



Factsheet on 2014-2022 Rural Development Programme for Lazio

The Rural Development Programme (RDP) of the Region Lazio, which was formally adopted by the European Commission on 17 November 2015, sets out the priorities for Lazio for the use of the EUR 1 225 million of public funds available for the 2014-2022 period (EUR 498 million from the EU budget, of which EUR 37 million from the NextGenerationEU recovery instrument, EUR 607 million national co-financing and EUR 120 million of additional national resources).

Lazio's RDP is putting particular emphasis on actions related to improving the competitiveness of the farm and forestry sectors, as well as on actions related to restoring, preserving and enhancing ecosystems and to promoting social inclusion and economic development in rural areas. Over 13 % of agricultural land is expected to be under management contracts to improve water management, 16 % of agricultural land will be under contracts to improve soil management and 14 % of agricultural land will be subject to management contracts supporting biodiversity. To improve the competitiveness of farmers, over 900 farms will receive support for investments in restructuring and modernisation and 2 420 young farmers will be granted business start-up aid. Organic farming is also important as a total of almost 33 432 hectares will receive support to convert to organic farming and another 51 662 ha to maintain organic production. Moreover, particular emphasis is put on innovation when selecting the supported operations and almost 1.64 % of RDP public expenditure is earmarked by actions that foster innovation, cooperation and the development of the knowledge base. In this framework Lazio region will implement the European Innovation Partnership to help deliver innovative solutions to the farm sector. Finally, the rural development programme of the Region Lazio will contribute to social inclusion and economic development in rural areas, with almost 33 % of the rural population in local development strategies and more than 16 % of the rural population benefiting from new or improved broadband infrastructure. In addition, the region is supporting beneficiaries hit by the consequences of COVID 19 sanitary emergency through the funds stemming from the 100% co-financed recovery instrument NextGenerationEU.

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 27 Member States¹. The new RD Regulation for the period 2014-2022 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 maximize 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 Lazio 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 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 2014-2022 programming period.

1. CONTEXT AND MAIN CHALLENGES

In Italy, rural development is implemented through 22 separate RDPs — one at national level and 21 regional RDPs (including “less developed”, “transition” and “more developed” regions). In addition, the National Rural Network Programme provides the funding for the networking of rural development actors in Italy.

Lazio is a region of central Italy, classified as a developed region. It has a total area of 17 236 km² of which 57 % is agricultural land and 25 % is forest land. Almost 96 % of the total area is classified as rural, and nearly half of it is currently classified as Less Favoured Area. Lazio has about 5.7 million inhabitants — with a high rate of elderly population (20 %) — of which only 17 % live in rural areas and 9.5 % live in areas classified as neither fully rural nor urban. The unemployment rate is 10.8 % (2012) but it goes up to 40 % among youngsters (age between 15 and 24 years).

The region is facing structural changes: total Utilised Agricultural Area (UAA) and number of active agricultural holdings are decreasing as compared to early 2000. Today there are 98 220 farm holdings (7 % of the total national value) with an average size of 6,5 hectares, for a total regional UAA of some 639 000 hectares. However, 97 % of farms are managed directly; of these, 99 % use family labour, with only a limited number of additional employees. The level of professional education in agriculture remains low, although basic education is increasing: 67 % of farm holders completed the compulsory education cycle. More than 55 % of farms are managed by farmers aged between 41 and 64 years, while only 9 % is managed by “under 40” (value rising to 4.5 % for “under 35”).

Due to the favorable climatic conditions, the most important agricultural production is fruit and vegetable. Most important products are: table grapes, olives, olive oil, kiwi, potatoes, cereals, sugar beet and wine. The presence of an important number of quality products (the Region has 59 PDO/PGI, while organic farming covers 7 % of total UAA) is a significant point of strength. However, the export rate of the regional food industry is extremely low (it accounts for only 2.5 % of the total value of the national export).

As it concerns the production of energy from renewable sources, the region is lagging behind in terms of energy production from biomass (Lazio produces only 0.68 % of the total energy produced by Italy from biomass in the agricultural sector).

Lazio is characterized also by an important naturalistic heritage: the surface covered by protected high value natural areas, parks and reserves, is some 487 000 hectares, including 200 Natura 2000 sites, covering 23 % of the total regional surface area. Management plans have already been completed for 75 % of Natura 2000 sites, but so far only ten management plans have been adopted. The main environmental challenges to be tackled concern pollution, plant diseases, landslides and soil erosion.

