



Brussels, 23.2.2016  
COM(2016) 83 final

**REPORT FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND  
THE COUNCIL**

**on the implementation of Article 45 of Regulation (EU) No 1306/2013 of the European  
Parliament and of the Council on information measures relating to the common  
agricultural policy**

{SWD(2016) 37 final}

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

This report concerns the implementation of information measures relating to the common agricultural policy (CAP) for 2013 and 2014. Until 1 January 2014, the legal basis was Council Regulation (EC) No 814/2000 of 17 April 2000 on information measures relating to the common agricultural policy<sup>1</sup>. This legal basis changed with the entry into force of Regulation (EU) No 1306/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013 on the financing, management and monitoring of the common agricultural policy and repealing Council Regulations (EEC) No 352/78, (EC) No 165/94, (EC) No 2799/98, (EC) No 814/2000, (EC) No 1290/2005 and (EC) No 485/2008<sup>2</sup>. Article 45 of Regulation (EU) No 1306/2013 now includes the reference to information measures related to the CAP previously covered by Regulation (EC) No 814/2000.

The objectives of the information measures as defined in Regulation (EC) No 814/2000 were

- helping to explain the CAP as well as to implement and develop it
- promoting the European model of agriculture and helping people to understand it
- providing information for farmers and others living in rural areas
- raising public awareness of the issues and objectives of the CAP

Article 45(1) first subparagraph of Regulation (EU) No 1306/2013 states that information financed "shall aim, in particular, to help explain, implement and develop the CAP and to raise public awareness of its content and objectives to reinstate consumer confidence following crises through information campaigns, to inform farmers and other parties active in rural areas and to promote the European model of agriculture, as well as to help citizens understand it. Article 45(2) last subparagraph states that these measures "shall also contribute to the corporate communication of the Union's political priorities in so far as those priorities are related to the general objectives of this Regulation".

Information measures financed fall into two main categories:

- Those submitted by third party organisations for co-financing under the European Agricultural Guarantee Fund - EAGF (grants);
- Those at the initiative of the Commission and financed at a rate of 100% under the European Agricultural Guarantee Fund - EAGF (direct actions/public procurement).

According to Article 45(5) of Regulation (EU) No 1306/2013 and Article 8 of Regulation (EC) No 814/2000, a report on the implementation of the information measures under the Regulation shall be presented to the European Parliament and the Council every two years. This is the sixth such report<sup>3</sup>.

The information measures implemented during the reporting period were furthermore based on an "External communication strategy for the CAP 2010-2015" of DG Agriculture and Rural Development (DG AGRI) which was agreed in 2010, and were implemented through annual action plans, setting out the information measures to be developed during the year.

---

<sup>1</sup> Official Journal of the European Union, OJ L 100, 20.4.2000, p. 7.

<sup>2</sup> Official Journal of the European Union, OJ L 347, 20.12.2013, p. 549.

<sup>3</sup> COM (2003) 235 final of 8.5.2003; COM (2007) 324 final of 13.6.2007; COM (2009) 237 final of 20.5.2009; COM (2011) 294 final of 25.5.2011; COM(2013) 645 final of 29.9.2013.

## **II. BUDGET**

The budget made available for information measures under budget line 05 08 06, originally foreseen in the financing decision, was EUR 8 million in 2013, and EUR 11 million in 2014 (including the contribution of DG AGRI to the Commission's corporate communication campaign "EU: working for you"). The provisional breakdown between public procurement (actions taken at the initiative of the Commission) and grants (co-financed actions) was as follows:

2013: public procurement (5.5 million EUR) (68.25%) – Grants (2.5 million EUR) (31.25%)  
2014: public procurement (5 million EUR) 45.6% – Grants (3 million EUR) 27.3% – co-delegated to DG Communication (DG COMM) for the corporate communication campaign (3 million EUR) 27.3%.

Execution of the 2013 measures reached 99% in terms of commitments and 88% in terms of payments.

Execution of the 2014 measures reached 98% in terms of commitments. The figures for payments on 2014 measures were not yet finalised at the time of drafting this report as payments could still be made until 31 December 2015.

