and gender, whose employment levels are significantly lower than the average. The training and education level is not elevated, and lower than the regional average in the internal areas. In 2006, the employment structure was the following: primary sector = 2,5%, industrial sector = 37,7%, tertiary sector = 59,8%.

- *Performance of the agricultural, forestry and food sectors*

According to the last available data, the regional UAA is approx. 512.000 Ha. Arable land is about 80%, while permanent pastures and grasslands covers approx. 7%. 13% of the regional UAA, finally, is represented by permanent crops.

Regional farms are about 55.000. Their average surface is 9,2 Ha and their economic dimension is approx. 30 ESU. In spite of the increase of the average dimension of the holding recorded in the 1990-2000 period, regional structures are still very fragmented. Less than 20% of the regional holdings can be defined as “professional”, while 25% of them are essentially non-market farms, for self consumption purposes. Land productivity is not elevated, and lower than the national average. Labour productivity is, on the contrary, higher both than the national and the EU-25 (27.400 euro GVA/AWU). In 2000-2002, the agricultural sector represented 2.8% of the regional economy in terms of VA (780 Meuro per year, on average). In 2003, the number of employed was 26.900.

On of the most important **agricultural production** of the region is represented by cereals. In 2006, more than 200.000 Ha were devoted to the production of cereals, and in particular of durum wheat (more than 50%), common wheat, barley and maize. According to the data provided in the text, the sector accounts for approx.

16% of the total agricultural output of region. In the last three years, the surface has diminished constantly (-12% from 2004). This decrease, probably a consequence of the implementation of the CAP reform, has affected mainly durum wheat and to a minor extent, common wheat. Oilseed crops are significant. The arable surface devoted to these crops was, in 2004, approx. 30.000 Ha and accounted for 6% of the agricultural output. The incidence of no-food crops (i.e. sunflower for bioenergy) is increasing steadily. Another important sector of the regional agriculture is represented by sugar. 30.000 Ha are devoted to sugar beet, which accounts for 6% of the regional agricultural output. The reform of the CMO will have relevant consequences on the sector. From 2000, two of the regional plant have been closed or converted, the number of farms has halved, and the surface has diminished significantly.

Another important sector of the regional agriculture is fruit and vegetable production. According to the last available data, fruit and vegetable crops occupy approx. 13.000 Ha and accounts for nearly 14% of the regional agricultural output. In this sector, the fragmentation of the holdings is particularly evident (low level of specialization, average F&V surface of 0.8 Ha). Less than 30% of the production is managed by the PO, which means that the retailers and discount chains have a leading role in the determination of market prices and conditions. Large part of the production is represented by vegetable, fresh, frozen or processed. The most common fruits are peaches, apricots and plums.

Nearly 30% of the regional holdings are rear farms. According to the last available data, livestock production accounts for approx. 29% of the regional agricultural output. Cattle breeding are present in more than 5.000 farms and account for 5% of the regional agricultural output. The presence of a traditional, productive and certified breed (razza marchigiana) is a positive feature for this sector. In these years, the demand of beef has increased and the prices have been stable. Milk production is not very significant. The few regional dairies (less than 200) are facing a general crisis, with the exception of some bigger holdings localized in more fertile areas. Other important productions are represented by poultry, sheeps and goats.

The production of wine is important, in the agri-food regional context, especially in terms of added value (12% of the regional total, while the incidence on the agricultural output is approx. 3%). Vineyards occupy nearly 20.000 Ha of the regional UAA and are present in more than 50% of the holdings. Only few of them, however, are specialized and competitive (less than 20%). In spite of this fragmentation of the production, more than 70% output is represented by quality wine, which is frequently exported (more than 30 Meuro in 2004). Olive production is less important. The regional surface doesn't reach 8.000 Ha and the bigger, specialized producers are extremely rare. Large part of the production is represented by extra-virgin olive oil, which is consumed locally. The production of table olive is much smaller, and characterized by an extremely small production, and by high quality and price.

According to the last available data, approx. 200.000 Ha of the regional territory is covered forests and woods. About 63% of the regional forests are owned by public local bodies, and 28% by private. The average size of the private forestry holding is small (2 Ha). Less than 6% of the regional forests are completely available for wood supply. In spite of these problems, the production of wood is stable. The

demand of fire wood is increasing, as well as the demand of the forest by-products (i.e. truffles, chestnuts). The main problem of the sector is the fragmentation, the ageing of the entrepreneurs, the bad working conditions (comprising security) and the small incomes.

As mentioned before, the incidence of quality wines is significant. The other quality schemes (PDO, PGS, etc.) are fewer and less common than in the rest of the country. Only 5 PDO and 3 PGS are in fact present, and some of them have an inter-regional character. A regional quality certification system has been recently introduced. The production of bioenergy is still limited, but it's increasing. The result of a recent survey shows that there are some possibilities of development of biomass production (both from forests and from SRC) and of biodiesel/bioenergy production (from oilseed crops).

The **food sector** is characterised by the presence of small productive units (smaller than the national average). The incidence of the sector on the regional GVA is 2,2% and accounts for 726 Meuro in absolute terms. The number of employed is approx. 14.900 units (again, 2,2% of the regional total). Labour productivity is slightly lower than the national average and the investments in the sector are not particularly elevated. As a consequence, the regional enterprises have some problems in comply with all the market requirements (in terms of safety and quality standards, innovation, etc.), especially in the international context. The most important food sectors (present on the national/international markets) are: wine, vegetables (mainly frozen or processed), sugar and seed production (cereals and forage crops).

The situation in terms of **human capital** shows some problems and weaknesses. The percentage of young farmers is the lowest of Italy (7%), and the ageing process is increasing. The data concerning training and education show that the regional farmers have a low level of education (75% with a basic education) and of training. In particular, 92% of the regional farmer based their knowledge only on practical agricultural experience.

On the basis of the analysis, the region has found the following **intervention needs**, related to priority axis 1 (additional needs – per sector – are listed in the text):

- To develop and restructure the physical potential of the farm localised in the areas with territorial disadvantages (D, C3 and C2)
- To diversify the agricultural production of the farms localised in the central part of the region (hills – area C2)
- To support the specialisation and to improve the logistics and the services for the farms localised in the more productive areas (area C1)
- To support the qualification of the farms localised in peri-urban areas

- *Environment and land management*

Land cover is the following: 65.6% agricultural, 21% forestry, 9.5% natural and 3.9% artificial.

Approximately 64% of the regional territory (53.8% in terms of UAA) is localized in less favored areas (LFA – both mountain and with other natural handicaps). In these areas, the **risk of abandonment** is particularly elevated, and it is related to

the higher costs of production, to the fragmentation property, to the lack/scarcity of infrastructures and services, to the more severe working conditions and to the scarce presence of young farmers.

The **biodiversity** of Marche is elevated. In the regional territory, there are 2 national parks, 4 regional parks and 5 other protected areas, for a total surface of nearly 90.000 Ha (approx. 9.2% of the regional territory). Natura 2000 areas cover 14% (approx. 137.000 Ha) of the territory. SCI are 80 and SPZ 19. In these areas there are more than 500 different plant and animal species and 51 different habitats. In these areas, 28% of the surface is agricultural, 23% is represented by permanent pastures and other natural areas and 45% is represented by woods. In november 2006, the Region has defined the conservation measures for the Natura 2000 sites, defining some obligations for the farmers. At the moment, no managing plans have been implemented. The incidence of land with a high natural value is significant (more than 60% of the total UAA).

On the basis of the monitoring carried put by the regional authorities, it can be said that the quality of the **water** is good in mountains and more internal hills, is sufficient in the central part of the region, and present some problem in the last part and the mouths of the rivers. 12% of the regional territory is classified as nitrate vulnerable zone (NVZ). An action plan has been adopted and now is in the process of updating, in order to take into account the development of the national legislation. Less than 5% of the regional UAA is irrigated, and the surplus of nutrients is in line with national average for phosphorus, and significantly lowers for nitrogen.

The **emissions** of greenhouse gasses linked to agricultural activities are limited in case of CO₂ and more significant in case of N₂O and CH₄. The contribution of agriculture to the emissions of the three gasses is, respectively, 1,9%, 93,3% and 19,2%. Breeding activities are the first responsible of the emissions of the latter two gasses. The regional plan for energy and environment has individuated the objectives for the production of bioenergy from the agricultural sector. According to this programme, the savings could arrive at 0,16 Mtep/year. Afforestation rotation and other agricultural techniques could contribute to the "carbon sink" effect of the soil. Today, the production of **bioenergy** (mainly for heating) is 3.510 TJ and energy crops cover 2.400 Ha.

The main problems concerning **soil** are represented by erosion, loss of organic matter, contamination, compaction and landslides/floods. 30% of the regional territory is affected by erosion, and 25% of it in at significant levels. The phenomenon is strictly linked with agricultural activities (arable land) and concentrated in the hills that occupy the central part of the region. The loss of organic matter is strictly linked with erosion: in the hilly part of the region, the phenomenon is more intense. Another negative effect caused by agriculture in soil contamination: in case of Marche, the problem is present but at smaller levels than in the rest of the country (in 2001 7.6 kg/Ha of chemicals were used vs. 11.2 kg/ha at national level). Compaction is recorder in hills and along the coast, and landslides and floods (not only related to agriculture) are a major problem, which affect more than 17% of the regional territory.