2. MODALITY WITH WHICH THE LAZIO'S RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME WILL ADDRESS THESE CHALLENGES

In addressing the challenges, Lazio's RDP will fund operations under all six Rural Development priorities, — with a particular emphasis on “Improving the competitiveness of the farm and forestry sectors”, as well as on “Restoring, preserving and enhancing ecosystems” and on “Promoting social inclusion and economic development in rural areas”. The focus of each priority is explained briefly below.

Knowledge transfer and innovation in agriculture, forestry and rural areas

Knowledge transfer will address the training, coaching, information and advisory needs of the agricultural, food and forestry sectors as well other land holder and SMEs in rural areas, in particular related to sustainable agricultural and forestry practices, regulatory issues, innovation and technology, quality products and diversification. Almost 6000 places will be made available in training courses. An important element is innovation: 349 projects will be financed to strengthen the link between agri-food and forestry sectors and research and innovation.

Competitiveness of agri sector and sustainable forestry

Given the ageing farmer population and the small — and lately further decreasing — size of agricultural holdings in the region, the RDP will support the start-up of 2 420 young farmers and investments and modernization 926 farms, with a specific emphasis on innovation as a means to increase competitiveness. The sustainability of agricultural production is taken into account also by promoting a reduction of energy consumption and an efficient use of renewable energy sources.

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

Under this priority, Lazio will support the promotion of quality products and the participation of farmers to quality schemes: the RDP is expected to support 182 farms to participate in quality schemes. The RDP will also support the development and strengthening of supply chains, including short supply chains and local markets, in order to enlarge the market of the regional products and ensure a higher added value to the farmer's production resulting in a higher income for the farmer. Cooperation and chain projects will also be supported for this purpose.

Restoring, preserving and enhancing ecosystems related to agriculture and forestry

Under this priority, Lazio will focus on environment-friendly farm investments and management procedures: 13 % of agricultural land will be under contracts to improve water management. The erosion problem will be tackled by linking up 16 % of agricultural land to management contracts to combat soil erosion. In addition, around 14 % of agricultural and forest land will be covered by management contracts supporting biodiversity. About 30 % of the allocated EAFRD amount will be used for area-based payments to farmers for using environment/climate-friendly land management practices, including organic farming and support to areas facing natural constraints. Around 85 000 hectares of farmland will receive support to either convert or maintain organic farming.

Resource efficiency and climate

Under this priority, RDP Lazio will pursue carbon conservation and sequestration mainly by supporting afforestation, agroforestry systems, the prevention and restoration of damage to forest, the improvement of the resilience and environmental value of forest ecosystems, as well as their conservation, also by encouraging environmentally and climate friendly forest conservation services; 3.2 % of the regional agricultural area will be covered by management contracts to reduce greenhouse gas and/or ammonia emissions and 2.4 % of the total regional agricultural and forestry area will be subject to management contracts contributing to carbon sequestration and conservation. The rural development programme will also pursue energy efficiency through investments for a total of around EUR 9 million of public and private funds and support the production of energy from renewable sources through investments for a total amount of approximately EUR 26 million of public funds.

Social inclusion and local development in rural areas

The rural development programme of Lazio shall pay particular attention to social inclusion and economic development in rural areas, which shall be promoted through support for the creation and diversification of SMEs as well as farm and business development, including support for technological and ICT activities and services, the provision of basic services and village renewal in rural areas, including in the area of health and social care services. Moreover, Local Development Strategies will be implemented through 14 LEADER Local Action Groups and will cover over 32 % of the rural population. Under this priority, 300 new jobs will be created, 12 % of the rural population will benefit from new or improved services and 16 % of rural population in rural areas will benefit from new or improved broadband services/infrastructures.

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

- EUR 245 million allocated to measure 4 (Investments in physical assets)
- EUR 198 million allocated to measure 11 (Organic)
- EUR 170 million allocated to measure 6 (Farm/business development)
- EUR 128 million allocated to measure 14 (Animal welfare)
- EUR 89 million allocated to measure 10 (Agro-environment-climate measure)