## **III. BREAKDOWN OF ACTIONS FINANCED**

### **1. Grants (co-financed information measures taken at the initiative of third party organisations)**

The Regulation (EU) No 1306/2013 envisages two types of measures to be funded through grants, specific information measures and annual work programmes. A specific information measure means information events limited in time and space and implemented on the basis of a single budget. An annual work programme is a set of two to five specific information measures. For 2013<sup>4</sup> and 2014<sup>5</sup>, it was decided (as in previous years) to retain only specific information measures for co-financing, with the aim of simplifying the grants scheme and ensuring coherence between the different communication actions.

Calls for proposals for co-financed actions in 2013 and 2014 targeted the general public with **particular attention to young people in urban areas; and rural actors** for whom actions focused on more specific issues, in particular as regards the implementation of new measures introduced by the CAP reform such as greening, and compulsory measures for young farmers.

The maximum financing rate for the measures referred to above is 50% of eligible costs. However, under Article 2 of Council Regulation (EC) No 814/2000, there was provision to increase the rate up to 75% in exceptional cases, as specified in the implementing regulation<sup>6</sup>, and defined in the call for proposals.

Under the 2013 call for proposals, 14 specific information measures were co-financed at a 50% rate. The amount of grants requested from the Commission was between EUR 100.500,00 and EUR 341.659,00. Under the 2014 call for proposals, 13 specific information measures were co-financed; these included three actions co-financed at a 75% rate as they met the conditions defined in the call for proposals for information measures of exceptional interest. For 2014, this meant the action was implemented in at least 3 Member

---

<sup>4</sup> Call for proposals for 2013, Official Journal of the European Union, 2012/ C 223/4 of 27.7.2012.

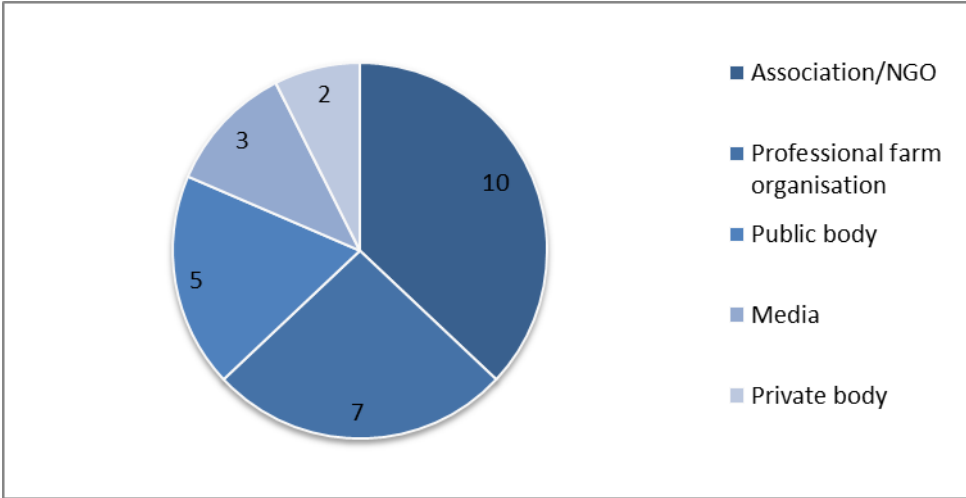
<sup>5</sup> Call for proposals for 2014, Official Journal of the European Union, 2013/ C 264/9 of 13.9.2013.

<sup>6</sup> Commission Regulation (EC) No 2208/2002 of 12 December 2002 laying down detailed rules for applying Council Regulation (EC) No 814/2000 on information measures relating to the common agricultural policy. Official Journal of the European Union OJ L 337,13.12.2002, p. 21-23.

States of the EU, it was proposed by an established network at European level or it had as an objective setting up and/or developing such a European network, and the action included a dissemination plan capable of reaching a minimum of 5% of the target public of the action (general public and/or rural actors) in each Member State. The amount of grants requested from the Commission was between EUR 133.397,00 and EUR 374.119,00. Thus a total of **27 information measures were co-financed during the reporting period 2013-2014**. Grants were awarded mainly for information campaigns, audio-visual productions, conferences, seminars, projects aimed at informing schoolchildren about the CAP and tools and workshops for stakeholders.

