

# Social Farming in Italian Rural Development Programmes 2014-2020

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## 1. Social farming in the current EU programming period and possible synergies among Funds

EU *Europe 2020* strategy has been formulated in an historical phase where the overcoming of the economic crisis represents a priority for the European Union; this goal is pursued creating the conditions for an intelligent, sustainable and inclusive growth. One of the 5 objectives of the strategy is fighting against poverty and marginalization, with a special attention to active inclusion in society and in the labor market of the most vulnerable groups, by overcoming discriminations and fostering integration of people with disabilities, ethnical minorities, immigrants and other vulnerable groups<sup>1</sup>. *Europe 2020* settles specific compulsory quotas of resources for social inclusion policies in the framework of Social Fund Regulation<sup>2</sup>.

In the framework of Europe 2020 Strategy, the 2014-2020 Partnership Agreement (PA) for Italy acknowledges the intimate link between economic and social policies; with thematic Objective 9 “Promoting social inclusion, fighting poverty and discrimination”, PA incorporates EU indications and among actions requested foresees the following: promotion of social inclusion through active inclusion and job placement; reinforcing the offer and improving quality of territorial, social and health services; reinforcing social economy.

The abovementioned principles are set in the EU Regulations setting rules for European Structural and Investment Funds (ESI Funds), fixing thematic objectives (ESF) and priorities of interventions (ERDF)<sup>3</sup> aimed at promoting social inclusion and removing poverty and discrimination. EU Regulation for European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD)<sup>4</sup> sets as one of the 6 Priorities to be pursued “social inclusion, reduction of poverty and economic development in rural areas”.

Social farming (SF) has already been addressed by EAFRD in 2007-2013 as instrument of diversification of firms with social activities and is more relevant in the present programming period. The evolution of agricultural firms in the intentions of European policy makers goes, beyond their central role in production, towards the development of services for civil society; these services are both environmental, focused on management of territories, and social. This evolution also allows an important diversification and integration of firm’s income, favoring the prosecution of agricultural activity in rural and peri-urban areas.

Social farming, in cooperation with social and health institutions and with the support of European Funds, can represent a model of network between agricultural sector and social and health services. The current period can be usefully used also for better defining social farming activities, their framework, and practices proper of the agricultural firm.

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<sup>1</sup> COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION EUROPE 2020 “A strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth”. EU flagship initiative “European platform against poverty”.

<sup>2</sup> Reg. (EU) n. 1304/2013 - art. 4.

<sup>3</sup> Reg. (EU) n. 1301/2013.

<sup>4</sup> Reg. (EU) n. 1305/2013 - art. 5.

The recent national Law (2015)<sup>5</sup> defines social farming and individuates 4 main types of activity: social integration and job placement of people with handicap and of disadvantaged people, social and service activities for local communities using material and immaterial agricultural resources, services supporting medical therapies, projects for environmental and food education, biodiversity conservation and dissemination of knowledge concerning territories.

Awaiting the decrees that will give details for implementing the Law in Italy, Operational Programmes (OP) for ESF and ERDF and Rural Development Programmes (RDPs) for EAFRD can contribute to the definition of principles inspiring the same Law. Italian Regions, with the only exception of Bolzano, have mentioned social farming among the interventions that can be financed by RDPs. The following analysis provides a picture of Measures addressing social farming and of their implementation. A detail of the financial resources foreseen for social farming activities is not available at this stage. Since activities are foreseen within sub-measures and operations, an analysis of financial resources will be possible after the activation of calls.

## 2. Social farming in Italian Rural Development Programmes (RDPs)

In EU rural development policy 2014-2020, interventions affecting social farming (SF) are programmed in various RDPs Measures, with a relevant variability among Programmes. The 21 Italian RDPs have been fully analyzed, starting from Swot analysis, and continuing with Priorities and Focus Areas and Strategy<sup>6</sup>. 12 RDPs<sup>7</sup> explicitly mention SF and 3 refer to diversification and integration between agriculture and social services and to development of extra-agricultural (non-agricultural) economic activities dealing with the social<sup>8</sup>.

