



Factsheet on 2014-2022 Rural Development Programme Cataluña

The Rural Development Programme (RDP) for Cataluña was formally adopted by the European Commission on 28 July 2015 and last modified on 27 February 2023. It outlines Cataluña's priorities for using nearly € 1.075 million of public money that is available for the 9-year period 2014-2022 (€479.6 million from the EU budget, out of which 30 million EURI, and € 595, 4 million of national co-funding). The 9th modification extended the programming period for 2-years, to 31 December 2022 and included two annual EAFRD allocations as well as the EU financed recovery funds (EURI).

The RDP for Cataluña focuses mainly on three priority areas. In order to improve the competitiveness of the farm sector 5 750 farmers will get support to restructure and modernise their farms and 3 047 young farmers will get support to launch their businesses. Some 2 250 farms will receive funding to participate in quality schemes, local markets and short supply chain distribution. The region will support training for 18 900 participants and 120 cooperation projects, targeting innovation and development, will receive support. Restoring, preserving and enhancing ecosystems related to agriculture and forestry is also considered important with 9.18 % of farmland to come under management contracts to improve biodiversity. Nearly 39 % of the rural population will be covered by a LEADER local development strategy and these strategies are expected to create around 1 000 new jobs.

Support for Rural Development is the 2nd Pillar of the Common Agricultural Policy, providing Member States with an envelope of EU funding to manage nationally or regionally under multi-annual, co-funded programmes. In total, there are 118 programmes in all 28 Member States¹. The RD Regulation for the period 2014-2020 addresses six economic, environmental and social priorities, and programmes contain clear targets setting out what is to be achieved. Moreover, in order to coordinate actions better and maximise synergies with the other European Structural & Investment Funds (ESIF), a Partnership Agreement has been agreed with each Member State highlighting its broad strategy for EU-funded structural investment.

This document provides a brief overview of how the challenges and opportunities Cataluña is facing are addressed by the RDP. In the annex, a table indicates the priorities and focus areas, each with their specific targets and their allocated budgets.

1. SITUATION AND KEY CHALLENGES

In Spain rural development is implemented through 18 separate RDPs – one at national level and 17 regional RDPs. However, common elements to the programmes are

¹ The UK left the Union on 31st January 2020; in accordance with the Withdrawal Agreement support under Rural Development continues to apply in the UK during the 2014-2020 programming period

presented in a national framework. In addition, the National Rural Network provides the funding for the networking of rural development actors in Spain.

The region of Cataluña is located in the North East of Spain. It covers an area of 32 108 km² of which 88 % is rural. The region is home to 7.5 million people. The unemployment rate was 23 % (2013) and, among young people, was more than 50%.

Of the total area, farmland covers less than 1/3 and forestry more than 2/3. The percentage of forest area and private forest surface is higher in Catalonia than the average for Spain and the EU as a whole.

The food industry is a sector of great importance in the Catalan economy. The primary sector represents only 1, 2 % of Gross Value Added of the region. The region has a strong livestock sector, which represents 60 % of the total agricultural production. The livestock sector is very intensive and is specialised in pig, poultry and bovine production.

The main challenges of the region are to establish specific policies for young people in rural areas, to promote their economic and social development. It also needs to promote economic recovery and job creation, with a focus on the agricultural, food, forestry and rural areas. It should stimulate innovation and knowledge transfer in the food sector and promote actions to mitigate and adapt to climate change and the protection of natural resources.

2. HOW THE CATALUÑA 'S RDP WILL ADDRESS THESE CHALLENGES

In addressing these challenges, Cataluña's RDP will fund actions under all Rural Development priorities – with a particular emphasis on enhancing farm viability and competitiveness of all types of agriculture and promoting innovative farm technologies and the sustainable management of forests as well as restoring, preserving and enhancing ecosystems related to agriculture and forestry. The focus of each priority is explained briefly below.

Knowledge transfer and innovation in agriculture, forestry and rural areas

This cross-cutting priority will be addressed mainly through measures supporting training: more than 22 000 participants will be trained. There will also be support for 696 cooperation projects in the framework of the European Innovation Partnership for Agricultural Productivity and Sustainability.

Competitiveness of agri sector and sustainable forestry

Farm investments supported under this priority will aim at modernising and restructuring around 9.45 % of all farms (5 750 farmers) in the region, while 5 % of farms (3 047 farmers) will receive support for young farmers to launch their businesses.

Food chain organisation, including processing and marketing of agricultural products, animal welfare and risk management in agriculture

Under this priority, 4 % of farms (2 250 farmers) will receive support to invest in processing and marketing of agricultural products.