Table 1 shows **grants beneficiaries by type**.

**Table 1**



As in the past, socio-professional organisations active in agriculture and rural development at national level (often members of EU level bodies) figured prominently among the lists of beneficiaries. However, due to the fact that the calls for proposals 2013 and 2014 targeted more audiovisual projects, three media organisations – especially from the audio-visual sector – qualified for grants for multinational actions. The Commission Staff Working Document accompanying this report gives more detailed information on the grants awarded during the reporting period<sup>7</sup>.

Applications were assessed in the light of rigorous eligibility, exclusion, selection and award criteria as laid down in the call for proposals. This was in line with the Financial Regulation<sup>8</sup> and reflected the Commission's aim to achieve equal treatment and fair competition between applicants.

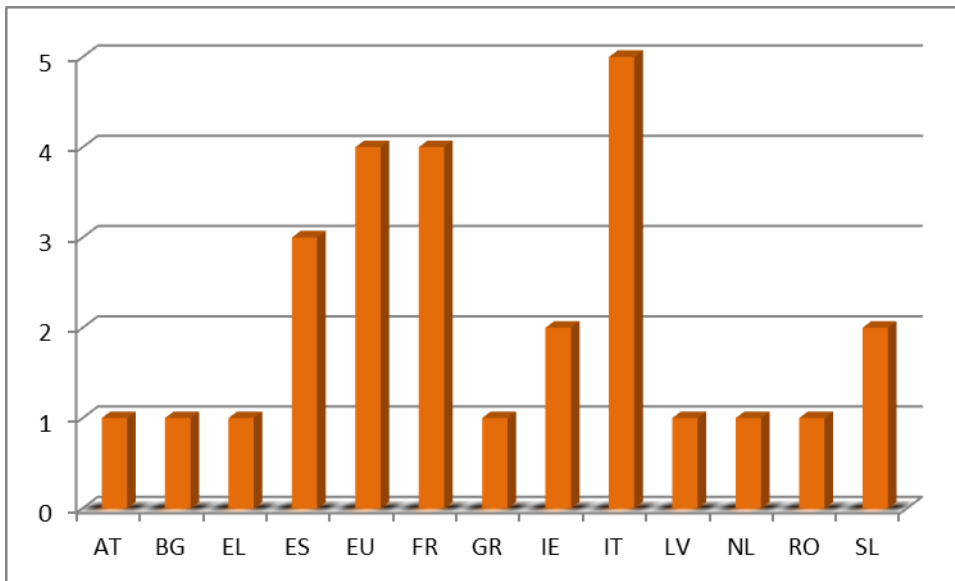
Table 2 gives an overview of the number of **successful applications per Member State**. In the reporting period, five out of a total of 27 successful grant applications were received from the new Member States. Furthermore, there continued to be a high level of interest from southern EU Member States. Five successful applications were submitted by EU level organisations.

<sup>7</sup> More detailed information on grants are to be found also on the Europa website: [http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/grants-for-information-measures/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/grants-for-information-measures/index_en.htm)

<sup>8</sup> Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2012 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union and repealing Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1605/2002 (OJ L 298, 26.10.2012, p. 1).

**Table 2**

**Successful applications per Member State (incl. EU level organisations)**



It is important to emphasise that, as in the past, a considerable number of co-financed information measures reached a wider audience beyond the immediate participants, thanks to the multiplier effect of the specialised press and audio-visual media, as well as increased use of the internet and social networks as dissemination tools.

## **2. Direct actions/public procurement (information measures taken at the initiative of the Commission)**

In the reporting period, as in previous years, an important number of information measures were carried out at the initiative of the Commission. These were mainly implemented with external technical assistance. **66% of the budget** was allocated for these measures in the period 2013-2014.

