



REVAB

Reuse and Valorisation of Agricultural Building
through training based on real experiences

MODULE 1

Rural areas: Added value and opportunities



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OBJECTIVES

By studying this module, you can gain awareness of the relevance of reuse projects for rural areas. It is important to know what the main attractive elements are in rural areas, and how these elements can be valorised to create added value. In this context, this training module offers an overview of the main strategies of the European Union for fostering rural development, and of the financial support and opportunities foreseen by the Rural Development Policies in the framework of the CAP.





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1. Principles of Rural Development



What is the place of rural development in the context of the global economy?

Is rural development only a problem for farmers and rural populations?

What policies do the European institutions consider important to support agriculture and rural development?

What added value can agriculture and rural development offer in terms of public interest and quality of life for people?

Awareness of the rural context is an essential starting point for anyone setting up a rural business.



1. Principles of Rural Development



Social and economic development of rural areas is important for society on the whole for many reasons:

- A balanced relationship between urban and rural development is important for territorial development;
- A competitive agriculture sector is important in terms of supplying enough good food to people;
- When properly managed, agriculture and forestry can ensure sustainable development, in terms of maintenance of biodiversity, and the production of renewable energy;
- Multifunctional activities of farmers and rural enterprises can improve the quality of life of citizens.



1. Principles of Rural Development



A BALANCED RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN URBAN AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT IS IMPORTANT FOR TERRITORIAL DEVELOPMENT

Some contrasting strategies are required to counteract global trends



Urbanisation: in the year 2014, almost 75% of the European population were living in urban areas and this figure is increasing.

1,000 km² of cultivated land (275 Hectars per day) is taken out of agricultural production each year and used for other purposes.





1. Principles of Rural Development



Negative effects of these tendencies are

Soil sealing
Landscape deterioration
Land erosion

RURAL DEVELOPMENT BASED ON COMPETITIVE AND SUSTAINABLE
AGRICULTURE CAN HALT THESE PHENOMENA AND CREATE NEW
ECONOMIC AND EMPLOYMENT PROSPECTS.



1. Principles of Rural Development



A COMPETITIVE AGRICULTURE SECTOR IS IMPORTANT IN TERMS OF
SUPPLYING ENOUGH GOOD FOOD TO PEOPLE

- The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) estimate that by 2050 the world population will have increased to 10 billion people;
- In this scenario, food production may need to increase by 50% relative to now.





1. Principles of Rural Development



A COMPETITIVE AGRICULTURE SECTOR MUST BE ABLE TO IMPROVE THE
QUALITY OF FOOD PRODUCTS

- Health of animals and plants;
- Agrobiodiversity;
- Traceability of the origin and contents of products and transparency for consumers;
- Valorisation of local products.





1. Principles of Rural Development



A COMPETITIVE AGRICULTURE SECTOR MUST BE ABLE TO CARE FOR THE ENVIRONMENT AND LANDSCAPES AS ESSENTIAL RESOURCES OF RURAL AREAS

Smart agriculture is sustainable agriculture

- Saving natural resources (soil, water, energy);
- Limitation of polluting factors (pesticides, chemical products);
- Safeguarding landscapes, including the limitation of land consumption and the reuse of rural buildings.





1. Principles of Rural Development



MULTIFUNCTIONAL AGRICULTURE AS AN OPPORTUNITY FOR RURAL PEOPLE

Essential conditions for success for farmers and rural entrepreneurs:

Entrepreneurship: the basic requirement for every economic activity;

Multifunctionality: strategic vision based on awareness of the context of rural areas and making links with other activities to generate added value;

Network: in a rural context, with small farms that are frequently isolated, the network strategy is a pivotal way of valorising farms, products and territories.



2. Link between food production, landscape and territory

Looking towards the future of European rural areas, what will the balance be between risks and opportunities?

What are the main attractive features of agricultural and rural areas?

What are the key factors for good territorial marketing?

How can a farmer concretely improve their business in the context of rural development?

Urbanisation and globalisation can cause a progressive marginalisation of agriculture and rural areas. At the same time, many people approach rural traditions and culture with a renewed interest.