25% of the regional **forests** are in Natura 2000/protected areas. They are represented mainly by broadleaves (more than 92%) and are concentrated in the

more internal part of the region. As in other Italian regions, forests are increasing, at a rate of more than 2.000 Ha per year. More than 60% of them have a protective role/high natural value, in terms of protection of water/soil. Forest fires are not a major problem.

On the basis of the analysis, the region has found the following **intervention needs**, related to priority axis 2:

- To maintain agricultural and forestry activities, reducing the gap of income and controlling the naturalisation of agricultural land
 - To protect the landscape and the HNV farmland, habitats, rare species and breeds and the Natura 2000 sites
 - To improve water quality and to rationalise irrigation and to promote sustainable agriculture, especially in NVZ
 - To reduce GHG emissions and to promote renewable energy production
 - To protect soil and to promote sustainable agriculture
 - To promote the sustainable use of forests and to prevent forest fires, landslides and other damages affecting forests
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- *Rural economy and quality of life*

The situation in terms of **rural economy** is the following. As mentioned before, the rural areas D and C3 are more isolated and have significant physical and structural disadvantages. Depopulation and ageing are the main problems, and the risk of marginalisation is concrete. In these areas, the rate of economic activity and the availability of services are lower and, between 1990 and 2000, more than 27% of the enterprises have been lost. The rural area C2 presents some natural handicaps, but has fewer problems in terms of depopulation and economic marginalisation. Rural area C1, localised along the coast, is characterised by a high level of industrialisation and by an increase in population. In Marche, the incidence of the **micro-business** is extremely elevated: more than 53% of the regional enterprises are "micro". Craft activities play an important role (more than 51.000 units, with a positive trend). 70% of the craft activities are localised in rural areas C1 and C2, but in the weaker areas, they represent more than 40% of the total economic units. **Tourism** is increasing and represents 4% of the regional GDP. 60% of the tourists are attracted by the coast and the main towns. There is however an increasing "environmental" (national parks, protected areas, etc.) and "natural tourism that is increasing and that involves mainly the rural areas D and C3. As a consequence, the tourist supply from agritourisms, B&B and country houses has increased by 30% in the last five years. The **cultural heritage** of the region is significant. Most of the regional municipalities have less than 5.000 inhabitants. More than 9.000 sites are listed and protected. In the region there are nearly 350 museums, most of them localised in small villages. In many cases, these museums have difficulties in terms of personnel, budget and are closed. The highest percentage of closed museums is localised in the small, rural towns and villages.

The development of **services** at regional level is satisfactory, as the region is the sixth of Italy, according to various indicators. In rural areas, however, the density and the quality of services is lower. In rural area D, in particular, the development of services is sensibly lower than the regional average. As an example, the number of buses and chemists for inhabitant is 6 times lower than the regional average and the number of banks is 10. Schools and other educational/training facilities are also

less spread. The development of **infrastructures** of the Region is not particularly elevated. In rural areas, the infrastructures are less developed. Broadband infrastructures are much less common in rural areas, and in particular in rural area D, where less than 30% of the villages have ADSL connections (the regional average is 50%).

On the basis of the analysis, the region has found the following **intervention needs**, related to priority axis 3:

- To improve the services for the rural economy
 - To support human capital
 - To keep the population on the territory, improving the level of services and supporting the creation of new economic activities
 - To keep and improve the cultural heritage of the rural areas
 - To protect and improve the natural recourses of the rural areas
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- *Leader*

The Leader+ initiative has involved 158 communes. The supported LAG were five, the area covered was 7.000 Km² (69% of the regional surface), with a population of 422.000 inhabitants (29% of the regional population).

3.2. Strategy chosen

The strategy of the Rural Development Programme for Marche individuates, within the framework set up at the Community and national level, three general objectives: a) improving the competitiveness of agriculture and forestry, b) improving the environment and the countryside, c) improving the quality of life in rural areas and promoting the diversification of rural economy.

The priorities of **axis 1** (improving the competitiveness of agriculture and forestry) are the followings: 1) to promote modernisation and innovation of the holdings and the industries, 2) to improve the quality of agricultural and forestry production, 3) to develop the physical and telematic infrastructures, 4) to enhance the entrepreneurial capacities of the agricultural and forestry workers and to promote generational renewal. The measure for the modernisation of the agricultural holdings is the most important, as it represents 52% of the budget of the axis and 22% of the programme's one. The measure for the increase of the added value of agricultural and forestry products is also relevant, as well as the support for the setting up of young farmers (15% and 10% of axis 1, respectively).

The priorities of **axis 2** (improving the environment and the countryside) are: 1) the conservation of the biodiversity and the protection of agricultural and forestry areas with a high environmental value, 2) the protection of water resources, 3) the reduction of greenhouse gasses, 4) the safeguard of landscape, soil and countryside. The agro-environmental measure is the most significant. Its financial incidence is the 47% of axis 2 and 18% of the total programme's budget. The payments for farmers localised in mountain areas and other areas with handicaps are also important (10% and 4% of axis 2, respectively), as well as the measure for the first afforestation of agricultural land, which represents 13% of the axis budget.

The objectives of **axis 3** (quality of life in rural areas and diversification of the rural economy) are: 1) to maintain and create employment and income in rural areas, 2) to enhance the conditions of rural areas, for the population and the enterprises. The most important measure of axis 3 is the measure for the diversification into non-agricultural activities, which covers more than 74% of the resources of the axis. The measure for the setting up of basic services is also significant, as it represents 15% of the axis budget.

The objectives of **axis 4** (Leader) are: 1) to reinforce the participation of local communities in the definition of the rural development policies, 2) to valorise the endogenous resources of the rural areas. The LAGs will implement the measures of axis 3 and a specific measure (measure 410) for territorial marketing and certification. Inter-territorial and trans-national cooperation will be also financed.

In terms of axis, situation in terms of spending rates is the following: axis 1 is the most important, as it has a financial weight of 44%. Axis 2 represents The 40,4% of the total programme's budget and axis 3 (comprising Leader measures) is 15,6%. As mentioned before, the Leader axis will contribute to the achievement of the axis 3 objectives. Its financial weight is 6%.

In relation to the territorial priorities, axis 1 and will be possible in all the territories, with some limitations and priorities related to the territorial needs in case of axis 1 and the environmental objectives in case of axis 2. Axis 3 and Leader will be implemented only in rural areas, with some priorities for the weaker areas and some limitation for the rural area C1 (more developed).

In the urban areas (area A) and in the more productive and industrialised rural areas (rural area C1), the interventions that will have a priority will be: the re-orientation of the agricultural production towards agro-energy crops and the promotion of direct marketing and the improvement of the irrigation infrastructures.

In rural area C2 (lower population density), the interventions that will have a priority will be: the improvement of the irrigation and forestry infrastructures, the support to local/organic agri-food chains, the re-orientation of the agricultural production towards agro-energy crops and the promotion of direct marketing, the support to organic agriculture, the support to agritourism, rural tourism and other activities for the diversification of rural economy, the promotion of the territory and its products and the diffusion of information and communication technology.

In the weaker rural areas (rural area D and C3), the interventions that will have a priority will be: the improvement of forestry infrastructures, the support to mountain/extensive livestock production and to joint management of forests and pastures, the support to local/organic agri-food and bio-energy chains, the support to organic agriculture, the support to agritourism, rural tourism and other activities for the diversification of rural economy, the promotion of the territory and its products, the diffusion of information and communication technology and the implementation of basic services for the rural population.

As far as the agricultural sectors are concerned, a strategy of intervention based on the territorial and structural disadvantages has being set up. For each agricultural sector, the support for investments will be granted according to priorities and limits, described in the programme.

In the nitrate vulnerable zones, the support to organic and integrated agriculture, the creation of buffer areas and the afforestation of agricultural areas (in particular near the rivers) and other interventions for the improvement of water quality will have a specific priority. In the areas at risk of erosion, the action for the extensification of vegetable crops and the first afforestation of agricultural land will have a priority. In the nature 2000 areas, finally, the support to organic agriculture and livestock production, the drawing-up of the management plans and the support to the implementation of the conservation measures, as well as the realisation of non-productive investments for the improvement of the environment, will have a specific priority.

The regional authorities intend to promote the adoption of integrated projects, in order to improve the efficacy of the operations. The proposed types of integrated projects are the followings:

- Individual integrated projects: through the presentation of a business plan the young farmer or the farmer could have the access to various rural development measures, and in particular measure 112 (in case of young farmers), and measure 121 and 311.
- Integrated projects for the development of the agri-food industry chain: projects which involve farmers and food industries, who present a project for the development of the agri-food chain. Through the project, the producers and the processing industries could have the access to various rural development measures (i.e. measure 121 and measure 123)
- Integrated territorial projects for the implementation of agri-environmental operations: projects which involve farmers and local bodies, who present a project for the implementation of sustainable agriculture/ agro-environmental operations in a determined territory. In this case the possible measures are measure 214, 216 or 222.
- Integrated territorial projects for the development of rural areas: projects which involve local bodies, associations, etc. and are proposed by the Province. The aims of these integrated projects are the development of rural economy and/or the enhancement of quality of life in rural areas. The possible measures are measure 313, 321 and 323.