Restoring, preserving and enhancing ecosystems related to agriculture and forestry

Most funds under this priority will be used for agro-environmental operations, as well as support for environment/climate-friendly forest investments. Around 9 % of the agricultural land will be under contracts for biodiversity, more than 8 % for water management and more than 3 % for soil management. For organics, support will be

given to convert 17.800 hectares to organic farming and to maintain organic farming on 69.000 hectares

Resource efficiency and climate

This priority will mainly address investments related to water efficiency so that 9 % of the region's irrigated area will switch to more efficient irrigation systems.

Social inclusion and local development in rural areas

Under this priority, the region will support LEADER Local Action Groups and their Local Development Strategies. These strategies will address small investments related to the diversification of non-agricultural activities in rural areas and the reinforcement of basic services and small-scale collective infrastructure. The focus will be on improving the living conditions of the rural population and on creating 1 000 new jobs as well as new business opportunities. The Local Development Strategies will cover nearly 39% of the rural population in Catalunya.

The four *biggest RDP measures* in budgetary terms (total public funding) are:

- € 382 million allocated to Measure 4: Investments in physical assets
- € 151 million allocated to Measure 10: Agri-environment-climate
- € 107 million allocated to Measure 11: Organic farming
- € 99 million allocated to Measure 6: Farm and business development (business start-up aid for young farmers)

Annex 1: Indicative public support for the Rural Development Programme in Cataluña

Target	Measure	€ Total public	%
Priority1: Knowledge transfer and innovation in agriculture, forestry and rural areas²			
1A: Fostering innovation, cooperation, knowledge base 4.61 % of RDP expenditure	01 knowledge		
	16 cooperation		
1B: Strengthening links (with research etc.) 696 cooperation projects	16 cooperation		
1C: Training 22 000 participants trained	01 knowledge		
Priority 2: Farm viability, competitiveness and sustainable forest management		305 690 057	28.43
2A: Economic performance, restructuring & modernisation 9.45 % of holdings with RDP support	01 knowledge	8 040 000	0.75
	04 investments	172 670 623	16.06
	06 farm / business development	11 000 000	1.02
	08 forests	17 475 000	1.63
	09 producer groups	1 354 433	0.14
	16 cooperation	8 100 000	0.75
2B: Generational renewal 5.01 % of holdings with RDP supported business development plan/investments for young farmers	01 knowledge	400 000	0.37
	06 farm / business development	82 650 000	7.69
Priority 3: Food chain organisation, including processing and marketing of agricultural products, animal welfare and risk management		115 223 376	10.72
3A: Improving competitiveness of primary producers 4.03 % of agricultural holdings receiving support for participating in quality schemes, local markets and short supply circuits, and producer groups/organisations 300 supported beneficiaries for processing and marketing of agricultural products	03 quality schemes	18 030 000	1.68
	04 investments	78 300 000	7.28
	16 cooperation	11 1640 000	1.04
	M22 Impact Russian invasion in Ukraine	7 729 376	0.72

² No financial allocation shown for Priority 1 as the expenditure is distributed across other focus areas.

Priority 4: Restoring, preserving and enhancing ecosystems in agriculture and forestry³		469 503 888	43.66
4A Biodiversity 9.18 % of agricultural land under contracts	01 knowledge	4 150 000	0.39
	04 investments	18 000 000	1.67
4B Water management 8.21 % of agricultural land under contracts	07 basic services	2 000 000	0.19
	08 forests	67 550 000	6.28
	10 AEC	149 900 000	13.94
4C Soil erosion and management 3.36 % of agricultural land under contracts	11 organic farming	115 153 888	10.71
	13 ANC	100 500 000	9.35
	16 cooperation	12 250 000	1.14
Priority 5: Resource efficiency and shift to low carbon and climate resilience economy in agriculture, food and forestry sectors		98 150 457	9.13
5A Water efficiency 8.87 % of irrigated land switching to more efficient irrigation systems	01 knowledge	270 000	0.03
	04 investments	37 400 000	3.48
	16 cooperation	1 400 000	0.13
5B Energy efficiency 87 188 000 Total investment for energy efficiency	04 investments	52 150 457	4.85
5C Renewable energy 2 400 000 investment in renewable energy production	01 knowledge	530 000	0.05
	04 investments	2 600 000	0.24
	16 cooperation	3 800 000	0.35
Priority 6: Social inclusion, poverty reduction and economic development in rural areas		80 215 000	7.46
6B Fostering local development 38.86 % rural population under local development strategies 1 000 jobs created (via LEADER)	19 LEADER and CLLD	80 215 000	7.46
Technical Assistance		6 395 620	0.59
Discontinued measures		139 018	0.01
Total public expenditure €		1 075 317 417	100

³ Expenditure under Priority 4 is programmed for the priority as a whole, not for individual focus areas