2. Link between food production, landscape and territory

RISKS AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR RURAL AREAS

Current conditions and perspectives for rural areas show that many risk decline and marginalisation, but there are also some opportunities

RISKS

- Lack of infrastructure;
- Lack of services;
- Global competition;
- Climate change;
- Abandonment of agriculture;
- Lack of competitiveness;
- Deterioration of the environment;
- Land consumption.

OPPORTUNITIES

- Attractiveness of rural areas;
- Increasing food supply;
- Interest amongst young people;
- Need for healthy eating;
- Environmental awareness;
- New communication tools;
- Network opportunities
- Support from EU policies



2. Link between food production, landscape and territory

RURAL DEVELOPMENT: TRADITION AND INNOVATION

The renewed interest of people in rural areas is not exclusively due to the “wish to connect nature” but also to the values inherent to rural society.

- The culture of the using the surrounding natural resources and landscape;
- The culture of preparation and preservation techniques for foodstuffs;
- The culture of doing things well and slowly & following the rhythm of nature;
- The culture of neighbourliness and solidarity between generations and within communities.

All these factors represent answers to the sense of loss experienced by those living in a society based on individualism, on disposable consumer goods, and on the culture of “waste”.



2. Link between food production, landscape and territory

RURAL DEVELOPMENT: TRADITION AND INNOVATION

TRADITION AS A BASIS FOR INNOVATION

Starting with these “good traditions”, many farmers and local institutions promote “best practices” aimed at valorising this cultural heritage, and set up projects and activities aimed at rebuilding the historical link between local products, territory and landscape.

- Certification of products;
- Improving sustainable production processes;
- Development of farming hospitality and restaurants;
- Restoration and valorisation of old rural buildings;
- Elaboration of tourism itineraries linked with local products and traditions.



2. Link between food production, landscape and territory

PRODUCT VALORISATION

MARKET REQUIREMENTS

Consumer demand is swiftly evolving towards higher quality food products.

- **The quality of the product for its exclusive peculiarities**
In these cases, certification might be for a special production process.
- **A “natural” production process**
As in the case of organic production, where there is guaranteed certification from a recognized certification body
- **Links with the producing area**
The EU recognise many types of certification, like “Protected Geographic Indication” or “Protected Origin Denomination”.

Knowledge of the regional provenance of products, together with traceability, is becoming an important factor for the consumer. There is an increasing demand for the use of territory (the region) as intrinsic to the marketing.



2. Link between food production, landscape and territory

TOURISM IN RURAL AREAS IS AN IMPORTANT DEVELOPMENT FACTOR FOR AGRICULTURE

- Income and employment, particularly for young people and women;
- Improvement and restoration of traditional rural structures;
- Rediscovery and promotion of typical products;
- Farm life integrated into the local culture and handicrafts;
- Balanced relationship between towns and the countryside;
- Improvement and preservation of the environment.

There are many different ways of organising rural tourism, and many activities can be set up within this e.g. direct selling, restaurants, sports, tourism routes, training about local traditions.

In recent years, many farmers have developed didactic and social activities, based on hospitality for students or disadvantaged people.



2. Link between food production, landscape and territory

THEMATIC ITINERARIES TO GET TO KNOW AREAS

In the last few years, many initiatives have been created, by both private and public institutions, aimed at valorising rural areas and promoting agriculture and tourism.

- Products itineraries like “Wine roads”;
- Gastronomic itineraries to discover the local food traditions;
- Itineraries built around rural traditions that are based on cultural centres and museums;
- Nature itineraries inside parks or protected areas;
- Itineraries based on cycling, trekking or, horse riding.

The development of ITC and navigation systems support the development of these opportunities. Some organisations have set up special services for farmers, whose businesses can be located by tourists thanks to the navigation system.



2. Link between food production, landscape and territory

THE ROLE OF RURAL BUILDINGS

BUILT HERITAGE AS AN ESSENTIAL BASIS FOR RURAL TOURISM

Abandonment of rural areas and the reorganization of work on farms free up a lot of old buildings. Many of these have a historic value, and their reuse is useful both to avoid additional land consumption and to valorise important heritage.