The expected results of the programme are the followings:

Axis/Objective	Indicator	Target
Improving the competitiveness of the agricultural and forestry sector	Number of participants that successfully ended a training activity related to agriculture/forestry	625
	Increase in gross value added in supported holdings/enterprises	9,6%
	Number of holdings/enterprises introducing new products and/or new techniques	1.469

	Value of agricultural production under recognized quality label/standards	1.925 (number of holdings)
Improving the environment and the countryside	<i>Area under successful land management contributing to:</i>	
	a) Biodiversity and high nature value farming/forestry	39.807 Ha
	b) water quality	42.773 Ha
	c) climate change	3.110 Ha
	d) soil quality	55.461 Ha
	e) avoidance of marginalisation and land abandonment	56.791 Ha
Improving the quality of life in rural areas and encouraging diversification of economic activity	Increase in non-agricultural gross value added in supported businesses	0,57 Meuro
	Gross number of jobs created	398
	Additional number of tourist visits	31.989 visit. 162.148 overnight stays
	Population in rural areas benefiting from improved services	187.470
	Increase in internet penetration in rural areas	584.739
	Number of participants that successfully ended a training activity	90

The expected impacts of the programme are the followings:

Impact indicator	Target
Economic growth	+10 Meuro
Employment creation	+7.500
Labour productivity	+484 GVA/FTE
Reversing biodiversity decline	96.6% (100% in 2001). The RDP will contribute in reducing the loss of biodiversity (level without RDP = 89.8; additional effect of RDP = + 6.8%))
Maintenance of high nature value farming and forestry areas	Positive effect on the biodiversity of the 33% of the HNV agricultural areas (9% of the HNV areas according to the national classification) and 9% of the HNV forestry areas
Improvement in water quality	- 5.13 kg/Ha of N and – 4,17 kg/Ha of P

Contribution to combating climate change	+ 8,341133 Ktoe of renewable energy per year
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3.3. Ex-ante evaluation

The ex ante evaluation has been elaborated by the ATI Iris-RESCO. The programming document has been analysed in relation to the following aspects: problems and threats of the area covered by the programme, goals to be achieved, coherence with the NSP, proposed measures, lessons drawn from the previous programming period, results expected and quantified targets, Community value-added, procedures for implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

According to the evaluator, the analysis of the situation individuates correctly the needs of intervention. The goals and the objectives are coherent with the needs of intervention and with the priorities set up by the NSP. The budget of the measures seems to be coherent with the objectives and the needs of intervention, and the lessons arising from the previous programming periods have been taken into account. The results and the expected impacts have been correctly calculated and the added value of the Community involvement is considered positive. Finally, the implementation of the monitoring and evaluation system, as well as the communication plan, seems to be correct.

The SEA is enclosed to the ex ante evaluation. The main conclusions of the SEA are that the programme takes into account the environmental aspects related to the rural development policies and will have a positive impact. The consultation of the authorities with environmental responsibilities has been carried out and was concluded on the 15 of November 2006.

3.4. Impact from the previous programming period

RDP 2000-2006 had a budget of 455 Meuro I terms of public expenditure, while the EAGGF contribution was approx. 185 Meuro. The public expenditure at the end of the financial year 2006 reached 427 Meuro (173 Meuro in terms of EAGGF), for an expenditure rate of approx. 94%. Axis 1 accounted for 57% of the expenses, while axis 2 and axis 3 reached 32% and 11%, respectively.

The main conclusions of the MTE update (2005) are the following:

- The programme has improved the competitiveness of the agricultural sector, favouring in particular the employment and the generational renewal.
- The impact on the environment was positive, but didn't reach the expected target, because of the territorial fragmentation and a limited reduction of inputs.
- The programme promoted the diversification of the agricultural holdings, by the support to agritourism.

Leader+ finances 5 LAGs. The budget is about 17 Meuro in terms of public resources (8,4 Meuro EAGGF-Guidance). According to the MTE update, the programme is having some positive, in respect of the needs of the territory and the objectives set up in programming document. The implementation procedures and the expenditure rate are satisfactory;

4. AXES AND MEASURES

AXIS 1

Measure 111 (vocational training and information actions)

The measure will contribute to the objectives of improving the competitiveness of agriculture and forestry and of improving the environment and the countryside, through the improvement of human capital and the enhancement of the knowledge and the entrepreneurial capacities of farmers and forestry holders.

Actions: a) training activities, realised by private bodies selected through a call for proposal, concerning the management of the holding, quality, innovation and new technologies, the diversification of agricultural income and the protection of environment, b) information actions realised by the Region and related to the general objectives of the measure, c) information actions realised by private bodies selected through a call for proposal and related to sustainable agriculture and forestry, a better management of the holding, quality, innovation and diversification of agricultural income.

Beneficiaries: farmers and forest holders for action a), farmers, farm workers, farm/forest workers and other subjects providing advisory and technical assistance to the agricultural and forestry sector for action b).

Aid intensity 100% for training activities in case of young farmers or in case of territorial and integrated strategies, 80% in other cases (up to a maximum of 1.500 Euro per year/beneficiary and 6.000 Euro for programming period/beneficiary). 100% for information activities realised by Region Marche and for information activities concerning sustainable agriculture and forestry, 70% in the other cases.

Demarcation with ESF: the training for farmers and farm workers will be financed by EAFRD. ESF will not finance training activities for the persons engaged in the agricultural and forestry sector (with the exemption of food sector), and information activities concerning the agricultural, food and forestry sector.

Indicators: 833 participants to training and 16.250 training days, 20 information actions.

Measure 112 (Setting up of young farmers)

The measure will contribute to the objective of improving the competitiveness of agriculture and forestry, promoting the generational renewal

Amount of support: interest rate subsidy up to a maximum of 15.000 Euro, combined with a single premium up to a maximum of 40.000 Euro.

Beneficiaries: farmers younger than 40, who set up for the first time as head of the holding, possess adequate skills/competence, submit a business plan for the development of the farming activity and commit themselves to be the head of the holding for at least 5 years. It will be possible to realise investments to comply with existing Community standards, within a grace period of 36 months (this possibility

will be specified in the business plan). There will be the possibility to combine different measures through the business plan, and in particular measure 111, 114, 121 and 311. A grace period of 36 months to reach the conditions related to professional skills and competence will be allowed

Transition arrangements: 0,6 Meuro (0,3 Meuro EAFRD)

Output indicators are: 515 setting-ups, and 18,8 Meuro of total investments.

Measure 114 (Use of farm and forestry advisory services)

The measure will contribute to the three general objectives of the programme, and in particular to the improvement of the competitiveness of the agricultural and forestry holdings, to the enhancement of land management and to the support for the diversification of the agricultural incomes.

Actions: support for the use of advisory services with regard to a) statutory management requirements and good agricultural and environmental conditions provided for in Regulation 1782/03 (cross-compliance), b) requirements for the sustainable management of forests (mandatory standards and MCPFE standards), c) community standards related to occupational safety, d) improvement of the economical and technical performance of the holding (facultative).

Beneficiaries: farmers and forest holders

Amount and rate of support: 80% for a maximum amount of 1.500 Euro per advisory

Output indicators 1.855 beneficiaries (1.766 farmers and 89 forestry holders)

Advisory bodies will be selected by Region Marche (list updated every two years). They will have to provide for an adequate administrative and technical organisation and competence. The bodies (and the personnel) which are involved in the management and control of agricultural and forestry subsidies, are employed by the farm or are involved in the production and marketing of machinery and/or agro-chemicals will be considered inadmissible.

Measure 121 (Modernisation of agricultural holdings)

The measure will contribute to the objective of improving the competitiveness of agriculture and forestry, through the modernisation and the restructuring of the agricultural holdings. The investments will improve the economic efficiency through a better use of the production factors and the saving of energy. They will promote innovation and quality, as well as on farm processing and marketing and the integration of the food chain, and they will enhance the environmental performance (promoting the saving of water and the utilisation of renewable energy), the occupational safety and the hygiene and animal welfare status of the farms.

Actions: a) construction or improvement of immovable property aimed to the improvement of working conditions and occupational safety, to the reduction of

costs and to the improvement of quality, b) purchase of new machinery and equipment (including computer software) aimed to the improvement of working conditions and occupational safety, to the reduction of costs and to the improvement of quality, c) investments aimed to the improvement of animal hygiene and welfare, d) reconversion/plantation of permanent crops, for market adjustment and/or reduction of costs, e) investments for the on-farm processing and marketing, f) investments for the improvement of the environmental performance of the farms (including energy saving), g) on-farm land improvement, h) realisation and restructuring of on-farm irrigation networks, purchase of irrigation equipment and realisation of on-farm reservoirs, i) investment for quality certification, l) plantation of short rotation forestry, for biomass production, m) investments finalised to the introduction of new technologies/processes or to the respect of newly introduced Community standards, n) general costs such as consultation fees, feasibility studies and acquisition of patent rights and licences (up to a maximum of 12% of the related tangible investments).