Within this budget, information measures on networking activities with journalists (**media networking**) and stakeholders (**stakeholder networking**) were implemented. These measures followed the objective of creating further synergies among different communicators in the sector and of multiplying the impact of the information measures carried out by DG AGRI, in particular as regards the reformed CAP. Indeed, DG AGRI focused its direct **information measures on the general public** in the reporting period with the launch and implementation of a communication campaign on the reformed CAP under the signature "Europe's Common Agricultural Policy: Taking care of our roots". Other information measures in 2013 and 2014 concerned regular **horizontal communication activities** such as the organisation of CAP related briefings, presentations for visitor groups and the organisation of the European Commission's presence at EXPO Milan which took place from May to October 2015. In 2014, DG AGRI participated also in a corporate communication pilot campaign, led by DG Communication, with a view to effectively highlighting the role and contribution of agriculture in people's everyday lives, and the relevance of the CAP for the EU citizen, including for growth and jobs. The campaign was launched in 2014 ("EU: Working for you") and continued until mid-2015. Through mainstream media, it showed the EU's added value in a tangible and lively way, reaching citizens directly. The campaign is part of a general effort to deliver a clearer message about how the EU, through its programmes and policies, helps to achieve economic growth and create jobs.

The Commission Staff Working Document provides more detail on these information measures, including the respective costs.

#### **a) Media networking 2013-2014**

In 2011, The **Ag-Press.eu network** was launched for European journalists with an interest in agriculture and rural development and has, since then, used the Ag-Press e-platform, a weekly newsletter and regular events, to maintain and service the network. Events comprised press trips on CAP related themes in different Member States, study trips to Brussels including visits to the press services of the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission and a half day of farm visits, and finally the "Ag-Press Annual Network Event" with the participation of the Commissioner for Agriculture and Rural Development.

These tools have helped to maintain and strengthen the network which had - during this period - around 900 active members. In 2013, seven press trips and three study trips were carried out; in 2014, six press trips and three study trips were organised. This was particularly useful in promoting understanding of the 2013 CAP reform and the implementation options open to Member States. On average, subsequently, participating journalists produce 1-3 published articles each, with the actual number being higher when counting on-line publications, social media posting of the printed publications, radio or TV.

An external evaluation carried out in 2014<sup>9</sup> concluded that the material gathered by DG AGRI is sufficient to estimate that, for example, through the involvement of one agricultural journalist on a field trip, DG AGRI reaches at least 10 000 readers. It is furthermore observed that journalists who attended an event have also become frequent users of the DG AGRI on-line and social media tools.

The aims of this long-term project are to encourage journalists to cover agricultural issues, to increase coverage of EU level and CAP related information in the national agricultural press, and to increase journalists' knowledge about agriculture and the CAP by inviting them on trips where they learn from DG AGRI, the farmers and from each other. By end 2014, there were some 1000 registered members on the Ag-Press platform.

In addition, DG AGRI's **social media tools** have developed successfully over the years. A corporate Twitter account was launched in November 2014 to complete the already existing Facebook page and replacing the previously used Twitter account (in the name of DG AGRI Spokesman).

#### **b) Stakeholder networking 2013-2014**

Similar to the media networking, the **stakeholder networking activities** have to be considered also as a long term investment with the overall objective to multiply communication initiatives related to the CAP. During the reporting period, DG AGRI launched and further developed the website "CAP Communication Network" to provide stakeholders active in the field of communicating about agriculture, food and rural development with tools so that they could showcase their communication initiatives and exchange on best-practice.

A key networking tool in these activities was the organisation of the CAP Communication Awards competition. Other actions included the organisation of targeted networking events and an "Annual CAP Communication Event" to bring together stakeholder representatives to encourage exchange of best-practice. Internal evaluation reports documented a very positive feedback from stakeholders regarding these initiatives. The CAP Communication Awards

---

<sup>9</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/evaluation/market-and-income-reports/information-policy-2015\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/evaluation/market-and-income-reports/information-policy-2015_en.htm)

competition received 118 applications in 2013 and 148 applications in 2014 from all EU Member States. In the months leading up to the 2014 Annual Communication Networking Event, more than 20.000 stakeholder visits were recorded on the CAP Communication Network website.

