



Factsheet on 2014-2020 National Rural Development Programme for Spain

The National Rural Development Programme (RDP) for Spain was formally adopted by the European Commission on 26 May 2015 and last amended on 28 November 2019, outlining Spanish priorities for using more than € 408 million of public money that is available for the 7-year period 2014-2020 (€ 238 million from the EU budget and € 170 million of national co-funding).

The National RDP for Spain focuses on 3 priority areas. The most important priority is enhancing the economic performance and the competitiveness of agricultural cooperatives. To this end, the RDP will provide support for setting up producers' organisations covering 500 holdings, and total investments in processing and marketing of agricultural products of priority associative entities up to 332 million (public and private). The second priority consists of promoting an efficient use of natural resources, combating climate change and preserving rural heritage. The RDP also envisages to have 1 400 hectares of farmland switching to more water efficient irrigation systems, to introduce forest fire preventive actions on 10 500 forest hectares, as well as the creation of 690 kilometres of new greenways. The third priority is to foster innovation and collective approaches in the agricultural sector, with 200 cooperation operations to be funded under the RDP.

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, 118 programmes are foreseen in all 28 Member States. The new 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 Spain is facing are addressed by the National 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 presented in a National Framework. In addition, the National Rural Network provides the funding for the networking of rural development actors in Spain.

Spain covers an area of 505 991 km², of which 80 % is rural. Of the total area, agricultural land covers 55 % and forestland 27 %. The unemployment rate was 25 % in 2014 and more than 50 % of the youth was unemployed; since then things have evolved favourably.

While agriculture and rural areas in Spain face many challenges, the National RDP addresses those that could be tackled at national level taking into account the repartition of competences between the national and regional authorities defined in the Spanish Constitution. One of such challenges is the fragmentation of agricultural cooperatives and the lack of integrated cooperatives which can cover more than one region and that are able to operate throughout the entire food chain. In the past, it has been difficult to modernise irrigation systems or combat forest fires affecting more than one region because such actions could not be carried out by the regions. Finally, disparities across regions in the uptake of research and development activities, the lack of entrepreneurial spirit and the limited financial capacity of farmers and agri-food companies is hampering innovation in both farming and forestry.

2. HOW THE SPANISH NATIONAL RDP WILL ADDRESS THESE CHALLENGES

In addressing these challenges, the Spanish National RDP will fund action under six Rural Development priorities, with a particular emphasis on promoting food chain organisation, including processing and marketing of agricultural products. The focus of each priority is explained briefly below. It is important to note also that, in addition to actions related to these priorities, the establishment and operation of the National Rural Network is included within the National RDP.

Knowledge transfer and innovation in agriculture, forestry and rural areas

Spain will support the development of innovation through 170 European Innovation Partnership (EIP) operational groups and it will also offer training to 400 members of agricultural associations.

Competitiveness of agri sector and sustainable forestry

4,34 % of the funds have been allocated to this priority with the aim to support 66 operations within the European Innovation Partnership (EIP).

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

57,38 % of the funds have been allocated to this priority. It will be mostly used for investments in processing and marketing agricultural products, as well as for supporting the setting up of producer organisations and cooperation projects. Eleven new producer organisations covering more than one region will be created.

Restoring, preserving and enhancing ecosystems related to agriculture and forestry

Funds under this priority will mainly be used for preventive and restoration actions related to forest fires and natural disasters. Preventive actions are foreseen in 10 500 forest hectares, while 7 000 forest hectares will benefit from restoration actions.

Resource efficiency and climate

4,97 % of the programme aims at promoting resource efficiency and the shift towards low carbon and climate resilient economy. This priority will mainly address interregional investments related to water efficiency in order that 0.05 % of the total Spanish irrigated area is provided with more efficient irrigation systems through the National RDP. Support

for 42 cooperation projects related to energy efficiency and renewable energies is also foreseen.

Social inclusion and local development in rural areas

5,05% of the programme has been allocated to this priority. This will be entirely dedicated to the creation of 690 kilometres of natural pathways covering more than one Spanish region.

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

- € 210 million allocated to Measure 4: investments in physical aspects
- € 88 million allocated to Measure 8: forest investments
- € 59 million allocated to Measure 16: cooperation
- € 21 million allocated to Measure 7: basic services and village renewal in rural areas

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

Target	Measure	€ Total public	%
Priority1: Knowledge transfer and innovation in agriculture, forestry and rural areas¹			
1A: Fostering innovation, cooperation, knowledge base 15.34 % of RDP expenditure	01 knowledge 02 advisory 16 cooperation		
1B: Strengthening links (with research etc.) 200 cooperation projects	16 cooperation		
1C: Training 400 participants trained	01 knowledge		
Priority 2: Farm viability, competitiveness and sustainable forest management		17 727 586	4.34
2A Farm performance Number of EIP cooperation operations: 66	16 cooperation	17 727 586	4.34
Priority 3: Food chain organisation, including processing and marketing of agricultural products, animal welfare and risk management		234 199 374	57.38
3A: Improving competitiveness of primary producers 0,05 % of agricultural holdings receiving support for participating in quality schemes, local markets and short supply circuits, and producer groups/organisations	09 producer groups	3 259 647	0.80
500 holdings participating in producer groups supported	16 cooperation	26 982 777	6.61
3C+: Fostering size of associative entities to improve market positioning through investments in processing and/or marketing	01 knowledge	4 916 628	1.20
Total investment (public + private): 331 733 871	04 investments	199 040 322	48.76

¹ 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 forestry²		97 396 291	23.86
4A Biodiversity	08 forest	88 119 614	21.59
1 040 000 hectares benefitting from forest fire prevention actions	15 forest environm.	4 028 000	0.99
	16 cooperation	5 248 677	1.29
4B Water management			
17 cooperation projects related to water management			
4C Soil erosion and management			
7 000 hectares benefitting from forest fire restoration actions			
Priority 5: Resource efficiency and shift to low carbon and climate resilience economy in agriculture, food and forestry sectors		20 275 529	4.97
5A Water efficiency	04 investments	11 258 716	2.76
0.05 % of irrigated land switching to more efficient irrigation systems			
Total investments (public and private): 11 258 716	16 cooperation	3 162 906	0.77
5B Energy efficiency			
30 cooperation projects related to energy efficiency	16 cooperation	2 483 540	0.61
5C Renewable energy			
12 cooperation projects related to renewable energies	16 cooperation	3 370 367	0.83
Priority 6: Social inclusion, poverty reduction and economic development in rural areas		20 630 496	5.05
6B Fostering local development			
Population benefitting from improved infrastructures: 420 000 (1.5 %)	07 basic services	20 630 496	5.05
690 kilometres of natural greenways			
Technical Assistance		17 949 345	4.40
Total public expenditure €		408 178 621	100

² Expenditure under Priority 4 is programmed for the priority as a whole, not for individual focus areas