

Transitional provisions on support for rural development by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD)

2013/0117(COD) - 09/10/2013 - Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading

The Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development adopted the report by Albert DESS (EPP, DE) on the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council laying down certain transitional provisions on support for rural development by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) and amending Regulation (EU) No [RD] as regards resources and their distribution in respect of the year 2014 and amending Council Regulation (EC) No 73/2009 and Regulations relating to the new Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) as regards their application in the year 2014.

The committee recommended that the Parliament's position adopted at first reading, following the ordinary legislative procedure, should amend the Commission proposal.

The main amendments aim to:

- call on the Commission to avoid imposing any additional, unnecessary and disproportionate administrative burden when implementing this Regulation and the Regulations relating to the CAP;
- provide continuity of support for broader scope of commitments for 2007-2013 measures than proposed by the Commission;
- give Member States greater flexibility to address the needs of their agricultural sectors or to strengthen their rural development policy in a more flexible way, by giving them the possibility to transfer funds from their direct payments ceilings to their support assigned for rural development and from the support assigned for rural development to their direct payments ceilings;
- allow Member States to continue to transfer unspent resources from the first pillar to the second in 2014;
- avoid penalising small beef cattle breeders who receive less in aid than the EUR 5 000 exemption from the current modulation instrument, which is set to disappear;
- enable the use of higher rates of coupled payments of the new draft Regulation on direct payments;
- allow Member States, that wish to do so, to apply one section of the CAP immediately and give advance assistance to some sectors such as the breeding sector, which are in a difficult situation and suffer from revenue problems;
- include, in this legal framework, the Commission proposal on extending the use of increased co-financing rates by Member States threatened with serious difficulties with respect to their financial stability;
- authorise the new Member States applying the Single Area Payment to grant transitional national aid in 2014;
- provide that the new transparency rules should apply from the financial year 2015;
- provide that the control of legality and regularity laid down in the Horizontal Regulation should apply only as from financial year 2016;
- allow Finland to be authorised by the Commission to make national payments to certain sectors in the south of the country.