As regards communication activities with stakeholders, the **organisation of conferences** provided an important forum for dialogue and consultation with stakeholders on specific aspects of the CAP. This included conferences on family farming and the EU dairy sector in 2013. In 2014, for the first time, a conference on the prospects for EU agricultural markets took place; it is envisaged this will become an annual event to encourage a broad exchange of views among stakeholders on the market outlook, including the political framework and uncertainties surrounding market developments.

### **c) General public activities 2013-2014**

The main focus of communication activities during 2013 and 2014 was the implementation of the **communication campaign "Europe's Common Agricultural Policy: Taking care of our roots"**. The launch of this campaign was directly linked to the agreement on the 2013 reform of the CAP.

The orientation of this campaign reflected the findings of a number of Eurobarometer surveys on agriculture and the CAP in recent years: the guiding principles and aims of the CAP are supported by a majority of people but many of them are unaware of the policy itself. Therefore the campaign aimed to raise awareness of the CAP and show that it addresses citizens' concerns.

The campaign promoted among the broader public, in particular younger urban dwellers, the importance of sustainable farming, not only for the supply of healthy food but also for the environment, the countryside and the economy. The channels of communication used included online promotion and publications, promotional and audio-visual material for websites, TV and cinemas as well as targeted activities at events organised for the general public in different Member States.

To ensure the highest possible cost-efficiency, it was decided to run the cinema campaign in the EU-15 and the TV campaign in the EU-13. The cinema campaign reached 10.300.385 people, the TV campaign 24.296.390 people. The online campaign was promoted across all Member States, and generated a further 68.395.019 Ad Impressions and 241.320 effective clicks. The campaign furthermore included the design and development of an educational pack for school children, and a toolkit to facilitate farmers to encourage members of the public to visit their farm (open farms). Both information measures are still being developed.

As part of the communication activities linked to the reformed CAP, DG AGRI also organised its **"Green Team" operation** which consisted of DG AGRI senior officials providing technical briefings to stakeholders and journalists in the Member States about the different aspects of the reform. When the political agreement was reached in June 2013, nine Member States were visited by "Green Team" officials from DG AGRI. A second wave of visits was launched in November 2013 to cover the remaining 18 Member States. Six Green Team Ambassadors (Team Leaders) and 14 advisors travelled to eight Member States from November 2013 to April 2014 to present and explain in depth the newly reformed CAP to stakeholders including farmers, public authorities and other bodies. The Green Team Ambassadors helped to convey the messages of the newly reformed CAP taking into account also the national context.

In 2014 also, DG AGRI deepened its cooperation with other Commission departments, for example, working closely with DG Health and Food Safety (DG SANTE) in organising a

**common stand at large scale agricultural fairs** such as "Grüne Woche" in Berlin, the "Salon de l'Agriculture" in Paris and "Salone del Gusto" in Turin. This cooperation helped provide the general public with a more coherent image of the European Commission, under the theme "From farm to fork". It resulted in improved efficiency in the deployment of human and financial resources used to represent the Commission at these important fairs.

#### **d) Horizontal communication activities**

##### ***Publications***

In the reporting period, publications continued to reflect the legislative programme. This included texts concerning the farm accountancy data network (FADN), the forestry policy, young farmers, the monitoring and evaluation framework of the CAP, etc. The publications were widely distributed via the representations of the European Commission in the Member States, the European Documentation Centres as well as during some fairs and other public events where DG AGRI was present.

##### ***Website and Audio-visual***

In addition to the online activities within the above mentioned projects, DG AGRI continued devoting resources to the Europa website "Agriculture and Rural Development", notably as an important source of specialist information on the CAP and rural development, as well as to social media accounts and the Commissioner's website (until 1/11/2014 when DG COMM took over all Commissioners' websites).

The switch-over to a completely new web presence (new corporate design, user-centred approach, new web content management system, streamlined and updated content, all in line with the Commission's Digital Transformation initiative) is currently under way.

In addition, a Video News Release (VNR) was produced in June 2013 on the occasion of the political agreement on the CAP reform. This VNR showcased the diversity of European agriculture while explaining the CAP and giving concrete examples from four different Member States of how the policy brings practical benefits.