The presence of best practices and experiences of SF (Campania, Liguria, Sicilia) or anyway the interest for the theme (Umbria, Puglia) is among points of strength in the Analysis; however, among weaknesses are mentioned the small number of firms diversifying their agricultural activity (Veneto, Campania, Sardegna) and the low degree of diversification into recreational, teaching-educational and social activities (Abruzzo), the low propensity for networking among individuals and institutions and business creation (Puglia), the low profitability of complementary activities in agricultural firms (Sardegna).

Growing interest in Social Farming is attested by the fact that the theme is explicitly mentioned in 11 Programs among Opportunities of social inclusion, diversification and innovation for rural communities (Umbria, Friuli Venezia Giulia), as meeting between farmers and social cooperation operators (Umbria, Liguria), as opportunity for farmers to deliver complementary services related to the multifunctionality of agriculture (Umbria), as instrument of social and economic

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<sup>5</sup> Italian Law n. 141/2015.

<sup>6</sup> Swot Analysis, by examining Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats in the programming area, that in Italy is Regional, ends up with the identification of Needs and elaboration of the Strategy. Strategy is formulated as a justification of the needs selected in the SWOT Analysis, to be addressed by the RDP, and the choice of objectives, priorities, focus areas and the target setting based on evidence from the Swot and the needs assessment.

<sup>7</sup> Veneto, Umbria, Liguria, Piemonte, Friuli Venezia Giulia, Marche, Lazio, Abruzzo, Campania, Basilicata, Puglia, Sicilia.

<sup>8</sup> Lombardia, Calabria, Sardegna.

development in rural areas (Campania) and expansion of opportunities for diversification (Campania, Sicilia). SF also represents a social innovation (Piemonte) that, in a perspective of multifunctionality, can enable agriculture to become instrument of welfare for the benefit of rural communities. Multifunctionality is seen by Italian Regional authorities as opportunity of reconverting the economic system with a special attention to the social and as opportunity of income and employment both for firms and new operators (Umbria). The context of SF in Italy is that of the increasing demand for services and functions related to agriculture (Lazio, Puglia, Sicilia) and of the growing potential for the offer of socio-educational and welfare services in agricultural firms (Abruzzo).

Some Regions show among Threats a poorly entrepreneurial social inclusion management, that could frustrate the expectations of agricultural firms, and the risk connected to the lack of adaptability of production activities to certain forms of disability. Among Threats is also recurring the growing risk of economic and social exclusion and of deterioration of essential services, especially in marginal areas, due to the decrease in the purchasing power of the appropriate authorities<sup>9</sup>.

The Needs identified by Swot Analyses show the widespread requirement of increasing the diversification and the multifunctionality of firms and of improving services to population in rural territories; many RDPs<sup>10</sup> underline the social role of agriculture and express the specific need of supporting the diversification of farm activities towards providing welfare services and creating synergies between agriculture and social, as welfare instrument in rural areas.

Social Farming is predominantly programmed within Priorities 2A<sup>11</sup> and 6A<sup>12</sup>. Measures giving a major contribution to SF in Italian RDPs are: M6<sup>13</sup> "Farm and business development", in particular with sub-measure 6.4 "Investments in creation and development of non-agricultural activities", dedicated to diversification; M16<sup>14</sup> "Co-operation", with sub-measure 16.9 "Diversification of farming activities into activities concerning health care, social integration, community-supported agriculture and education about the environment and food".

Furthermore, within M7 "Basic services and village renewal in rural areas"<sup>15</sup>, in some cases investments of sub-measure 7.4 "investments in the setting up, improvement or expansion of local basic services for the rural population, including leisure and culture, and the related infrastructure" aim at establishing or enhancing the offer of welfare services, creating a possible link with social farming.

A space for growth of SF in RDPs 2014-2020 can finally be traced in transversal Measures 1 "Knowledge transfer and information actions" and 2 "Advisory services, farm management and farm relief services". M1 refers to the theme of diversification and/or multifunctionality in 15 Regions, among which some RDPs explicitly mention socio-cultural aspects of agriculture, services

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<sup>9</sup> Veneto, Valle d'Aosta, Friuli Venezia Giulia, Sicilia.