Specific priorities and limits, for each agricultural sector, are defined in the programme. In case of on farm processing and marketing, at least 2/3 of the raw material will be produced in the holding and the output will be an annex I product. In case renewable energy production, power plant will be proportionate to the farm dimension and aimed to the reduction of the costs of production. In case of irrigation, the investments will have to respect the provisions of the Water Framework Directive. The newly introduced Community standards are the following: Directive 91/676/CEE and Directive 96/61/CE. In this case, it will be possible to finance investments to comply with these standards, within a grace period of 36 months from the entry into force of the standard. In case of young farmers, support will be granted for investments to comply with existing Community standards, within 36 months from the date of setting up.

Beneficiaries: agricultural holdings

Aid intensity: 1) in case of machinery (tractors): 35% for young farmers, 30% for other farmers; 2) in case of renovation/realisation of immovable property (categories considered as a "priority" – the priorities for each sector are individuated in the measure fiche): 60% for young farmers in areas with handicaps, 50% for young farmers in other zones or in areas with handicaps, 40% for other farmers/areas; 3) in case of renovation/realisation of immovable property and purchase of specialised machinery/equipment (categories not considered as a "priority"): 50% for young farmers in areas with handicaps, 40% for young farmers in other zones or in areas with handicaps, 30% for other farmers/areas

Transition arrangements: 29,7 Meuro (EAFRD 13,1 Meuro)

Coherence with first pillar: see chapter 7

Output indicators: 2.187 farm holdings supported and 213,3 Meuro of total investments

Measure 122 (Improvement of the economic value of forests)

The measure will contribute to the objective of improving the competitiveness of agriculture and forestry, through the improvement of the economic performance of the forests. The promotion of the sustainable management and the multifunctional role of the forests will be other important objectives of the measure.

Actions: a) pruning and other investments related to the improvement/recover of chestnut woods, b) thinning and other investments related to the improvement/recover of other woods, c) reconversion and improvement of woods (i.e. from conifers to broadleaves), d) recover and improvement of existing forest roads, up to 25% of the total investments, e) purchase of harvesting machinery and equipment, d) general costs linked to the tangible investments such as consultation fees, studies, etc. up to a maximum of 10% of the total investment. If the investments will help the holding to be eligible for forest certification or are related to the drawing up of the forest management plan, the general costs will go up to a maximum of 25%. In any case, the administrative costs related to forest certification will not be supported. The investments above 80 Ha will be based on a forest management plan.

Beneficiaries: forestry holdings and consortium, mountain organisations, other forest holders, who possess or manage a forest. The investments will be granted for forests owned by private owners and their associations or by municipalities and their associations

Aid intensity: 50% (+10% in mountain areas, in areas with handicaps other than mountain areas and in Natura 2000 and WFD areas). In case of harvesting machinery and equipment, 30% (+10% in mountain areas, in areas with handicaps other than mountain areas and in Natura 2000 and WFD areas)

Transition arrangements: 1,6 Meuro (EAFRD 0,7 Meuro)

Output indicators: 53 forest holdings supported and 5,7 Meuro of total investments

Measure 123 (Adding value to agricultural and forestry products)

The measure will contribute to the objective of improving the competitiveness of agriculture and forestry, through the increase of the added value of the agricultural and forestry products.

Actions: for agricultural products a) construction and improvement of immovable property, b) purchase of new equipment and machinery (including computer software), c) general costs such as consultation fees and feasibility studies up to a maximum of 10% of the related tangible investments. For forestry products a) construction and improvement of structures for the collecting, storage and the first processing of wood (prior to industrial processing), b) purchase of new equipment and machinery for the cutting, collecting and the first processing of wood, c) general costs such as consultation fees and feasibility studies, up to a maximum of 10% of the related tangible investments.

The eligible agricultural sectors will be: wine, olive oil and table olives, fruit and vegetable, floriculture, cereals, beef, pig meat, sheep and goat meat, eggs and poultry, milk and milk products, oilseeds, protein crops, seeds, other animal

products (honey, rabbits, horses, etc.), medicinal plants and small fruits. The investments will concern quality products, certified products or the integrated projects for the development of the agri-food chain and will have to respect the community standards applicable to the investment concerned. Specific priorities and limits, for each agricultural sector, are defined in the programme. In case renewable energy production, power plant will be proportionate to the holding dimension and aimed to the reduction of the costs of production.

Beneficiaries: micro, small and medium-sized enterprises, and other enterprises with less than 750 employees and with a turnover of less than 200 Meuro, for agricultural products. Microenterprises, for forestry products.

Aid intensity: 40% in case of integrated projects for the development of the agri-food chain, 30% in case of projects submitted by micro, small and medium-sized enterprises. In case of other projects submitted by enterprises with less than 750 employees and with a turnover of less than 200 Meuro, the intensity will be halved.

Transition arrangements: 14,91 Meuro (EAFRD 6,89 Meuro)

Coherence with first pillar: see chapter 7

Output indicators: 190 holdings supported and 106,8 Meuro of total investments.

Measure 124 (Cooperation for development of new products, processes and technologies in the agriculture and food sector and in the forestry sector)

The measure will contribute to the objective of improving the competitiveness of agriculture and forestry, promoting the cooperation between farmers, food and raw material processing industries, research bodies and other partners, in developing new products, processes and technologies.

Actions: a) tangible and intangible investments for the development of a new product, technology or process before the commercial use, b) tests for the comparison and verification of the results of the research in the regional conditions. The eligible expenses shall be: cost of the personnel directly involved in the cooperation, realisation, purchase and lease-purchase of new machinery and equipment, acquisition of patent rights, costs for tests and experiments, other costs (up to 30% of the total investment) such as feasibility studies, costs for information/diffusion of the results, general costs linked to the cooperation activity.

Sectors covered: wine, olive oil and table olives, fruit and vegetable, floriculture, cereals, livestock production, agro-energy, forestry.

Beneficiaries: agricultural and forestry holdings, processing and marketing enterprises, public/private research institutes.

Aid intensity: 100% from 50.000 Euro to 500.000 Euro of eligible expenses. In case of agro-energy and forestry, the support will be granted in respect of the *de minimis* Regulation.

Transition arrangements: 0,91 Meuro (EAFRD 0,40 Meuro)

Output indicators: 20 cooperation initiatives supported.

Measure 125 (Infrastructure related to the development and adaptation of agriculture and forestry)

The measure will contribute to the objective of improving the competitiveness of agriculture and forestry, through the modernisation and the development of the infrastructures related to the agricultural and forestry sectors, promoting innovation and the sustainable management of soil and water.

Actions: a) improvement and rationalisation of the irrigation network, b) realisation of troughs in pasturelands, c) realisation, improvement and recover of rural roads for the access to farm and forest land, d) general costs such as consultation fees and feasibility studies (up to a maximum of 12% of the related tangible investments).

Beneficiaries: municipalities and their associations, local consortium and associations for intervention a) and b), municipalities and their associations, local consortium and associations, associated farmers and forest holders for intervention c).

Aid intensity: 100% for the improvement of the irrigation network, 50% for the realisation of troughs in pasturelands, 100% for the realisation/improvement of rural roads (80% in case of private beneficiaries).

Transition arrangements: 1,65 Meuro (EAFRD 0,73 Meuro)

Output indicators: 36 initiatives supported and 9,7 Meuro of total investments.

Measure 132 (participation of farmers in food quality schemes)

The measure will contribute to the objective of improving the competitiveness of agriculture and forestry, promoting the participation of farmers in food quality schemes.

Amount of support: 3.000 Euro maximum per holding per year and/or up to a maximum of 70% of the fixed costs arising from the participation in the supported schemes, for a maximum duration of 5 years.

Beneficiaries: farmers who participate in the following quality schemes (list of the products is present in the programme): a) Traditional specialities guaranteed (Council Regulation 509/2006) – 1 product, b) Geographical indications and designations of origin (Regulation 510/2006) – 8 products, c) Organic production of agricultural products (Regulation 2092/91), d) Quality wine produced in specified regions (Regulation 1493/1999) – 17 products, e) regional quality scheme (L.R. 23/2003) – 5 products.

Output indicators: 303 beneficiaries

Measure 133 (Information and promotion activities)

The measure will contribute to the objective of improving the competitiveness of agriculture and forestry, supporting the information and the promotion of quality products.

Actions: a) participation in fairs and exhibitions b) information/promotion programs (also in shops, restaurants, supermarkets, etc.), c) initiatives involving schools, students, etc..

Beneficiaries: producer groups participating in a food quality scheme, who realise an integrated project for the development of the agri-food chain (same products financed by measure 132).

Aid intensity: 70%

Coherence with first pillar: Information and promotion activities supported under Regulation (EC) n. 2826/2000 will not receive support under this measure (through a self-declaration of the beneficiary). The avoidance of double funding will be individually checked by the competent authority, before and after the emission of the authorisation of payment.

Output indicators: 165 supported actions

AXIS 2

Measure 211 (Natural handicap payments for farmers in mountain areas)

The measure will contribute to the objective of improving the environment and the countryside compensating for farmer's additional costs in mountain areas, thus preventing their abandonment.

Actions: payments to a) livestock farms with a density of 0,3-2 LU/Ha and a surface of at least 3 Ha of UAA, b) specialised chestnut woods of at least 3 Ha. Payments will decrease above certain dimensions (80 Ha, no payment over 120 Ha) and will be 200 Euro/Ha.