##### ***Opinion polls***

In May 2013, a special Eurobarometer survey was carried out to monitor and evaluate the opinion of citizens on the CAP and related issues. The survey was carried out in all EU Member States based on responses of 28.000 citizens. The objective was to continue tracking EU public opinion on a range of issues relevant to the Commission's work in this field with a view to better target the Commission's communication actions in relation with the EU's major policies, including the CAP.

##### ***Visits***

In the reporting period, DG AGRI continued to receive groups of visitors, comprising principally farmers, farmers' representatives, students, regional and local representatives, journalists and academics. The purpose of the visits was to explain and deepen understanding of the CAP, including rural development, and the rationale for its reform. In total, 220 visitor groups (comprising 4919 individual persons) were hosted in the DG AGRI premises during 2013 and 2014.

##### ***EXPO Milano***

Preparatory work for the European Commission's presence at the world EXPO 2015 in Milan, under the theme "*Feeding the Planet, Energy for Life*", started in early 2013, and continued in 2014, with DG AGRI taking a lead role in communicating themes related to the CAP to an expected 500.000 visitors to the pavilion of the European Commission. The preparatory work



consisted mainly in the production of video animations for the general public as well as in the preparation of more than 20 targeted events for stakeholders and the general public during EXPO's duration from May to October 2015.

**IV. THE PROPORTION OF SPENDING (COMMITMENTS AND PAYMENTS) BETWEEN CO-FINANCED ACTIONS AT THE INITIATIVE OF THIRD PARTIES (GRANTS) AND INFORMATION ACTIONS AT THE INITIATIVE OF THE COMMISSION (PUBLIC PROCUREMENT)<sup>10</sup>**

	2013			2014		
	Grants	Public procurement	Total	Grants	Public procurement	Total
<b>Initial foreseen budget</b>	2.500.000	5.500.000	8.000.000	3.000.000	5.000.000	8.000.000
<b>Commitments in EUR</b>	2.423.345	5.531.484	7.954.830	3.062.075	4.740.020	7.802.095
<b>% of commitment</b>	97%	110%	99%	102%	95%	98%
<b>Payments (**) in EUR</b>	2.035.614	4.974.298	7.009.912	(*)	(*)	(*)
<b>% of disbursement vs commitment</b>	84%	90%	88%	(*)	(*)	(*)

(\*) Figures not yet available at the time of drafting this report – most of the actions were not paid yet.

(\*\*) The payments mentioned in the table do not only represent the execution of the year N, but regroup the payments made in years N and N+1 in the commitments of year N.

Payments are generally lower than the amounts originally committed. In the case of grants, this can be explained by the fact that final costs of the actions are lower than initially foreseen by the beneficiary, and secondly, because not all expenses declared by the beneficiaries can be considered as eligible. In the case of actions taken at the initiative of the Commission, the difference between payments and commitments is smaller. This arises from the fact that, while commitments are fixed, actual expenditure is less than that foreseen due to savings and the use of more cost-effective measures during implementation.

**V. CONCLUSION**

The information measures carried out by DG AGRI during the reporting period 2013-2014 followed the objectives laid down in Article 45 of Regulation (EU) No 1306/2013 as regards communication and information measures in relation to the CAP, as well as the "External communication strategy for the CAP 2010-2015" through the annual action plans for 2013 and 2014. The measures targeted specific groups and transmitted key messages with a main focus on younger urban audiences as regards the general public; and, rural actors as regards specific issues, in particular in relation to the new measures introduced by the CAP reform, and on multipliers such as media representatives and stakeholder organisations. In carrying

<sup>10</sup> EUR 3.000.000 for Corporate Communication activities managed by DG COMM not included in this table

out these information measures, efforts were further reinforced to promote stronger synergies between the information measures of the DG AGRI, other DGs of the European Commission, partners in civil society, with national ministries and journalists as multipliers.

For future information measures, a new strategy covering the period 2016-2020 is being elaborated in the light of the results and recommendations of the evaluation of the overall communication activities conducted by DG AGRI for the period 2010-2014 (published in June 2015<sup>11</sup>).

---

<sup>11</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/evaluation/market-and-income-reports/information-policy-2015\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/evaluation/market-and-income-reports/information-policy-2015_en.htm)