A good valorisation strategy in this area should consider some important elements:

- Using existing heritage;
- Avoiding further land consumption;
- Restoring old buildings while respecting the original features;
- Opportunities associated with safeguarding built heritage.



3. Rural development policies and opportunities

What are the main objectives of European policies for rural development?

How does the EU support farmers that are involved in development projects?

What are the main measures that the EU has set up to help farmers?

How can these measure support farmers in building reuse projects?

The Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) represents one of the main competencies of EU policy, taking up about 38% of the EU budget.

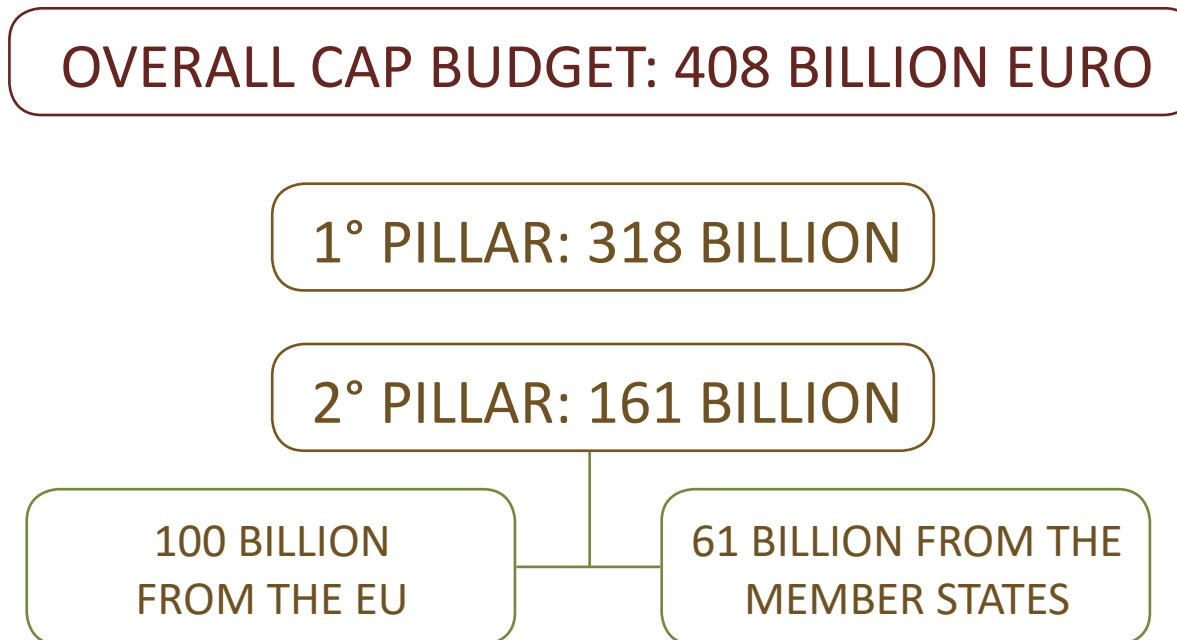
In the next slides, we'll explain the main actions promoted by the EU to promote rural development.



3. Rural development policies and opportunities

THE FINANCIAL BUDGET OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT POLICY

The CAP has 2 pillars. The first one is dedicated to direct payments for farmers and market measures. The second one is aimed at promoting rural development. This is the CAP budget for the period 2014-2020:





3. Rural development policies and opportunities

MAIN OBJECTIVES OF THE EU FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT (EU REG. 1305/2013)

The rural development policy is based on these objectives:

1. Fostering knowledge transfer and innovation in agriculture, forestry, and rural areas;
2. Enhancing farm viability and the competitiveness of all types of agriculture;
3. Promoting food chain organisation, animal welfare and risk management in agriculture;
4. Restoring, preserving and enhancing ecosystems related to agriculture and forestry;
5. Promoting resource efficiency and supporting the shift towards a low carbon and climate resilient economy in agriculture, food and forestry sectors;
6. Promoting social inclusion, poverty reduction and development in rural areas.