<sup>10</sup> Umbria, Liguria, Lombardia, Friuli Venezia Giulia, Marche, Abruzzo, Campania, Basilicata, Calabria, Sicilia.

<sup>11</sup> "Improving the economic performance of all farms and facilitating farm restructuring and modernization, notably with a view to increasing market participation and orientation as well as agricultural diversification".

<sup>12</sup> "Facilitating diversification, creation and development of small enterprises, as well as job creation".

<sup>13</sup> Art. 19 Reg. (EU) 1305/2013.

<sup>14</sup> Art. 35 Reg. (EU) 1305/2013.

<sup>15</sup> Art. 20 Reg. (EU) 1305/2013.



to the population in rural areas and social farming. M2 in 12 cases refers to diversification and/or multifunctionality among the themes of advisory services and in some cases to social multifunctionality and social farming. In all the cases in which M1 and M2 do not explicitly refer to the social and only foresee the theme of diversification/multifunctionality, public calls may have an important role in creating or not opportunities for SF.

### **3. Analysis of Measures financing SF**

#### **3.1 Sub-measure 16.9: beneficiaries and types of interventions**

Measure 16 “Cooperation”, with sub-measure 16.9, specifically addresses the promotion and implementation of social and welfare services by a variety of forms of partnerships.

In RDPs provisions and current implementation phase, 16.9 is the most targeted intervention with respect to Social Farming and related services. It can be seen as an innovative cooperative form of diversification of agricultural firms; it is also a specific support to different actors involved into providing social services, implemented through a specific form of cooperation for Social Farming.

It finances cooperation activities, such as costs for studies, animation for project development and design, partnership set up, organization and management, operating costs of cooperation. The main purpose of the sub-measure, in all the 14 Italian RDPs (listed in Tab. 1-3) which have foreseen it, is the development of cooperative relations among public, private, third sector entities and, in some cases, the creation of networks or of new activities in already existing networks; cooperation is aimed at promoting services and practices of Social Farming targeted at vulnerable and disadvantaged groups and the population in general.

In particular, the sub-measure foresees the cooperation among agricultural firms and public, private, third sector entities for the development of social welfare, therapeutic (health care), educational and training, recreational, job placement activities. Other key objectives of 16.9 are: the use of agricultural activity for obtaining various benefits through a common action (Toscana); the promotion of a cultural change within society with the involvement of local stakeholders and network building (Liguria); the answer to the widespread need of welfare in rural areas (Umbria) through the provision of services to the community (Marche, Sicilia); the development of new relationships in service delivery (Basilicata); the increase of the presence of SF services within markets (Calabria).

Beneficiaries of the sub-measure are aggregations of subjects variously named in RDPs: business networks, business associations, temporary partnerships, clusters, consortia, partnerships, etc.

In 4 RDPs<sup>16</sup> the beneficiary is named “cooperation group”; in one case (Veneto) the cooperation group is specifically related to SF; in another (Emilia Romagna), beneficiaries are individual and associated farmers with a multi-year agreement with a public body for the supply of a social

<sup>16</sup> Piemonte, Veneto, Liguria and Sicilia.

and/or care service (Tab. 1). The subjects of the aggregation/partnership have variable compositions from Region to Region, with the compulsory presence of the individual (and, in some cases, associated) agricultural firm. In all RDPs (with the only exception of Toscana), the presence of various public entities (healthcare public companies, other social and health care providers, Region in one case, municipalities, park authorities, cultural institutions, schools, universities, research institutes) is specified; in 10 RDPs<sup>17</sup>, also private subjects are included; in other 10<sup>18</sup> also the third sector may be present. Finally, Veneto mentions the presence of mixed public-private entities.

