

Rural Development Plan (2007-2013) for Greece

Country profile:

- Size: 131,960 km²; 128,133 km² (97.1%) of the country are rural areas with the OECD definition (73.9% are predominantly rural and 23.2 % intermediate rural);
- 10,934,000 inhabitants; 7,041,496 (64.4%) live in rural areas;
- Unemployment rate of 9.7% is slightly higher than the EU average;
- In 2003, approximately 824,460 agricultural holdings managed 3,967,770 Ha of cultivated land or 40.9% of the total surface excluding coastal zones. In addition to the agricultural land, 18.9% are forests and 37% natural areas, 2.3% drained areas and 0.9% lakes;
- Natura 2000 areas cover 3,151,000 Ha (26.4%) out of which 447,948 (14.2%) Ha are agricultural land and 1,820,720 (57.8%) Ha private forest areas;
- Agriculture contributes to 5.2% of the GDP, 22.9% to the exports and employs 12.6% of the total workforce. Food industry contributes to 2.5% of the GDP, 16.9% to the exports and employs 3.2% of the total workforce;
- 82.7% (3,281,345 Ha) of the total agricultural land is classified as less-favoured area (LFAs).

Chosen strategy corresponding to the profile

The overall objectives were chosen in accordance with the Community Strategic Guidelines (CSG) and the National Strategy Plan and are:

- Strengthening the competitiveness of the primary and food industry sector by improving the infrastructure and the conditions in which the enterprises operate as well as the promotion of entrepreneurship. Solving the structural difficulties and restructuring the agricultural primary and secondary sectors will be of priority in this context;
- Protection of the environment and enhancing biodiversity, sustainable use of natural resources and landscape conservation;
- Improving the quality of life of the rural population and encouraging diversification of the rural economy mainly in the mountainous and less favoured areas.

Total budget and share of EU funding

Axis	Total Public Expenditure (in €)	Share of EAFRD* in public expenditure (in %)	EAFRD contribution (in €)
Axis 1	2,254,921,209	70.87%	1,598,153,220
Axis 2	1,714,908,870	75.60%	1,296,518,200
Axis 3	709,898,244	71.96%	510,813,004
LEADER	295,266,850	76.06%	224,570,000
Technical assistance	103,000,000	75.00%	77,250,000
Total	5,077,995,174	73.01%	3,707,304,424

* EAFRD = European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development

Overall aim of the programme

- Improving the competitiveness of the agricultural and agri-food sector,
- Sustainable use of natural resources and landscape conservation,
- Improving the quality of life of the rural population and encouraging diversification of the rural economy.

Axis 1: budget allocation and main priorities

Total public funding: € 2,254,921,209 – EAFRD contribution: € 1,598,153,220

In the context of strengthening the competitiveness of the primary sector, the priorities set involve the increase of productivity and competitiveness of the agricultural, forestry and agri-food sector, improvement of the age structure in the primary sector, reduction of regional disparities, alleviation of the problems resulting from the CAP reform and improvement of food quality.

Axis 2: budget allocation and main priorities

Total public funding: € 1,714,908,870 - EAFRD contribution: € 1,296,518,200

As regards the protection of the environment and the sustainable development of natural resources, the objectives include the preservation of biodiversity and the development of agricultural and forestry systems and traditional rural landscapes, rational management of water quantity and quality and the protection and sustainable management of soil.

Axis 3: budget allocation and main priorities

Total public funding: € 709,898,244 – EAFRD contribution: € 510,813,004

The proposed measures aim at reviving economic activity mainly in the mountainous and semi-mountainous regions via the support of entrepreneurship and diversification of rural economy, basic infrastructure provision, promotion of education and acquisition of skills, conservation and upgrading of the rural and cultural heritage and the improvement of information flow.

LEADER: budget allocation and main priorities

Total public funding: € 295,266,850 – EAFRD contribution: € 224,570,000

The measures will contribute to the reinforcement of the endogenous potential of the rural regions by promoting the cooperation and applying the bottom-up approach. The Leader actions can be implemented via Axis 1 (0,8%) and Axis 2 (5,1%) of the programme. Entrepreneurship axed on innovation as well as diversification of the rural economy are the main themes of this axis.

See: http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/rurdev/index_en.htm