Beneficiaries: farmers localised in mountain areas

Transition arrangements: 5,57 Meuro (EAFRD 2,45 Meuro)

Output indicators: 1.370 holdings and 53.430 Ha

Measure 212 (Natural handicap payments for farmers other than mountain areas)

The measure will contribute to the objective of improving the environment and the countryside compensating for farmer's additional costs in areas with natural handicaps, thus preventing their abandonment.

Actions: payments to livestock farms with a density of 0,3-2 LU/Ha and a surface of at least 3 Ha of UAA. Payments will decrease above certain dimensions (80 Ha, no payment over 120 Ha) and will be of 100 Euro/Ha.

Beneficiaries: farmers localised in areas with natural handicaps

Transition arrangements: 0,76 Meuro (EAFRD 0,33 Meuro)

Output indicators: 565 holdings and 14.125 Ha

Measure 213 (Natura 2000 and Water Framework Directive payments)

The measure will contribute to the objective of improving the environment and the countryside, compensating for farmer's additional costs resulting from the implementation of Directive 79/409/EEC and Directive 92/43/EEC (Natura 2000).

Amounts of support: 30 Euro/Ha, calculated on the basis the obligations for the farmers resulting from the regional management provisions (regional conservation measures for SCI and SPZ). In particular, the obligation taken into account for the calculation of the payment consists in the execution of harvesting with techniques favourable for the fauna. This obligations has been established

The calculations justifying the amounts have been elaborated by Region Marche and take into account he cross compliance requirements, according to R. 1782/03. The ASSAM (regional agency for services for the agricultural sector), with the support of the University of Marche, is confirming the adequacy and consistency of the calculations.

Beneficiaries: farmers localised in Natura 2000 areas

Output indicators: 370 holdings and 3.800 Ha

Measure 214 (Agri-environment payments)

The measure will contribute to the objective of improving the environment and the countryside, supporting the farmers who make, on a voluntary basis, agro-environmental commitments going beyond the mandatory requirements and standards.

Action A – integrated production

The commitments are:

- reduction of plant protection products, according to the integrated production principles (elimination and/or consistent reduction of the more toxic products);
- implementation of a fertilisation plan, based on the principle of nutrient balance (reduction of fertilisers inputs of at least 30%);

The foreseen environmental advantages are a reduction of the negative impacts caused by intensive agriculture mainly on water and biodiversity, by the reduction of chemical products, and an increase in the safety of the products. The support will be granted only for horticultural and permanent crops (minimum 2 Ha), localised in NVZ areas. The duration of the commitment is 5 years. Annual payments are the followings:

Crop	Annual support
vineyards	400
olive growths	250
permanent crops	450
vegetable crops	300

Action B – organic farming

The commitments are:

- to respect the provisions of Reg. 2092/91

The foreseen environmental advantages are a reduction of the use of chemical products, the improvement of the fertility of the soil and an increase in the safety of the products, with positive effects on water, biodiversity and soil. The action will apply on the entire regional surface, with a priority in NVZ and Natura 2000 areas, and for farmers who take part in a territorial agro-environmental project or respect the provision of R. 1804/99 for livestock production. The minimum surface will be 2 Ha, reduced to 0,5 Ha in case of farms with glasshouses (at least 3.000 m²). The duration of the commitment is 5/7. Annual payments are the followings:

Crop	Introduction	Maintenance (hills/plains)	Maintenance (mountain)
Winter cereals	180	160	140
Spring cereals	280	250	220
Protein crops	170	150	130
Oilseed crops	170	150	130
Lucerne	110	100	90
Vegetable crops	600	540	470
lavender	400	370	330
vineyards	770	600	690

olive growths	600	550	480
permanent crops	780	710	620
Forage crops in farms which respect the provisions of R. 1804/66	250	250	250

Action C – protection and improvement of soil

The action supports the conservation and the increase of the fertility of the soil.

The commitments are:

- upkeep of a green cover in permanent crops
- green manuring in arable crops
- prohibition of mineral fertilisers and use of organic fertilisers (high quality compost and manure) in arable crops

The foreseen environmental advantages are: the reduction of erosion due to the upkeep of a green cover in permanent crops and (in winter/spring) in arable crops, an improvement of the structure of the soil and an increase of the soil organic matter, with positive effects on the control of erosion and on the structure of the soils, a reduction of chemical fertilisers use, with positive effects on biodiversity and water quality. The action will apply on the entire regional surface, with a priority in areas at risk of erosion, and NVZ or Natura 2000 areas, and for farmers who take part in a territorial agro-environmental project. The duration of the commitment is 5 years. Annual payments are the followings: 120 Euro/Ha for green cover for permanent crops, 135 Euro/Ha for green manuring, 190 Euro/Ha for use of organic fertilisers. The realisation of a green cover in vineyards and permanent crops can be combined with action a) – integrated production and action b) – organic production. The use of organic fertilisers for vegetable crops can be combined with action a) – integrated.

Action D – maintenance of local endangered varieties and breeds

The commitments are

- To rear farm animals of local breeds in danger to be lost to farming
- To cultivate plant varieties, under threat of genetic erosion
- To preserve animal and plant genetic resources

In case of animal breeds, the payments will be granted for the breeding of the following breeds: sheep – *Appenninica* (8.142 breeding females), *Fabrianese* (5.363), *Sopravvissana* (2.877); equidae – *Cavallo del Catria* (269). The annual premiums are: 200 euro/LU for *Appenninica*, *Fabrianese* and *Sopravvissana* and 180 for *Cavallo del Catria*.

In case of plant varieties, annual payment will be granted for the cultivation of 4 varieties of bean, one of maize, 1 of barley, 7 of apple, 1 of pear and 11 of olive. The annual premium will be: 300 Euro/Ha for barley, 600 Euro/Ha for maize and beans, 530 Euro/ha for fruit crops and 400 Euro/Ha for olive growths. These payments can't be cumulated with other actions of measure 214.

The operations for the conservation of genetic resources will consist in: ex situ and in situ conservation, characterisation and collection of vegetal genetic resources, conservation of endangered permanent crop varieties, information and dissemination activities. 100% of the costs will be covered.

Action E – better management of permanent pastures

The commitments are:

- Prohibition of use of chemical fertilisers and pesticides.
- Introduction of good management practises such as removal of manure accumulations and the drawing-up and application of a grazing management plan

The better management of permanent pastures will contribute to the protection of biodiversity and to the reduction of local erosion, with the more rational grazing and the avoidance of over-grazing. The quality of water will be also improved (no manure accumulations). The action will apply in mountain areas. The duration of the commitment is 5 years. Livestock density will have to be between 0,3 and 0,8 LU/Ha. Annual payments are 60 Euro/Ha.

For the measure 214, the calculations justifying the amounts have been elaborated by Region Marche and take into account the cross compliance requirements, according to R. 1782/03, and the minimum requirements for fertilisers and plant protection products. The ASSAM (regional agency for services for the agricultural sector), with the support of the University of Marche, is confirming the adequacy and consistency of the calculations.

Beneficiaries: farmers for action A, B, C, D (endangered breeds and varieties), Region Marche for action D (conservation of genetic resources). For action E, associated farmers and other land managers.

Transition arrangements: 38,79 Meuro (EAFRD 17,07 Meuro)

Output indicators: 3.521 agricultural holdings, 102.650 Ha

Measure 216 (non productive investments)

The measure contributes to the objective of improving the environment and the countryside, supporting non-remunerative investments, related to the protection of environment and the enhancement of the public amenity value of the Natura 2000 areas.

Actions: a) non productive investment linked to the agro-environmental commitments of action C (protection and improvement of soil), such as the creation of buffer areas, hedgerows and tree rows; b) investments which enhance the public

amenity of the Natura 2000 areas, and in particular the plantation of tree rows, hedges, small woods.

Beneficiaries: farmers for action a), farmers and other land managers (municipalities, provinces, natural parks management bodies) for action b)

Aid intensity: 100%

Transition arrangements: 1,57 Meuro (0,69 Meuro EAFRD)

Output indicators: 1.804 holdings and other land managers, 10,69 Meuro of total investments

Measure 221 (First afforestation of agricultural land)

The measure contributes to the objective of improving the environment and the countryside, supporting the afforestation of agricultural land with the following objectives: a) the protection of soil from erosion and landslides in hilly areas, b) the mitigation of climate change through the afforestation with long cycle forests, c) the conservation/improvement of countryside and landscape as well as the reduction of intensive agriculture.

Actions: first afforestation of agricultural land, according to one of the following typologies of plantation: a) productive forests with climate change mitigation purposes (i.e. walnut, cherry, etc.) – duration 25 years, b) multifunctional forests (broadleaves, forests suitable for truffle production) with climate change mitigation purposes – duration 40 years, c) natural forests (no limit of duration) for protective and landscape purposes.

Definition of agricultural land: arable crops, where farming activity took place at least for two years, before the submission of the application

Definition of farmer: individual who earns 50% of his income and dedicates 50% of his time to farming activities. In LFA, the percentage is 25%.