**Tab. 1 – Beneficiaries of sub-measure 16.9**

REGION	Beneficiaries										
	Subjects						Type of aggregation				
	Public	Private	Mixed public-private	Third Sector	Individual agricultural firm	Associated agricultural firms (consortia/cooperatives/networks)	Partnerships	Business networks (eg. temporary partnerships, clusters)	Cooperation groups	Agreements with a public entity	not specified
Piemonte	X	x		X	X	X			X		
Lombardia	X			X	X		X				
Veneto	X	X	X		X				X		
Liguria	X	X		X	X	X		X	X		
Emilia Romagna	X				X	X				X	
Toscana				X	X						X
Umbria	X	X			X						X
Marche	X	X		X	X			X			X
Lazio	X	X		X	X		X	X			
Campania	X	X		X	X	X	X				
Basilicata	X	X		X	X			X			
Calabria	X	X			X						X
Sicilia	X	X		X	X			X	X		
Sardegna	X			X	X			X			X

Source: our processing on RDPs 2014-2020 approved by the European Commission

<sup>17</sup> Piemonte, Veneto, Liguria, Umbria, Marche, Lazio, Campania, Basilicata, Calabria, Sicilia and Sardegna.

<sup>18</sup> Piemonte, Lombardia, Liguria, Toscana, Marche, Lazio, Campania, Basilicata, Sicilia, Sardegna.



Sub-measure 16.9, in general, besides preliminary studies, animation, project development, operating costs of cooperation, finances all the aspects related to partnership/cooperation group, such as expenses for implementation of the activities; costs incurred by individual “associated” parties for investments and ordinary activities are excluded and can be supported by Measure 6. In detail, the operating costs of cooperation, among which partnership setting up, managing and functioning, are included in all 14 RDPs; feasibility, context and preliminary studies are included in 12 RDPs<sup>19</sup>; activity of animation in 10<sup>20</sup>; development/presentation of cooperation project in 4<sup>21</sup>. Promotion and dissemination of results are foreseen respectively by 2 and 5 Regions<sup>22</sup>. Emilia Romagna and Sicilia include construction, renovation and expansion of farm buildings for social care activities and purchase of related equipment. Finally, in 9 cases<sup>23</sup>, 16.9 supports direct costs for services and practices of SF.

**Tab. 2 – 16.9: activities**

REGION	Feasibility/context/preliminary studies	Animation	Project development/presentation	Operating costs of cooperation	Direct costs for services and practices of SF	Promotion	Dissemination of results	Construction, renovation and expansion of farm buildings for social care activities	Purchase of equipment related to social care activities
Piemonte	X	X		X	X				
Lombardia		X		X					
Veneto	X	X		X	X		X		
Liguria	X	X		X	X		X		
Emilia Romagna			X					X	X
Toscana	X	X	X	X	X		X		
Umbria	X	X		X	X	X			
Marche	X	X		X			X		
Lazio	X	X		X					
Campania	X	X	X	X					
Basilicata	X	X		X	X				
Calabria	X			X	X				
Sicilia	X	X		X	X			X	X
Sardegna	X		X	X	X	X	X		

Source: our processing on RDPs 2014-2020 approved by the European Commission

<sup>19</sup> Piemonte, Veneto, Liguria, Toscana, Umbria, Marche, Lazio, Campania, Basilicata, Calabria, Sicilia, Sardegna.

<sup>20</sup> Piemonte, Veneto, Liguria, Toscana, Umbria, Marche, Lazio, Campania, Basilicata, Sicilia.

<sup>21</sup> Emilia Romagna, Campania, Toscana, Sardegna.

<sup>22</sup> Umbria and Sardegna promotion, Veneto, Liguria, Toscana, Marche, Sardegna dissemination of results.

<sup>23</sup> Piemonte, Veneto, Liguria, Toscana, Umbria, Basilicata, Calabria, Sicilia, Sardegna.

Thanks to cooperation projects within sub-measure 16.9, partnerships will be able to deliver a variety of services. In all RDPs which foresee 16.9, with the exception of Sicilia, SF is explicitly mentioned in the intervention description. In several cases there is also a generic reference to social services for local communities<sup>24</sup> or social services in general<sup>25</sup>. There are also services for social inclusion (7 RDPs<sup>26</sup>); delivery of therapeutic and rehabilitative services (9<sup>27</sup>); educational and training (11<sup>28</sup>); employment(7<sup>29</sup>), care<sup>30</sup>, training<sup>31</sup>, hospitality<sup>32</sup> services. Finally Calabria and Sardegna give the possibility to activate environmental and food education projects.

