Common agricultural policy CAP: information measures (Regulation (EC) No 1258/99)

1999/0209(CNS) - 20/05/2009 - Follow-up document

This report concerns the implementation of Council Regulation (EC) No 814/2000 on information measures relating to the common agricultural policy for the period 2007-2008.

Actions fall into two main categories:

1. those submitted by third party organisations for co-financing by EAGF which may be annual work programmes and specific measures (grants),
2. those at the initiative of the Commission and financed at a rate of 100% by EAGF ("direct actions").

Budget: for 2007, the same budget (EUR6.5 million) as 2006 was made available for information measures. In 2008, this budget was increased to EUR 7 million.

The breakdown between actions to be taken at the initiative of the Commission and actions to be co-financed (grants) was as follows:

- **2006**: direct actions (EUR 3 700 000) (57%) – grants (EUR 2 800 000) (43%)
- **2007**: direct actions (EUR 3 900 000) (60%) – grants (EUR 2 600 000) (40%)
- **2008**: direct actions (EUR 4 000 000) (57%) – grants (EUR 3 000 000) (43%)

Execution of the budget, in terms of commitments, reached 88% for 2007 and 91% for 2008.

This reflects a continuation of the steady uptake of the budget allocated to grants in the reporting period.

Grants (communication actions taken at the initiative of third party organisations):under the 2007 call for proposals, 12 programmes and 27 specific actions were co-financed. It should be noted that each programme contains a number of actions and that the 12 programmes financed contained 32 specific actions bringing the overall total to 59 actions for 2007. In 2008, 47 specific actions were co-financed, making an overall total of 106 actions for the 2 years. Grants were awarded for 62 conferences and seminars, 26 information campaigns, 9 audiovisual productions, 5 publications, 2 participations in fairs, 1 visit and 1 E-learning programme on the CAP.

Grants were awarded in the reporting period on the basis of the following themes – CAP in general (9), CAP reform (42), Future of the CAP (15), Rural Development (19), Common Market Organisations, including wine, fruit and vegetables, milk.(9), Organic farming (5), Sustainable Development (3), Quality (2), Other (2).

The types of grants beneficiaries were as follows: professional farm organisations (39), nongovernmental organisations/associations (30), private sector (20), regional and local authorities (17).

Communication actions taken at the initiative of the Commission: in 2007–2008, as in the previous period, a significant number of actions were financed at the initiative of the Commission. These were carried out often with external technical assistance. Some 60% of the budget was earmarked for these measures in 2007 and some 57% for 2008. The paper details all communication initiatives by the Commission in 2007–2008 as well as the respective costs. Initiatives include conferences, participation at fairs, publications, website, opinion polls and visits. The paper also describes **communication campaigns**

on major issues, including the wine reform proposals, the CAP Health Check, and the School Milk Scheme and the School Fruit and Vegetable Scheme.

The report notes that in the 2007-2008 period, efforts were intensified to increase the understanding and acceptance of the CAP among the general public, and also to increase support from stakeholders in agriculture and the rural areas. Increased attention was paid to the local context in designing information measures. Strategic messages were improved. Actions aimed at newer and younger audiences were developed, using the WEB and audiovisual tools. There was a renewed focus on better dissemination of information both for co-financed actions and measures taken at the initiative of the Commission. Key policy developments were accompanied by major information campaigns in the capitals, with high-level briefings of media and stakeholders providing an opportunity for open and frank dialogue on the policy. Overall, this contributed to improving the understanding of both rural area stakeholders and the general public concerning the benefits of the CAP and the role of Rural Development, in line with the objectives of Regulation (EC) No 814/2000.