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The ex-ante evaluation of the Rural Development Programme for Mainland Finland 2014-2020

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Evaluators

- External and independent.
- Produced by MDI in cooperation with:
 - Nordregio,
 - University of Eastern Finland,
 - MTT Agrifood Research Finland.
- Experts from ProAgria and The Finnish Centre for Animal Welfare have also contributed to the analysis.
- Ex-ante evaluation included also SEA.



Evaluation thematic entities



1. Analysis of the current situation and SWOT-analysis;
2. Programme and cross-cutting themes responding to the EU priorities and national, regional and local needs;
3. Transparency and stakeholders involvement in the planning of the programme;
4. Coherence of the measures proposed and focus areas with the analysis of the current situation and the recommendations for the Common Strategic Framework and the Partnership Agreement;
5. Allocation of the financial framework according to the measures, priorities and identifies needs;
6. Relevance and clarity of the indicators proposed in the programme (realistic qualitative objectives, functionality of the procedures related to the monitoring and data collection);
7. Consistency of the proposed measures with the analysis of the current situation and budgetary resources;
8. Adequacy of personnel and administrative resources;
9. Complementarity and coordination with the programmes of the Common Strategic Framework and
10. Consistency and relevance of the mid-term objectives set for the programme.



Content of RDP for Mainland Finland



Six union priorities -> Six objectives at national level:

1. Improved skills and dissemination of information, and more innovations and co-operation in rural areas.
2. More effective climate change mitigation and adaptation.
3. Increased biodiversity, improved status of water bodies and soil in agricultural use.
4. Diversification of rural enterprising and higher employment, better services and improved possibilities for participation.
5. Improved competitiveness of agricultural production.
6. Rural enterprises respond to consumer demand and values by producing high-quality food and by improving animal welfare.



Public* funding for the Rural Development Programme

Measure	EUR million
Knowledge transfer and information actions	80
Advice	34
Investments in physical assets	1,035
- of which fully national additional financing	656
Farm and business development	402
- of which fully national additional financing	67
Development of rural services and villages	80
Agri environment-climate payments	1,586
Organic production	326
Natural constraint payments	3,734
- of which fully national additional financing	1,924
Animal welfare	458
Cooperation and innovations (incl. EIP)	160
Leader	300
Technical assistance	70
Total	8,265

* Additional to private inputs, e.g. investments and voluntary work



Evaluation methodology

- Ex-ante evaluation carried out 9/2012-2/2014.
- Document analysis:
 - RDP draft (23 May 2013) and (12 Dec 2013)
 - other preparation material
- Two focus group discussion:
 - 12/2012 around RDP preparatory working groups (measure-level)
 - 4/2013 around RDP priorities
- Web survey at spring 2013
 - Aim to collect data and opinions from those stakeholders that were not directly involved in the preparatory working groups (e.g. regional authorities and farmers' organisations).
- Interviews from the expert's.



Findings 1/2

- 38 recommendations regarding:
 - programme strategy and objectives
 - measures and implementation
 - intervention logic and financing

Main conclusions:

- The causal chains of the intervention logic are mainly visible.
 - but to ensure the effective evaluation of the RDP the coherence of the SWOT and the objective should be presented more clearly.



Findings 2/2



Main conclusions:

- The primary stress of the financial framework is on the conservative measures, but it is equally important to pay attention to renewing the rural areas.
 - > Conservative measures = ANC payments
- Reducing bureaucracy is a vital part of the implementation and administration of the programme.





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