

Agricultural Policy Forum
”Agriculture and Rural Development
in the Mountainous Areas
in South- Eastern Europe”

Results from Working group 1

**“Less Favorable Areas (LFA) and
Mountainous Areas (MA) - opportunities and
challenges for Policy Development”**

Participants of Working Group 1

Agnieska Rutkowska

Yuri Badenkov

Ljiljana Dunjic

James Airey

Valentina Stojanovic

Zeljko Vashko

Stanislav Lazarov

Sasho Martinov

Suzana Djordjevic Miloshevic

Elizabeta Makrevska

Lyubka Dureva

Vera Parunska

Raluca Sandu

Radivoj Nadlacki

Which are the (common) achievements of the SEE countries in Rural Development Policy within CAP regarding Less Favorable Areas and Mountainous Areas ?

- **Appreciation** of the importance of the Policy Development for LFA and MA
- **Changes in supporting measures**, increase of financial support and knowledge transfer including permanent field support: start-up after the evaluation of the 1st Rural Development Programme (Serbia)
- **Specific measure** for support diversification of rural economy in LFA and MA (Serbia)

Which are the (common) achievements of the SEE countries in Rural Development Policy within CAP regarding Less Favorable Areas and Mountainous Areas ?

- **Support** for farmers in LFA and MA **foreseen in the National Policy** and IPARD (Macedonia)
- **Two measures launched** for specific support of LFA and MA (Romania)
- **LFA defined** (Bulgaria)

What are future challenges/needs of Less Favorable Areas and Mountainous Areas in the EU-approximation process?

- Identification of LFA and MA based on National needs and specificity and negotiated with EU
- Identification of needs for support of LFA and MA from the National Budget
- Solving problem of Cadastre, introduction of LPIS system
- Provide access to unused land
- Training of Advisory Services on specific topics regarding LFA and MA and Institutional Capacity Building
- Identification of specific eligibility criteria for using Rural Development support and type of support

What are future challenges/needs of Less Favorable Areas and Mountainous Areas in the EU-approximation process?

- **Integrated approach**: Rural Development – Social – Economic – Environmental measures
- Identification of **territorially specific approach** to the Rural Development support in LFA and MA
- Raising **awareness for diversification** of Rural Economy
- Raising **awareness for introduction of forestry** as possibility for diversification of Farm Economy
- Support **Farmers and Rural Population to organize themselves** (young farmers' associations, NGO-s; cooperatives; producers groups, etc.)
- Provide **expertise for support** to LFA and MA (research and development work)

What are future challenges/needs of Less Favorable Areas and Mountainous Areas in the EU-approximation process?

- Strengthening of professional services
- Emphasis on support of diversity conservation and sustainable use (Agricultural, Bio, Cultural, Ethno, Wildlife . . .)
- Establishment of Regional Institution for integrated Mountainous development support
- Improvement of infrastructure and access to points of interest (tourism development)

Which are your recommendations for strengthening of the development of LF and MA? (Within the countries & on Regional/Cross-border level)

- Provide a **platform for exchange** of experiences and good practices in the Region and Worldwide
- Provide **pool of experts** specialized for LFA and MA development
- Organize **more consultation meetings** on topics related to LFA and MA for the decision makers in the region
- Strengthen the **Cross-border cooperation** for defining **specific territorial policies and measures, run actions** (development projects, capacity building for all stakeholders, etc.)

Which are your recommendations for strengthening of the development of LF and MA? (Within the countries & on Regional/Cross-border level)

- Empower Local Rural Communities and Farmers' Associations for **Cross-border, Regional and International cooperation** (example: "Mountain Villages Alliance", Branding of Regions and Products)
- Support **integration of tourist destinations** (cross-border cooperation)
- Support to **implementation of development projects** through Inter-Governmental Conventions (Balkan Convention, Carpathian Convention, ... and Euro Regions)