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

Target		Measure	Indicative public support (€)	%
P1: Fostering knowledge transfer and innovation in agriculture, forestry, and rural areas			0,00	
1A Innovation, cooperation, knowledge			0,00	
T1: percentage of expenditure under Articles 14, 15 and 35 of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013 in relation to the total expenditure for the RDP (focus area 1A)	1,64	M01 Knowledge	0,00	
		M02 Advisory services	0,00	
		M16 Cooperation	0,00	
1B Research & innovation			0,00	
T2: Total number of cooperation operations supported under the cooperation measure (Article 35 of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013) (groups, networks/clusters, pilot projects...) (focus area 1B)	349,00	M16 Cooperation	0,00	
1C Lifelong learning and vocational training			0,00	
T3: Total number of participants trained under Article 14 of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013 (focus area 1C)	5.980,00	M01 Knowledge	0,00	
P2: Enhancing farm viability and competitiveness of all types of agriculture in all regions and promoting innovative farm technologies and the sustainable management of forests			390.449.273,20	31,86%
2A Farm performance		Total: 2A	222.778.986,55	18,18%
T4: percentage of agricultural holdings with RDP support for investments in restructuring or modernisation (focus area 2A)	0,94	M01 Knowledge	790.612,24	0,06%
Total investment € (public + private)	449.076.978,81	M02 Advisory services	42.562,62	0,00%
Nr of holdings supported for investment in agricultural holdings (4.1)	926,00	M04 Physical Investment	172.026.477,27	14,04%
Nr of beneficiaries advised (2.1)	28,00	M06 Farm and business development	46.535.435,99	3,80%
		M16 Cooperation	3.383.898,43	0,28%
2B New farmers		Total: 2B	167.670.286,65	13,68%
T5: percentage of agricultural holdings with RDP supported business development plan/investments for young farmers (focus area 2B)	2,46	M01 Knowledge	2.268.413,73	0,19%
Total investment € (public + private)	165.401.872,92	M02 Advisory services	0,00	0,00%
Nr of beneficiaries (holdings) receiving start up aid young farmers (6.1)	2.420,00	M06 Farm and business development	165.401.872,92	13,50%
P3: Promoting food chain organisation, including processing and marketing of agricultural products, animal welfare and risk management in agriculture			244.597.964,82	19,96%
3A Competitiveness of producers		Total: 3A	234.420.177,25	19,13%

T6: percentage of agricultural holdings receiving support for participating in quality schemes, local markets and short supply circuits, and producer groups/organisations (focus area 3A)	0,44	M01 Knowledge	1.082.815,40	0,09%
OBSP1: Percentuale di imprese agroalimentari supportate	5,00	M02 Advisory services	2.523,19	0,00%
Total investment € (public + private)	169.327.313,00	M03 Quality schemes	4.288.511,13	0,35%
Nr of operations supported for investment (e.g. in agricultural holdings, in processing and marketing of ag. products) (4.1 and 4.2)	160,00	M04 Physical Investment	67.730.925,32	5,53%
Nr of beneficiaries	1.960,00	M09 Producer groups / organisations	818.000,93	0,07%
Nr of holdings supported (3.1)	182,00	M14 Animal welfare	155.168.433,28	12,66%
Nr of agricultural holdings participating in cooperation/local promotion among supply chain actors (16.4)	22,00	M16 Cooperation	5.328.968,00	0,43%
Nr of holdings participating in producer groups supported	226,00			
Nr of beneficiaries advised (2.1)	1,00			
3B Risk management		Total: 3B	10.177.787,57	0,83%
T7: percentage of farms participating in risk management schemes (focus area 3B)	0,68	M01 Knowledge	72.349,26	0,01%
Nr of beneficiaries for preventive actions (5.1) - farm holdings	664,00	M02 Advisory services	0,00	0,00%
		M05 Restoring agricultural potential	10.105.438,31	0,82%
P4: Restoring, preserving and enhancing ecosystems related to agriculture and forestry			356.634.386,59	29,10%
4A Biodiversity, HNV and landscapes		Total: P4	356.634.386,59	29,10%
T9: percentage of agricultural land under management contracts supporting biodiversity and/or landscapes (focus area 4A)	14,18	M01 Knowledge	1.071.138,68	0,09%
4B Water management		M02 Advisory services	558.552,88	0,05%
T10: percentage of agricultural land under management contracts to improve water management (focus area 4B)	12,79	M04 Physical Investment	14.178.970,07	1,16%
4C Soil management		M07 Basic services	1.683.698,98	0,14%
T12: percentage of agricultural land under management contracts to improve soil management and/or prevent soil erosion (focus area 4C)	16,40	M10 Agri-environment-climate	44.844.750,05	3,66%
P4 All Focus Areas		M11 Organic Farming	209.389.597,99	17,09%
Total investment € (public + private)	14.178.970,07	M13 Areas with natural constraints	83.135.043,43	6,78%
Area (ha) under agri-environment-climate (10.1)	655,00	M16 Cooperation	1.772.634,51	0,14%