3. Rural development policies and opportunities

RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN MEMBER STATES

HOW CAN A FARMER ACCESS EUROPEAN FINANCIAL SUPPORT?

- According to the EU Regulation, each Member State must develop and submit their Rural Development Programme (RDP) to the European Commission.
- The RDP covers the whole programming period. The current programme is 2014 – 2020.
- After approval by EU, the Member States publish public calls for each intervention line, inviting farmers to present their projects and financial requests.
- A list of projects and financial requests is elaborated following a set of selection criteria and approved on the basis of available financial resources.



3. Rural development policies and opportunities

THE MAIN 4 INTERVENTION MEASURES OF RDPs

INNOVATION AND KNOWLEDGE

The RDPs foresee some financial measures aimed at improving technical knowledge and promoting innovation by the farmers through:

- **Information and communication:** With Measure 1 of the RDP, it is possible to obtain financial help to organise seminars, conferences, and didactic visits that target farmers.
- **Advisory system:** Measure 2 is dedicated to ensuring that farmers can access technical advice aimed at improving productive processes, quality and the sustainability of agriculture.
- **Cooperation for innovation:** Measures 16.1 and 16.2 of the RDPs prioritise the creation of operational groups between farmers and researchers, within the scope of promoting innovative processes and transferring innovation.



3. Rural development policies and opportunities

THE MAIN 4 INTERVENTION MEASURES OF RDPs

INVESTMENT AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Many measures foresee financial support aimed at improving the competitiveness of farmers and supporting the creation of new enterprises managed by young people.

- **Investments in farms:** With Measure 4.1 of the RDPs, it is possible to obtain financial help to cover part of the investment costs associated with buildings, plants, machines, and energy infrastructure.
- **Investments in transformation systems and chains:** M 4.2 supports the establishment of plants for processing farm products.
- **Forestry:** Measure 8 promotes the sustainable management of forestry.



3. Rural development policies and opportunities

THE MAIN 4 INTERVENTION MEASURES OF RDPs

INVESTMENT AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

- **Young farmers:** Measure 6.1 allows people younger than 41 years old to receive a bonus to help them in the first phase of their entrepreneurial activity.
- **Diversification:** Measure 6.4 is designed to help farmers to invest in activities linked to agriculture (e.g. agri-tourism and energy production from renewable sources).
- **Cooperation:** Other measures cover the costs of common activities between farmers (e.g. direct selling and purchase of machinery).



3. Rural development policies and opportunities

THE MAIN 4 INTERVENTION MEASURES OF RDPs

ENVIRONMENT

The RDPs foresees special bonuses for farmers involved in environmental actions

- **Organic agriculture:** a regular yearly payment for 5 years is granted to farmers that choose to adopt organic methods in cultivation and breeding (Measure 11).
- **Agro-climatic measures:** Measure 10 allows for regular yearly payments for 5 years for farmers involved in some environmental actions (soil conservation, reduction of chemical impact, conservation of genetic animal heritage etc.).
- **Maintenance of agriculture in disadvantaged areas:** In this case, Measure 13 guarantees a grant to farmers to maintain their activities in disadvantaged and mountainous areas.



3. Rural development policies and opportunities

THE MAIN 4 INTERVENTION MEASURES OF RDPs

TERRITORIAL DEVELOPMENT

The LEADER programme is a special part of the RDPs, dedicated to some disadvantaged areas and managed by special networks called “Local Action Groups”.

The main measures are:

- Renewal of rural villages (Measure 7);
- Local rural development actions (Measure 19).



3. Rural development policies and opportunities

RDP FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR BUILDING RESTORATION

Financial support for the restoration of buildings is addressed in the following measures:

- Measure 4.1: To restore buildings for farming activities;
- Measure 4.2 : To restore buildings for product transformation activities;
- Measure 8: To restore buildings for forestry activities;
- Measure 6.4: To restore buildings for diversification activities (i.e. Agritourism and energy production).

The grants for investment in Measures 4.1 and 6.4 are only given to professional farmers.