**Tab. 3 – 16.9: services that can be activated**

REGION	Type of interventions (services)											
	Social Farming	Social for local communities	Social	Social inclusion	Therapeutic and rehabilitative	Care	Educational	Employment	Training	Hospitality	Social management of green areas	Environmental/food education
Piemonte	X		X	X	X	X	X	X				
Lombardia	X						X					X
Veneto	X						X					
Liguria	X			X	X		X	X	X	X	X	
Emilia Romagna	X		X			X	X	X		X		
Toscana	X		X	X	X			X				
Umbria	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X			
Marche	X	X			X		X					
Lazio	X	X			X		X	X				
Campania	X		X	X	X		X	X		X		
Basilicata	X	X				X						
Calabria	X			X	X		X					X
Sicilia		X	X				X					
Sardegna	X			X	X							X

Source: our processing on RDPs 2014-2020 approved by the European Commission

<sup>24</sup> Umbria, Marche, Lazio, Basilicata, Sicilia.

<sup>25</sup> Piemonte, Emilia Romagna, Toscana, Umbria, Campania, Sicilia.

<sup>26</sup> Piemonte, Liguria, Toscana, Umbria, Campania, Calabria, Sardegna.

<sup>27</sup> Piemonte, Liguria, Toscana, Umbria, Marche, Lazio, Campania, Calabria, Sardegna.

<sup>28</sup> Piemonte, Lombardia, Veneto, Liguria, Emilia Romagna, Umbria, Marche, Lazio, Campania, Calabria, Sicilia.

<sup>29</sup> Piemonte, Liguria, Emilia Romagna, Toscana, Umbria, Lazio, Campania.

<sup>30</sup> Piemonte, Emilia Romagna, Basilicata.

<sup>31</sup> Liguria, Umbria.

<sup>32</sup> Liguria, Emilia Romagna, Campania.

### 3.2 Measure 6: beneficiaries and interventions

Social Farming and social services are supported in 2 sub-measures of Measure 6 “Farm and business development”: “business start-up for non-agricultural activities in rural areas” (6.2) and “investments in creation and development of non-agricultural activities” (6.4) <sup>33</sup>.

Sub-measure 6.2, programmed in 10 RDPs, is specifically targeted to SF in 4 Regions; in the other 6 RDPs, it supports the providing of services to the rural population or to the people. Sub-measure 6.4 supports diversification of agricultural activities and is foreseen by all Italian RDPs, with the exception of the Province of Bolzano. Within the sub-measure, 2 interventions have been programmed in RDPs, 6.4.1 and 6.4.2. The first, 6.4.1, aims at stimulating the diversification needed to support growth, employment and sustainable development in Italian rural areas; beneficiaries are in all cases (with the exception of Lazio) agricultural firms. 6.4.2 aims at the diversification of rural areas economy by stimulating investments in the creation and development of non-agricultural activities, in order to improve economy and quality of life; beneficiaries are mostly micro and small agricultural firms in rural areas and individuals who want to start agricultural activities.

The range of possibilities for Social Farming in Italian RDPs within measure 6 is wide and the choices made in the programming phase will be confirmed or not in public calls. In 15 RDPs SF is explicitly foreseen in intervention 6.4.1 (or 6.4), in 2 Programs by 6.4.2, in 4 by 6.2. In many other cases (Tab. 4), RDPs do not mention SF, but services (and innovative services) to rural population in the social sector, services for social integration, employment services, etc. The considerable number of Regions giving to sub-measure 6.4 and, to a lesser extent, 6.2, the role of affecting SF attests the ongoing enhancement of the multifunctional role of agricultural firms. They are in fact increasingly required to expand the range of services to the territory, providing specifically social services targeted to the rural population or to specific categories of people.