Beneficiaries: farmers (according to the above mentioned definition), other farmers, public subjects

Aid intensity and grants: 1) support to first establishment costs (80% in LFA, 70% elsewhere and up to a maximum of 7.700 Euro/Ha for productive forests, 5.200 Euro/Ha for multifunctional forests, 7.800 Euro/Ha for natural forests), 2) annual premium for maintenance for 5 years (for productive forests 540 Euro/Ha in year 1-2 and 390 Euro/Ha in year 3-5, for multifunctional forests 450 Euro/Ha in year 1-2 and 350 Euro/Ha in year 3-5, for natural forests 550 Euro/Ha in year 1-2 and 400 Euro/Ha in year 3-5) 3) annual premium for loss of income for 10 years. The amounts of the annual premium for loss of income are the followings: 510 Euro/Ha coastal hills, 450 Euro/Ha internal hills, 370 Euro/Ha mountain areas. In case of privates other than farmers, the amount is 150 Euro/Ha.

Public bodies will receive only the contribution for establishment costs, the afforestation in Natura 2000 sites will be consistent with the management objective of the concerned site and permanent pastures/meadows will be excluded from

support. In case of multifunctional forests, the cost of truffle vaccination is not taken into account.

The calculations justifying the amounts have been elaborated by Region Marche. The ASSAM (regional agency for services for the agricultural sector), with the support of the University of Marche, is confirming the adequacy and consistency of the calculations.

Transition arrangements: 16,27 Meuro (7,16 Meuro EAFRD)

Output indicators: 1.160 beneficiaries and 2.300 Ha

Measure 222 (First establishment of agro-forestry systems on agricultural land)

The measure contributes to the objective of improving the environment and the countryside, supporting the establishment of agro-forestry systems aimed to the improvement of the landscape and water quality, as well as to the production of biomasses and to the diversification of the agricultural incomes.

Actions: establishment of agro-forestry systems with a) broadleaves tree species with double purposes with a maximum density of 100 plants per hectare, c) broadleaves trees and shrub for the production of fruit, honey, etc. (hawthorn, blackberry bush, chestnut, etc.) with a maximum density of 100 plants per hectare in case of trees and/or 200 plants per hectare in case in case of shrub species.

The agricultural use (arable crops, permanent crops and pastures) and the forestry use shall be carried out on at least 50% of the area. The establishment of the agro-forestry system in Natura 2000 sites will be consistent with the management objective of the concerned site. The cost of truffle vaccination is not taken into account.

Beneficiaries: farmers

Aid intensity: 80% of the first establishment costs in LFA, other areas with natural handicaps, Natura 2000 and WFD areas.

Output indicators: 466 beneficiaries and 932 Ha

Measure 224 (Natura 2000 payments)

The measure will contribute to the objective of improving the environment and the countryside, compensating the forest holder's additional costs resulting from the implementation of Directive 79/409/EEC and Directive 92/43/EEC (Natura 2000).

Amounts of support: 200 Euro/Ha, calculated on the basis the obligations for the forest holders resulting from the regional management provisions (regional conservation measures for SCI and SPZ). In particular, the obligation taken into account for the calculation of the payment is: execution of cutting with techniques favourable for the fauna (i.e. utilisation of cables for the removal of woods). The payment is granted only in the year where the cutting takes place.

Beneficiaries: private forest owners and their associations

Output indicators: 3.833 holdings and 6.593 Ha

Measure 226 (Restoring forestry potential and introducing preventive actions)

The measure will contribute to the objective of improving the environment and the countryside, supporting the restoration of forestry potential in forests damaged by fire and other natural disasters and introducing appropriate prevention actions.

Actions: a) preventive forestry practices such as vegetation control, thinning, diversification of vegetation structure, and recover and maintenance of protective infrastructures such as forest paths, tracks, water supply points and fire breaks, b) restoration of forests damaged by fire; c) land consolidations and water management interventions in forests, d) setting up or improvement of fixed forest fire monitoring facilities and communication equipment. The action a) and d) will be implemented only in the areas at medium/high risk of forest fire, individuated by the forest fire prevention plan. General costs up to 10%.

Beneficiaries: public bodies such as mountain communities, provinces, managing authorities of protected areas and Region Marche for action a), c) and e), private or public forest holders for action b), Region Marche for action c).

Aid intensity: 100% for action a), c), d) and e), 80% for action b).

Transition arrangements: 4,04 Meuro (1,78 Meuro EAFRD)

Output indicators: 80 beneficiaries and 2.258 Ha of damaged area restored, 13,55 Meuro of total investments

Measure 227 (non productive investments)

The measure contributes to the objective of improving the environment and the countryside, supporting non-remunerative investments related to the enhancement of the public amenity value of the forests.

Actions: a) recover and realisations of small roads and paths for recreational/educational purposes, b) conservation and upgrading of small buildings localised in forests, for recreational/educational purposes, c) thinning, conversion and diversification of vegetation structure for environmental purposes. General costs up to 12%.

Beneficiaries: public bodies such as mountain communities, provinces, managing authorities of protected areas and Region Marche

Aid intensity: 100%

Output indicators: 87 beneficiaries and 6,59 Meuro of total investments

AXIS 3

Measure 311 (Diversification into non-agricultural activities)

The measure contributes to the objective of maintaining and creating employment and income in rural areas, supporting the diversification into non-agricultural activities of the farmers and the members of the household.

Actions

- (1) Agritourism: a) improvement of immovable property and purchase of machinery and equipment for agritourism activities, b) realisation of green areas, camping areas, on-farm paths and other structures for recreational activities, c) purchase of hardware and software and realisation of web sites and e-booking services, d) general costs such as consultation fees and feasibility studies (up to a maximum of 12% of the related tangible investments).
- (2) Diversification activities: a) improvement of immovable property and purchase of machinery/equipment for the development of on-farm social services, on-farm educational and recreational services, processing of agricultural products or by-products into non annex I products, renewable energy production (cogeneration/heat from biomasses, photovoltaic, mini wind turbines up to a maximum of 1 MW), development of traditional rural craft activities; b) general costs such as consultation fees and feasibility studies (up to a maximum of 12% of the related tangible investments).

Beneficiaries: farmers and members of the farm household

Localisation: the measure will apply in rural areas, with a priority for rural areas with territorial disadvantages (C3 and D for agro-tourism and C2, C3 and D for other diversification activities)

Aid intensity: in case of improvement of immovable property, 55% for young farmers/persons in less favoured areas, 45% for young farmers/persons in other areas or for other farmers/persons in less favoured areas, 35% for other farmers/persons in other areas. An additional 5% of support will be granted if eco-building techniques are used. In case of machinery or equipment purchase, 30%. *De minimis* rule will apply.

Transition arrangements: 7,19 Meuro (3,29 Meuro EAFRD)

Output indicators: 295 beneficiaries and 65,13 Meuro of total investments. Gross number of job created = 141.

Measure 312 (Support for business creation and development)

The measure contributes to the objective of maintaining and creating employment and income in rural areas, supporting the creation and the development of micro-enterprises.

Actions: a) improvement of immovable property and purchase of machinery/equipment for the development of rural restaurants and tasting points,

B&B and small hotels and traditional workshops; b) general costs such as consultation fees and feasibility studies (up to a maximum of 12% of the related tangible investments). The measure will be implemented exclusively through LEADER approach.

Beneficiaries: micro-enterprises

Localisation: the measure will apply in the rural areas with territorial disadvantages (C2, C3 and D).

Aid intensity: in case of improvement of immovable property, 50% in mountain areas and 40% in other areas. In case of machinery or equipment purchase, 40% in mountain areas and 30% in other areas. *De minimis* rule will apply.

Output indicators: 40 beneficiaries. Gross number of jobs created = 19 (indicators to be referred to the LEADER axis)

Measure 313 "Encouragement of tourism activities"

The measure contributes to the objective of maintaining and creating employment and income in rural areas, supporting the development of tourism activities in rural areas.

Actions: a) realisation and restructuring of information centres and signposting; b) creation of recreational areas offering access to natural areas and other rural areas of cultural/traditional interest. c) realisation of services for the improvement of tourism such as e-booking, tourism packages, setting up of services such as naturalistic/local guides etc., d) general costs such as consultation fees, feasibility studies (up to a maximum of 10% of the investments). The measure will be implemented through LEADER approach or within an integrated territorial project (see pg. 9-10 for definition).

Beneficiaries: public subjects, NGOs, consortium and associations involved in the tourist/agro-tourist sector.

Localisation: the measure will apply in rural areas with territorial disadvantages (C2, C3 and D).

Aid intensity: in case of improvement of immovable property, 50% in mountain areas and 40% in other areas. In case of signposting, 40% in mountain areas and 30% in other areas. In case of equipment, 30%. The total investment will go up to a maximum of 150.000 Euro. *De minimis* rule will apply

Output indicators: 63 beneficiaries and 15,14 Meuro of total investments. Gross number of jobs created = 238. (60% of the indicators to be referred to the LEADER axis)

Measure 321 (Basic services for the economy and rural population)

The measure contributes to the objective of to enhance the conditions of rural areas, through the implementation or the improvement of basic services for the rural economy and population.

