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Agriculture and Rural Development



## **European Rural Development Policy and Mountain Regions**

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Final Conference Euromountain-net Alpine Convention  
Torino – 8 and 9 March 2007



## Definition of the mountain areas within the CAP

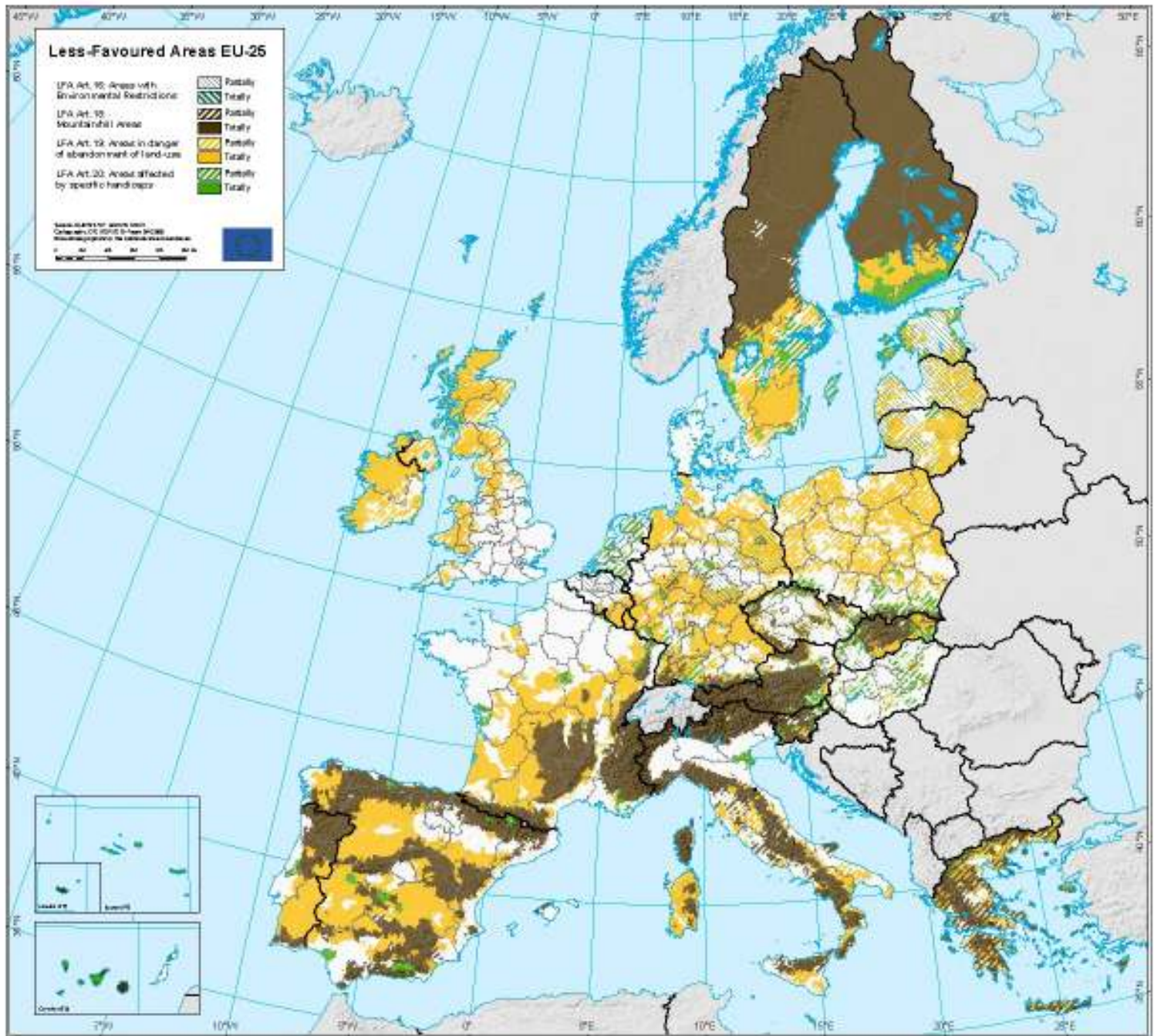
- a considerable limitation of the possibilities for using the land and an appreciable increase in the cost of working it,
- due to the existence, because of **altitude**, of very different climatic conditions, the effect of which is substantially to shorten the growing season.
- at a lower altitude, to the presence over the greater part of the area in question of **slopes** too steep for the use of machinery or requiring the use of very expensive special equipment.
- to a **combination of these two factors**, where the handicap resulting from each taken separately is less acute but the combination of the two gives rise to an equivalent handicap



## Importance of mountain areas in the EU

In 2004, the area of Utilised Agricultural Area (UAA) eligible as LFA in the European Union accounted for approximately 91 million hectares, which is equivalent to 54% of the UAA.

