



EU Legislation related to LFA

Multi-Country Workshop on Less Favoured Areas

**Multi- Country Workshop on Less Favoured Areas -Tirana, 21
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I Terminology

- **Mountain Area:** An area at a defined altitude or with a defined degree of slope above sea level.
- **Less Favoured Area:** An area with natural or economic handicaps that impede its economic development.
- **Criteria:** Conditions to be fulfilled.
- **European Directive:** A legislative act of the European Union which requires Member States to achieve a particular result without dictating the means of achieving that result. A directive must be transposed into national law within a certain maximum time period.
- **European Union Regulation:** a legislative act by the European Community of which application becomes mandatory immediately on its publication. If it is adopted by the Council, its character is more political. A Commission regulation often lays down the practical details of application,

II Why define Less Favoured Areas?

- 1972: A French measure: premium for cows at pasturage in mountain regions (*prime à la vache tondeuse* – “cow-lawnmower” grant) - an “agro-environmental” measure.
- 1975: recognition of this support by the Community.
 - Becomes “economic support” destined to offset extra costs or handicaps affecting the production of agricultural holdings in mountain areas.
 - This support is no longer reserved for agricultural holdings in mountain areas alone but goes to 'simple' Less Favoured Areas or areas with specific handicaps.
- Primacy of mountain areas for the amount of compensatory payments for natural handicaps.
- Hence the necessity of defining zones in those regions.

III Community regulations on Less Favoured Areas

Legislative acts:

- Directive 75/268 of 28 th april 1975 about mountain agriculture and the less favoured areas
- Regulation of the Council 1257/199 which concerns the rural developement program (art 17,18,19 et 20).

III Community regulations on Less Favoured Areas

III-1 Mountain areas

These are defined by:

major limitations on the use of land and a substantial increase in the cost of working holdings due to:

- altitude, very difficult weather conditions leading to a significantly shorter growing season;

Or

- steep slopes creating a situation in which the use of farm machinery is either impossible or requires the use of expensive equipment;

Or

- a combination of the above.

III Community regulations on Less Favoured Areas

III-2 'Simple' Less Favoured Areas

These are defined as being in danger of abandonment of land-use and where the conservation of the countryside is necessary. They must exhibit the following characteristics:

- the presence of land of poor productivity ill-suited to more intensive farming,
- production which results from low productivity of the natural environment which is appreciably lower than the average with regard to the main indices of economic performance in agriculture,
- a low or dwindling population predominantly dependent on agricultural activity.

NB: The current reform process relating to the criteria for classification of 'simple' Less Favoured Areas will result in radical modification of this system.

III Community regulations on Less Favoured Areas

III-3 Areas affected by specific handicaps:

Areas in which farming should be continued in order to maintain the countryside and preserve its tourist potential.

Areas defined as affected by specific handicaps may not exceed 10% of the total land area of the Member State concerned.

III Community regulations on less favoured areas

Area	Community regulations
	Mountain
	“Simple” less favoured area
	Areas affected by specific handicaps

III Community regulations on Less Favoured Areas

Currently, the procedure is as follows:

- Definition under Articles 17, 18, 19 and 20 of R1257/99;
- The Member State, in accordance with the principles laid down by the regulation, establishes its own criteria and submits them to the Commission under the approval procedure laid down by the Rural Development Programme or its revised version if applicable.

IV SOME DATA ABOUT THE LFA IN EUROPEAN COMMUNITY IN 2009

- 26 600 000 ha of mountainous LFA which represents 15% of total UFA and 18 % of the agricultural holdings
- 62 000 000 ha of non mountainous LFA which represents 35 % of the UFA and 23 % of the agricultural holdings.
- average compensatory for natural handicap in mountainous area is 2455 €/AWU and 1 448 €/AWU in non mountainous LFA.



Thank you for your attention

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