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<sup>33</sup> COMMISSION IMPLEMENTING REGULATION (EU) No 808/2014 laying down rules for the application of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council on support for rural development by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD).



**Tab. 4 – Social Farming and social services in sub-measures 6.2 and 6.4**

REGION	Sub-measure/ intervention	Type of activity											Other
		ine ss sta rt	Soc ial far mi ne cati ona l ser vic ic and reh abil itat ive										
Piemonte	6.4.1		X	X									Services to the territory
VdA	6.4.1												Agritourism, educational farms
Lombardia	6.4.1		X	X									
Trento	6.4.1		X	X				X					Recreational, educational, cultural activities
Veneto	6.4.1		X	X									
	6.4.2	X											Services to rural population
FVG	6.2	X	X	X				X					
	6.4.2		X	X				X					
Liguria	6.2	X	X	X				X					
	6.4		X	X				X					
ER	6.4.1			X									
Toscana	6.4		X	X				X					
Umbria	6.2.1	X											Services to rural population
	6.4.1		X	X				X					
Marche	6.2.A)	X											Services to rural population
	6.4.A)		X	X				X					
Lazio	6.2.1	X	X										Educational farms
	6.4.1		X	X				X					Educational farms
Abruzzo	6.2.1	X											Services to individuals
	6.4.1		X	X				X					Employment and training services
	6.4.2	X								X			Employment and training services
Campania	6.4.1		X										Educational farms
	6.4.2	X											Social services to individuals
Molise	6.2.1	X											Innovative services to individuals, social services
	6.4.1		X										Educational farms
	6.4.2												Services to individuals in rural areas
Puglia	6.4		X	X				X					Educational and recreational services
Basilicata	6.4.2		X										Educational farms
Calabria	6.2.1	X	X										Social services, services to individuals
	6.4.1		X	X				X					Educational farms
Sicilia	6.2.a)	X											Services to rural population
	6.4.a)												Recreational and social integration services
Sardegna	6.2.1	X											Business start-up for innovative social services
	6.4.1		X	X				X					Educational farms
	6.4.2			X				X					Social services

Source: our processing on RDPs 2014-2020 approved by the European Commission

The analysis of beneficiaries (Tab. 5) allows a more complete vision of regional choices and orientation.

**Tab. 5 – Beneficiaries of sub-measures 6.2 and 6.4**

REGION	Sub-measure/ intervention	Beneficiaries			
		Individual/ associated agricultural firms	Members of farmer's family	Individuals in rural areas who want to start farming	Micro and small non agricultural firms in rural areas
Piemonte	6.4.1	X	X		
Valle d'Aosta	6.4.1	X	X		
Lombardia	6.4.1	X	X		
Trento	6.4.1	X			
Veneto	6.4.1	X			
	6.4.2			X	X
Friuli VG	6.2	X	X	X	
	6.4.2	X	X	X	
Liguria	6.2	X	X		
	6.4	X	X		
Emilia Romagna	6.4.1	X			
Toscana	6.4	X		X	
Umbria	6.2.1	X	X	X	X
	6.4.1	X			
Marche	6.2.A)				X
	6.4.A)	X			
Lazio	6.2.1	X	X		X
	6.4.1	X	X		X
Abruzzo	6.2.1			X	X
	6.4.1	X	X		
	6.4.2				X
Campania	6.4.1	X			
	6.4.2				X
Molise	6.2.1	X	X	X	
	6.4.1	X			
	6.4.2			X	X
Puglia	6.4	X	X		
Basilicata	6.4.2	X	X		
Calabria	6.2.1	X	X	X	X
	6.4.1	X			
Sicilia	6.2.a)	X	X	X	X
	6.4.a)	X	X		
Sardegna	6.2.1			X	
	6.4.1	X	X		
	6.4.2				X

