QUALITY ASSESSMENT FORM[1]

Title of the evaluation

EVALUATION OF COMMON AGRICULTURAL POLICY MEASURES APPLIED TO THE DAIRY SECTOR

DG/Unit DG AGRI, Unit L4

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Evaluator/contractor LEI

Assessment carried out by:
Steering group with participants from units C-4, D-2, F-4, J-2, L-1, L-3, L-4 of DG AGRI, DG TRADE and DG ENTR

Date of the Quality Assessment November 2011

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[1] *Refer to the ‘Guide on Scoring the Criteria’ for how to assess each criterion.*

(1) RELEVANCE

Does the evaluation respond to information needs, in particular as expressed in the terms of references?

SCORING	Poor	Satisfactory	Good	Very Good	Excellent
			X		

Arguments for scoring:
The evaluation study covers largely the scope specified in the terms of reference.

(2) APPROPRIATE DESIGN

Is the design of the evaluation adequate for obtaining the results needed to answer the evaluation questions?

SCORING	Poor	Satisfactory	Good	Very Good	Excellent
			X		

Arguments for scoring:
The design of the evaluation is based on a two-step approach. First, the economic theory and the relevant legislation were analysed and the intervention logic of the measures was developed. Secondly, specific criteria and indicators were developed for each evaluation question. The quantitative and qualitative tools used are adequately described. However, a further development of the tools could have allowed a better separation of the policy impacts from the effects of other factors.

(3) RELIABLE DATA
Are data collected adequate for their intended use and have their reliability been ascertained?

SCORING	Poor	Satisfactory	Good	Very Good	Excellent
			X		

Arguments for scoring:

The analyses were based on national and regional agricultural statistics from EUROSTAT, DG AGRI and FADN. Further primary data was collected through interviews of producers, processors, national and regional authorities and dairy experts. These were carried within the case studies undertaken in 13 regions in 11 Member States (South-West region of Ireland, North-east region of the Netherlands, Bavaria, Lower Saxony, West-France, Franche Comté, Upper Austria, Lombardy, Emilia Romagna, Galicia, Latvia, Podlaski, and UK).

Despite the fact that the evaluation covered the period since 1 July 2004, in order to capture the impact of the 2003 CAP reform, data from previous years was used (e.g. for the volatility analysis data from 1997 was used).

The limitations encountered in terms of data availability are properly explained. However, in certain situations their implications on the interpretation of results could have been better highlighted (e.g. in the income question in which only data until 2007 is considered). Certain analyses are based on data derived indirectly from other publications (e.g. the relative cost of milk production in the EU with respect to key competitors which could not be based directly on data from the International Farm Cost Network).

Contextual constraints:

Despite repeated efforts in contacting a big number of process, the response rate to the questionnaire designed for these actors in the dairy chain was low.

(4) SOUND ANALYSIS
Are data systematically analysed to answer evaluation questions and cover other information needs in a valid manner?

SCORING	Poor	Satisfactory	Good	Very Good	Excellent
			X		

Arguments for scoring:

The analyses are based on a mix of quantitative and qualitative tools. However, in many cases the analysis of trends in certain indicators is the main basis for the findings and conclusions drawn. Further refinement of the tools could have allowed a better separation between the impacts of the policies and the effects of other factors.

The analysis of the coherence with the rural development measures could have better taken into account the specific measures and results from the regional rural development programmes.

(5) CREDIBLE FINDINGS

Do findings follow logically from and are justified by, the data/information analysis and interpretations based on pre-established criteria and rational?

SCORING	Poor	Satisfactory	Good	Very Good	Excellent
			X		

Arguments for scoring:
The findings are well explained and justified based on the results of the analyses carried out. However, certain findings seem to be based mainly on qualitative information derived from the questionnaires (e.g. market orientation and producers' response to decoupling).

(6) VALID CONCLUSIONS

Are conclusions non-biased and fully based on findings?

SCORING	Poor	Satisfactory	Good	Very Good	Excellent
			X		

Arguments for scoring:
Difficulties were sometimes encountered in clearly establishing causal relations between policy measures, other factors and impacts.

(7) HELPFUL RECOMENDATIONS

Are areas needing improvements identified in coherence with the conclusions? Are the suggested options realistic and impartial?

SCORING	Poor	Satisfactory	Good	Very Good	Excellent
		X			

Arguments for scoring:
The recommendations are based on the evaluation results and conclusions. Although they give indications for the current debates on the future CAP after 2013, they could have been more concrete.

(8) CLARITY

Is the report well structured, balanced and written in an understandable manner?

SCORING	Poor	Satisfactory	Good	Very Good	Excellent
			X		

Arguments for scoring:
The report has a clear structure. However its length can be a deterring factor to the reader. Certain formulations remain difficult to understand and do require an extra effort from the reader.

OVERALL ASSESSMENT
OF THE FINAL EVALUATION REPORT

Is the overall quality of the report adequate, in particular:

- Does the evaluation fulfil contractual conditions?

Satisfactorily and fully.

- Are the findings and conclusions of the report reliable, and are there any specific limitations to their validity and completeness?

The findings and conclusions of the report are reliable, limitations have been clearly indicated.

- Is the information in the report potentially useful for designing intervention, setting priorities, allocating resources or improving interventions?

The findings, conclusions and recommendations of the evaluation can give indications for the current debates on the future CAP after 2013. Therefore, they are helpful and relevant.