Actions:

Basic services for the rural population:

A) Realisation of structures and setting-up of services for: 1) schools (transport services, catering services, integrative recreational or social activities), 2) social services (childcare, services for disabled or old people), 3) basic services connected to trade (realisation of small markets in rural villages, delivery services to old/disabled people in rural villages, isolated farms, etc.), 4) recreational activities (setting up of services for the supply of cultural and recreational activities, realisation/upgrading of structures for aggregation/recreation).

B) Realisation of plants for the production of renewable energy/heating to public buildings such as schools or gymnasiums, up to 1 MW.

C) Purchase of machinery/equipment (comprising HW and SW) and setting up of services for: 1) integrative transport services, 2) on-call transport services, 3) telematic services for the population realised by the public administration (i.e. supply of on-line documents, certificates, etc.), 4) informative services for the population, concerning the abovementioned services or other basic services, realised by the public administration or by NGOs

Basic services for the rural economy

A) Purchase of HW and SW and setting up of services for telematic services for the enterprises realised by the public administration (i.e. supply of on-line documents, certificates, etc.)

The measure will be implemented through LEADER approach or within an integrated territorial project (see pg. 9-10 for definition).

Beneficiaries: public bodies and NGO

Localisation: the measure will apply in rural areas with territorial disadvantages – C3 and D. In case of renewable energy production, and telematic services for the rural population and economy, the measure will apply also in C2 rural areas.

Aid intensity: in case of investments for social services (category 1A), 80% for public beneficiaries and 60% for NGOs. In case investments for renewable energy (category 1B), 70%. In case of investments for telematic services (category 1C and 2), 80% for public beneficiaries and 40% for NGOs. Support for the setting up of the services (digressive support for 5 years, in equal steps from 100% the first year to 20% the fifth year). In case of economic activities, *de minimis* rule will apply.

Output indicators: 73 supported actions and 17,48 Meuro of total investments. Gross number of job created (impact) = 187. (30% of the indicators to be referred to the LEADER axis)

Measure 322 (village renewal and development)

The measure contributes to the objective of to enhance the conditions of rural areas, through the realisation of investments aimed to increase the attractiveness of rural villages.

Actions: investments for the restoration and the improvement of public buildings, squares, gardens, etc. in rural historical villages. The eligible villages will be rural municipalities (less than 3.000 inhabitants) localised in hilly and mountain areas (art. 36 a) (i) and (ii) of R. 1698/05). The measure will be implemented exclusively through LEADER approach.

Beneficiaries: Municipalities

Localisation: the measure will apply in weaker rural areas (C3 and D).

Aid intensity: 50% for a total maximum investment of 150.000 Euro. The same village shall not receive, in the programming period, more than 400.000 Euro of support.

Output indicators: 13 villages improved and 3,49 Meuro of total investments. Gross number of job created (impact) = 94. (Indicators to be referred to the LEADER axis)

Measure 323 (Conservation and upgrading of the rural heritage)

The measure contributes to the objective of to enhance the conditions of rural areas, through the realisation of investments aimed to conservation and the improvement of the cultural and natural heritage, localised in the rural territory.

Actions: a) studies on the cultural, architectonic and natural heritage of the rural areas, connected to the tangible investment and up to a maximum of 20% of the total investments, b) investments for the restoration and the upgrading of cultural features of the rural areas and landscape, c) drawing-up of protection and management plans related to Natura 2000. The action a) and b) will be implemented through LEADER approach or within an integrated territorial project (see pg. 9-10 for definition).

Beneficiaries: NGO and non-lucrative bodies for action a) and b), Region Marche for action c).

Localisation: the measure will apply in rural areas with territorial disadvantages (C2, C3 and D). The operations a) and b) will have to be part of a Leader integrated project or a territorial integrated project. For action c), all the regional Natura 2000 areas localised in rural areas will be eligible.

Aid intensity: 100% for action a) and c). For action b), 70% for a maximum investment of 150.000 Euro.

Output indicators: 66 actions supported and 6,23 Meuro of total investments. Gross number of job created (impact) = 280. (70% of the indicators to be referred to the LEADER axis)

Measure 331 (training and information)

The measure contributes to the two general objectives of axis 3 (to maintain and create employment and income in rural areas and to enhance the conditions of rural areas both for the population and the enterprises), supporting the realisation of training activities about the diversification of economic activities and the quality of life in rural areas.

Actions: A) Training courses for the professional adjournment of the beneficiaries of the measure for the diversification of rural economy (measure 311, 312 and 313) and the quality of life in rural areas (measure 321 and 323). B) Information action on diversification of rural economy and quality of life in rural areas, for the economic actors operating in the fields of axis 3. The bodies providing the training and the information actions will be selected trough a call of proposals. The measure will be implemented exclusively trough LEADER approach.

Beneficiaries: private and public bodies

Aid intensity: 100% for training activities and information actions.

Demarcation with ESF: the training concerning the diversification of rural economy and the quality of life in rural areas will be financed by only by EAFRD

Output indicators: 90 participants to training and 900 training days.

AXIS 4

Measure 41 (implementation of the local development strategies)

Characteristics of the strategies: it will be possible to implement Leader strategies on the rural areas with territorial disadvantages (rural area C2, C3 and D). The strategies will have to achieve the objectives of axis 3 (to maintain and create employment and income in rural areas and to enhance the conditions of rural areas both for the population and the enterprises). The operations will have to comply with the conditions of the following measures of axis 3: measure 312, 313, 321, 323 and 331, plus a specific Leader measure, described below.

Sub-measure 41.01 (territorial marketing): The sub-measure contributes to the two general objectives of axis 3 (to maintain and create employment and income in rural areas and to enhance the conditions of rural areas both for the population and the enterprises), supporting the realisation of the promotion, marketing and territorial certification of the local area. The actions that will be supported are: territorial marketing operations, area-based promotional activities concerning the cultural/natural/historical heritage of the area, area-based certifications for sustainable development, social and ethic aspects. The beneficiaries will be private and public bodies, and the aid intensity 80%, for an expected output of 30 projects.

Selection criteria and procedures: LAGs will have to 1) consist in a public-private partnership (socio-economic partners and other representative at least 50% of the partnership, at the decision-making level); 2) propose a strategy concerning an admissible area; 3) propose a strategy on an area with population between 40.000 and 150.000 inhabitants. Selection will be based on the characteristics of the area, of the partnership and of the strategy. LAGs will be selected by tender. A priority will be given to the LAGs who will integrate innovation and cooperation into their local development strategy. The call of proposals, open to all the admissible areas, will be organised 1 month after the approval of the programme. The definitive approval of the local strategy is foreseen no later than 1 and 9 months from the approval of the programme.

Expected output: The area covered by Leader approach is 79% of regional territory (7.655 km²) and the population is 30% (451.689 inhabitants). The planned number of LAGs is 6.

Measure 421 (Inter-territorial and trans-national cooperation)

The LAGs will have the possibility to implement inter-territorial and trans-national cooperation initiatives, aimed to the realisation of joint territorial marketing operations, creation of inter-territorial networks and implementation of trans-national projects.

Selection procedures: the LAG will submit the cooperation projects in the strategy. The MA will select the projects. There will be the possibility to present additional cooperation projects after the approval of the local strategies.

Output indicators: 28 cooperation projects supported, number of LAGs cooperating not available.

Measure 431 (Running costs, acquisition of skills and animation)

Actions: studies on the area concerned by the strategies, information and animation, training of personnel, running costs. Running costs will not exceed 15% of the public expenditure related to the local development strategy. The cost for the acquisition of skills and animation will not exceed 10% of it. In total, the measure will not exceed 20% of the public expenditure related to the local development strategy.

Aid intensity: 100%

Output indicators: 6 actions

5. FINANCING

5.1. Annual Contribution from the EAFRD (in EUR)

Année	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Total	29.662.000	29.488.000	28.604.000	28.998.000	28.683.000	28.552.000	28.333.000

5.2. Financial plan by axis (in EUR total period)

Title	Dépenses publiques	Taux contr. FEADER (%)	Contribution FEADER
Axis 1	194.098.182	44%	85.403.200
Axis 2	178.350.000	44%	78.474.000
Axis 3	41.390.909	44%	18.212.000
Axis 4 Leader	27.589.091	44%	12.139.200
Technical Assistance	18.390.000	44%	8.091.600
Total	459.818.182	44%	202.320.000