Mountain LFAs (Article 18) represent 28% of the total surface of the LFA (25 million hectares)




  
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## Main rural development measures funded by the EAGGF and implemented in mountain areas

- Support to farmers in Less Favoured Areas
- Agri-environmental commitments
- Forest conservation, forestry protective function and sustainable forestry management
- Improvement of infrastructure/rural roads (access to mountain pastures)
- Reparcelling (landscape management, improvement in land use, better use of meadows not affected by erosion)
- Renovation of villages (cultural heritage, site management)
- Tourism development
- Local development strategies through Leader (under Leader II (EU 15) : 200 local action groups in mountain areas)



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## Legislation for the period 2007-2013

Council Regulation 1698/2005 on support for rural development by the European Fund for Rural Development

Council Decision of 20 February 2006 on strategic guidelines for rural development

Commission Regulation 1974/2006



## Rural Development 2007-2013

Networking and Leader Axis

Axis 1  
Competi-  
tiveness

Axis 2  
Land  
Management:

Axis 3  
Economic  
Divers.  
+  
Quality of  
Life



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## Three core objectives for the period 2007-2013

Improving the competitiveness of the farm and forestry sector through support for restructuring, modernisation/innovation and quality production

Enhancing the environment and the countryside through support for land management

Improving the quality of life in rural areas and promoting diversification of economic activity





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## Community priorities

Axis 1: improving the competitiveness of the agricultural and forestry sectors

*Guideline 1:* the resources devoted to axis 1 should contribute to a strong and dynamic European agrifood sector by focusing on the priorities of ***knowledge transfer and innovation in the food chain*** and ***priority sectors for investment in physical and human capital***.



## Axis 1: Increasing Competitiveness

1. Measures aiming at improving human potential:  
vocational training/information; setting up of young farmers; early retirement; management, relief and advisory services, ...
2. Measures aiming at restructuring physical potential:  
investments to improve production, processing and marketing structures (and infrastructures), ...
3. Measures aiming at improving the quality of agricultural production and products:  
adaptation to new EU-standards; participation in food quality schemes; promotion for quality products
4. Transitional measures for the new Member States (until 2013):  
semi-subsistence farms; setting up of producer groups



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## Community priorities

Axis 2: improving the environment and countryside

*Guideline 2: the resources devoted to axis 2 should contribute to **three EU level priority areas: biodiversity and preservation of high nature value farming and forestry systems, water, and climate change.***



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## Axis 2: Land management

1. Measures targeting the sustainable use of agricultural land: mountain areas and other areas with handicaps; Natura 2000 areas; agri-environment; animal welfare; ...
2. Measures targeting the sustainable use of forestry land: first afforestation; first establishment of agro-forestry systems; Natura 2000 areas; forest-environment; restoring forestry production potential and introducing prevention actions; ...

NB.:

- Agri-environment measures are compulsory



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## Community priorities

Axis 3: improving the quality of life in rural areas and encouraging diversification

*Guideline 3: the resources devoted to axis 3 should contribute to the **overarching priority of the creation of employment opportunities** in the fields of diversification and quality of life.*



### **Axis 3: Diversification of the rural economy and quality of life in rural areas**

1. Measures aiming at the diversification of the rural economy:  
on farm diversification to non-agricultural activities; support for micro-enterprises; rural tourism
2. Measures aiming at the improvement of the quality of life:  
Basic services; village renewal; conservation and upgrading of the rural heritage (natural and cultural)
3. Training and capacity building



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## Community priorities

Axis 4 (Leader): building local capacity for employment and diversification

*Guideline 4:* the resources devoted to axis 4 should contribute to the priorities of axis 1 and 2 and in particular of axis 3, but also play an important role in the *priority of improving governance* and mobilising the *endogenous development potential* of rural areas.



## LEADER Axis

- Implementation of local development strategies through a LEADER approach to contribute to the achievement of the objectives of one or several of the three thematic axes
- Inter-territorial and trans-national cooperation
- Capacity building and working of local action groups





## Programming Steps

EU strategy document setting out the EU priorities for the three thematic axes

National strategy plans translation the EU priorities to the national situation and ensuring complementarity with other policies (Cohesion policy – ESF/ERDF)

National or regional rural development programmes articulating the four axes



## Community guidelines

- Axis 1:** the priorities of knowledge transfer and innovation in the food chain and focus on priority sectors for investment in physical and human capital.
- Axis 2:** three EU level priority areas: biodiversity and preservation of high nature value farming and forestry systems, water, and climate change.
- Axis 3:** the overarching priority of the creation of employment opportunities in the fields of diversification and quality of life.



## Community Guidelines

**Axis 4 (Leader):** the priority of improving governance and mobilising the endogenous development potential of rural areas.

**Horizontal:** Member States should ensure that synergies between and within the axes are maximised and potential contradictions avoided. They will also wish to reflect on how other EU level strategies can be taken into account.

**Horizontal:** The synergy between structural, employment and rural development policies needs to be encouraged.