Source: our processing on RDPs 2014-2020 approved by the European Commission



### 3.3 Measure 7: beneficiaries and interventions

Within Measure 7 “Basic services and village renewal in rural areas”<sup>34</sup>, sub-measure 7.4 “investments in the setting up, improvement or expansion of local basic services for the rural population, including leisure and culture, and the related infrastructure” is programmed in 13 RDPs, listed in Tab. 6. In many cases, it supports investments aimed at offering social services of various kinds (health care, welfare, social and recreational, socio-cultural and educational, etc.). In detail, the range of services that can be activated with the sub-measure is broad (Tab. 6): 6 Regions include the offer of social and social inclusion services (among them, Lazio explicit SF); 7 social and health services; 5 social welfare services; 8 services and recreational activities; 9 cultural and socio-cultural activities (as social horticulture); 4 educational services; 2 employment services for young people and disadvantaged population groups, transport services as alternative public mobility (Sardegna, Umbria), also for specific recipients as children or disabled, services for active aging, investments for the establishment or consolidation of cooperative enterprises with a social purpose. In more than half of the RDPs<sup>35</sup>, the sub-measure identifies, as recipients of services, families and vulnerable sectors of population such as the elderly, the disabled, children, families, young people, vulnerable or distressed, teenagers. In another group of Regions<sup>36</sup> investments are aimed at offering basic services for the rural population, for improving quality of life in rural areas. The support is paid as a capital grant; in one case (Umbria), it is paid as direct grant. Beneficiaries are not agricultural firms, but single and/or associated public entities, foundations and non-profit associations, social cooperatives. Among public bodies, Regions, Provinces, Municipalities and local authorities, park authorities, health organizations, public-private partnerships, cooperatives, social enterprises (Tab. 7).

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<sup>34</sup> Art. 20 Reg. (EU) 1305/2013.

<sup>35</sup> Lombardia, Friuli, Emilia, Umbria, Marche, Lazio, Abruzzo, Campania.

<sup>36</sup> Molise, Basilicata, Calabria, Sardegna.



**Tab. 6 – Sub-measure 7.4: activities and services**

REGION	Activities - Services													
	Services for the rural population/basic/local	Social/social inclusion	Social and health	Care services	Cooperative enterprises with a social purpose	Recreational activities and services/socio-recreational integration	Cultural activities/ socio-cultural integration	Educational services	Services for families	Services for children, elderly, disabled, vulnerable	Active aging	Social horticulture	Employment services	Transports
Lombardia	X		X	X		X	X		X					
Friuli VG	X				X	X	X					X	X	
Liguria	X					X	X							X
Emilia Romagna		X	X							X				
Umbria	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X			X
Marche		X	X					X			X			
Lazio		X	X	X		X	X	X					X	X
Abruzzo	X									X				
Molise	X	X				X	X							
Campania			X	X			X							
Basilicata	X			X		X	X							
Calabria	X										X			X
Sardegna	X	X	X			X	X	X						X

Source: our processing on RDPs 2014-2020 approved by the European Commission

**Tab. 7 – Beneficiaries of sub-measure 7.4**

REGION	Beneficiaries						
	Single and/or associated public bodies	Public-private partnerships	Foundations and non-profit associations	Cooperative societies	Micro and small enterprises (also associated)	Social cooperatives	Social enterprises
Lombardia	X	X	X				
Friuli VG	X		X	X	X		
Liguria	X						
Emilia Romagna	X						
Umbria	X		X			X	
Marche	X			X			
Lazio	X						X
Abruzzo	X		X			X	
Molise	X	X					
Campania	X						
Basilicata	X						
Calabria	X						
Sardegna	X						

Source: our processing on RDPs 2014-2020 approved by the European Commission

## Conclusions

The current programming of rural development policy offers many opportunities to the development of Social Farming: greater attention to the issue by EAFRD and ESI Funds in general, both in needs assessment and Measures, dedicated funding, whose amount will be known in the implementation phase, variability and integration of subjects and services related to social inclusion.

The issue of a specific National Law in 2015, whose full functioning will be defined in the short term with the implementing regulation, is another signal of great interest for the theme, being SF already operating in many Italian Regions. In this phase there are interesting development and consolidation opportunities for SF experiences; the role of actors involved can be crucial to orient the choices at regional level and to monitor their material implementation.



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