5.3. Indicative breakdown by measure (in EUR, total period)

Axis / Measure	Public Expenditure	Private	Total
111. Training and information	10.691.305	2.346.872	13.038.177
112. Young farmers	18.830.000	-	18.830.000
113. Early retirement	326.877	-	326.877
114. Use of advisory services	7.950.000	3.915.672	11.865.672
115. Setting up	-	-	-
121. Modernisation of farms	98.150.000	115.219.565	213.369.565
122. Improvement of forests	2.960.000	2.732.308	5.692.308
123. Adding value	28.850.000	78.001.852	106.851.852
124. Cooperation	3.140.000	785.000	3.925.000
125. Infrastructure	8.420.000	1.258.161	9.678.161
126. Restoring potential	-	-	-
131. Meeting standards	-	-	-
132. quality schemes	4.550.000	2.241.045	6.791.045
133. Promotion and information	10.230.000	5.038.657	15.268.657
Total axis 1	194.098.182	211.539.132	405.637.314
211. Natural handicap payments	17.160.000	-	17.160.000
212. Payments for disad. ...	6.820.000	-	6.820.000
213. Natura 2000 and WFD	4.550.000	-	4.550.000
214. Agri-environment payments	91.390.000	-	91.390.000
215. Animal welfare payments	-	-	-
216. Non-productive invest	10.690.000	-	10.690.000
221. First afforestation	23.050.000	8.963.889	32.013.889
222. Agroforestry	2.270.000	678.052	2.948.052
224. Natura 2000 payments	2.280.000	-	2.280.000
225. Forest-environment	-	-	-
226. Restoring forestry potential	13.550.000	-	13.550.000
227. Non-productive invest	6.590.000	-	6.590.000
Total axis 2	178.350.000	9.641.941	187.991.941
311. Diversification	30.610.000	34.517.660	65.127.660
312. Business creation	-	-	-
313. tourism activities	2.360.000	3.259.048	5.619.048
321. Basic services	6.310.909	5.825.454	12.136.363
322. Village renewal	-	-	-
323. rural heritage	2.110.000	527.500	2.637.500
331. Training and information	-	-	-
Total axis 3	41.390.909	44.129.662	85.520.571
411. Competitiveness	-	-	-

412. Environment	-	-	-
413. Quality of life	19.819.091	15.739.449	35.558.540
421. Cooperation	2.270.000	1.513.333	3.783.333
431. skills and competence	5.500.000	-	5.500.000
Total axis 4	27.589.091	17.252.782	44.841.873
511. Technical Assistance	18.390.000	-	18.390.000
Grand. Total	459.818.182	282.563.517	742.381.699

5.4. Additional financing according to Art. 16(f) of Regulation (EC) No 1698/2005

Measure/Axis	Public expenditure
Measure112	7.000.000
Measure 114	2.000.000
Measure 121	4.000.000
Measure 123	9.000.000
Total Axis 1	22.000.000
Measure 321	8.000.000
Total Axe 3	8.000.000
Total	30.000.000

6. DESCRIPTION OF STATE AID MEASURES

For the measures and operations falling within the scope of the article 36 of the Treaty, the Region envisages an additional national financing for the above-mentioned measures of axis 1 and axis 3. The additional financing will be used to increase the number of beneficiaries, at the same conditions set up in the rural development programme. For the measures/operations outside the scope of the article 36 of the Treaty, support will be granted according to the “de minimis” rule, with the exemption of non-economic activities in measure 321, 322 and 323. In this case the conditions set up in the measures will apply.

7. DESCRIPTION OF THE COMPLEMENTARITY

The information concerning the appraisal and means for the complementarity with cohesion Funds, EFF and EAFG is described in chapter 10 of the programming document.

The complementarity with the EFRD will concern various fields of intervention. The EFRD operations for regional development will be related to the improvement

of infrastructures and for the innovation and the accessibility for the industrial enterprises, while the EAFRD measures (axis 1 and 2) will concentrate on the agricultural sector. With regard to the support for the development and the diversification of rural economy and the improvement of the quality of life in rural areas (axis 3), the potential complementarity between the two Funds is more relevant. For each measure of axis 3, demarcation criteria have been individuated and are described in the following table. They are based on the on the typology of intervention, on the area concerned and the beneficiary.

Measure	EAFRD	EFRD
311	Diversification into non agricultural activities, localised in the farm and made by the farmer or a member of the farm household	EFRD doesn't intervene in the farm and for a farmer/member of the farm household
312	Creation and development of micro-enterprises, localised in rural areas, operating in the field of tourism (small hotels, B&B) and crafts.	In case of enterprises, EFRD doesn't intervene in these fields, but in the fields of research, innovation and financial engineering, which are not financed by the RDP
313	Infrastructures for tourism such as signposting, small areas, etc. up to a cost of 150.000 Euro. Realisation/improvement of small accommodation areas. Setting up of services for tourism.	In case of tourism, EFRD will finance the realisation infrastructures in protected areas, such as signposting, small areas, etc. for projects above a cost of 150.000 Euro.
321	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Setting up and development of basic services for the rural population – Production of renewable energy, for public utility/local purposes, up to 1 MW. – Setting up and development of integrative and on-call transport services – Setting up and development of telematic services for the rural population and economy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The EFRD doesn't finance the setting up and development of services for the population – The EFRD will finance the realisation of renewable energy plants above 1 MW. – The EFRD doesn't finance integrative and on-call transport services – The EFRD finances the development of the broadband network, and not the setting up and development of telematic services
322	Village renewal and development, realised in rural areas, up to a cost of 150.000 Euro	Village renewal and development, for projects above a cost of 150.000 Euro.

323	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Studies for the conservation and upgrading of the natural and cultural heritage, in rural areas - Investments for the conservation and upgrading of the natural and cultural heritage, in rural areas up to a maximum of 150.000 Euro of total investments - Drawing-up of Natura 2000 management plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The ERFD will not support studies for the conservation and upgrading of the natural and cultural heritage, in rural areas - Investments for the conservation and upgrading of the natural and cultural heritage, also in rural areas, for projects above 150.000 Euro of total investments - The ERFD will not support the drawing-up of Natura 2000 management plan
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In case of training activities, the EAFRD will support some specific interventions (i.e. tutoring of young farmers and training connected to the fields of intervention of axis 3), while the ESF will realise other types of training activities.

The RDP doesn't foresee any intervention for fisheries/aquaculture, and any possible overlapping with the local development strategies will be avoided in the implementation phase.

The measures of the RDP will complement and be synergic with the measures financed by the first pillar of the CAP, and in particular with some measures finance by the CMO. The appraisals of and the means for complementarity, as well as the criteria and the administrative rules to avoid double funding, are described in the programme.

Fruit and vegetables: the members of the producer organisations (PO) will be supported by the RDP only for certain types of investments related to the modernisation of the agricultural holding – measure 121 (machinery, equipment, restructuring of existing irrigation networks, realisation of cooling systems). In the case of investments for the processing and marketing of fruits and vegetables – measure 123, the PO and their members will be supported by the RDP only for innovative investments, with a total cost higher than 500.000 Euro. These categories will not be financed by the CMO. For the members of the PO, finally, the advisory services – measure 114 related to the fruit and vegetable sector will not be financed by the programme (the CMO will finance technical assistance/advisory actions related to the sector).

Olive oil: For the members of the PO, the advisory services – measure 114 related to the olive oil sector will not be financed by the programme. This activity is the only one financed by the CMO for this region. The RDP will support all the other actions related to this sector.

Bee keeping: the CMO finances the purchase of hives, swarms and the machinery/equipment for their transportation and some technical assistance/advisory actions. The RDP will finance investments for the processing

and marketing of the honey. The advisory services – measure 114 related to bee keeping will not be financed by the RDP.

Wine: the restructuring and the reconversion of vineyards will be financed by the CMO. The RDP will support the investments for the processing and marketing, and the machinery for the improvement of production.

Sugar: the RDP will not support the investments financed by the national plan related to the restructuring of the sugar sector.

8. PROGRAMME DELIVERY

8.1. Designation of competent authorities and bodies responsible

The managing authority will be Regione Marche – Servizio Agricoltura, Forestazione e Pesca

The paying agency will be the national one – AGEA

The certification body will be, for the year 2007, Price Waterhouse Coopers S.p.A.

8.2. The monitoring and evaluation system

The monitoring system will utilise the common indicators set up at community level. The monitoring and evaluation process will be realised according to the regulation prescriptions. It will be divided in three phases: ex-ante, in itinere and ex-post.

8.3. Information and publicity arrangement

The communication plan will involve the beneficiaries (effective and potential), the citizens, other partners and stakeholders, information bodies, opinion leaders and other members of the regional administration.

The main actions will be:

- a) Meetings and seminars and workshops
- b) Internet site and newsletter.
- c) Press releases and advertising (magazines and newspapers)
- d) Front office activities and local help desks
- e) Promotional literature (brochures, flyers, posters, CD etc.)
- f) Common logos and slogans, billboards and plaques.

The provisional budget is 1.5 Meuro. The results of the information activities will be evaluated by interviews, questionnaires, etc. The mid term evaluation will provide for a specific analysis on the information and publicity arrangements.

9. PARTNERSHIP ACCORDING TO ART. 6 OF REGULATION NO. 1698/2005

The consultation process began at the beginning of 2006, with the sending of information to the stakeholders. A series of meetings have been held between February 2006 and March 2007. The results of the meetings and the observations of the stakeholders have been taken into account for the drawn-up of the programme.

10. EQUALITY BETWEEN MEN AND WOMEN AND NON DISCRIMINATION

The equality between men and women will be taken into account in the elaboration and in the implementation of the programme. During the implementation phase, the issue will be considered in relation to the following aspects: quota for measure, selection criteria and specific technical assistance. In the monitoring and evaluation, specific indicators will be settled and a specific evaluation methodology adopted. The non discrimination principle will be also taken into account.

11. DESCRIPTION OF TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE OPERATIONS

Technical assistance (measure 511) finances the following operations: a) support to the managing and control, b) support to monitoring; d) support to evaluation; e) support to information activities. The support will cover the acquisition of services and consultancies and the purchase of the machinery and equipment (i.e. software and hardware for the monitoring activities). The National Rural Network is an independent programme.