Area (ha) - conversion to organic farming (11.1)	33.432,00			
Area (ha) - maintenance of organic farming (11.2)	51.662,00			
Nr of beneficiaries advised (2.1)	372,00			
P5: Promoting resource efficiency and supporting the shift towards a low carbon and climate resilient economy in agriculture, food and forestry sectors			85.025.484,68	6,94%
5B Energy efficiency				
		Total: 5B	5.210.892,86	0,43%
T15: Total investment for energy efficiency (€) (focus area 5B)	13.371.917,74	M01 Knowledge	471.138,68	0,04%
Total investment € (public + private)	9.252.880,34	M02 Advisory services	1.021.340,45	0,08%
Nr of beneficiaries advised (2.1)	680,00	M04 Physical Investment	3.718.413,73	0,30%
5C Renewable energy				
		Total: 5C	17.354.918,82	1,42%
T16: Total investment in renewable energy production (€) (focus area 5C)	25.953.765,95	M01 Knowledge	471.138,68	0,04%
Total investment € (public + private)	25.953.765,95	M02 Advisory services	181.115,49	0,01%
Nr of beneficiaries (holdings) receiving start up aid/support for investment in non-agric activities in rural areas (6.2 and 6.4)	40,00	M04 Physical Investment	5.996.841,37	0,49%
Nr of beneficiaries advised (2.1)	120,00	M06 Farm and business development	3.277.140,54	0,27%
		M07 Basic services	7.212.942,95	0,59%
		M16 Cooperation	215.739,79	0,02%
5D Reducing GHG and NH3				
		Total: 5D	3.058.003,25	0,25%
T18: percentage of agricultural land under management contracts targeting reduction of GHG and/or ammonia emissions (focus area 5D)	3,19	M10 Agri-environment-climate	2.838.181,82	0,23%
Area (ha) (e.g. green cover, catch crop, reduced fertilisation, extensification...)	2.324,00	M16 Cooperation	219.821,43	0,02%
5E Carbon conservation / sequestration				
		Total: 5E	59.401.669,75	4,85%
T19: percentage of agricultural and forest land under management contracts contributing to carbon sequestration and conservation (focus area 5E)	2,35	M01 Knowledge	471.138,68	0,04%
Area (ha) to be afforested (establishment - 8.1)	235,00	M02 Advisory services	276.263,91	0,02%
Area (ha) under agri-environment-climate for carbon sequestration	26.237,00	M08 Forest	13.035.030,15	1,06%
Nr of beneficiaries advised (2.1)	184,00	M10 Agri-environment-climate	45.410.324,67	3,71%
		M16 Cooperation	208.912,34	0,02%

P6: Promoting social inclusion, poverty reduction and economic development in rural areas			118.654.648,59	9,68%
6A Diversification, SMEs and job creation		Total: 6A	147.956,86	0,01%
T20: Jobs created in supported projects (focus area 6A)	2,00	M06 Farm and business development	147.956,86	0,01%
Total investment € (public + private)	147.956,86	M16 Cooperation	0,00	0,00%
Nr of beneficiaries (holdings) receiving start up aid/support for investment in non-agric activities in rural areas (6.2 and 6.4)	6,00			
6B Local development		Total: 6B	85.973.301,19	7,02%
T21: percentage of rural population covered by local development strategies (focus area 6B)	32,69	M07 Basic services	15.909.081,65	1,30%
T22: percentage of rural population benefiting from improved services/infrastructures (focus area 6B)	11,77	M19 LEADER and CLLD	70.064.219,54	5,72%
T23: Jobs created in supported projects (Leader) (focus area 6B)	300,00			
Population benefiting from improved services/infrastructures (7.1; 7.2; 7.4; 7.5.;7.6; 7.7)	619.503,00			
Population covered by LAG	679.163,00			
Number of LAGs selected	14,00			
6C ICT		Total: 6C	32.533.390,54	2,65%
T24: percentage of rural population benefiting from new or improved services/infrastructures (ICT) (focus area 6C)	16,35	M07 Basic services	32.533.390,54	2,65%
M20 TA			21.901.357,47	1,79%
M113 Early retirement			6.793.698,98	0,55%
M341 Skills-acquisition and animation			1.351.041,28	0,11%
M131 Meeting standards			0,00	0,00%
Total public expenditure			1.225.407.855,61	100,00%