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

**13th FINANCIAL REPORT FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN
PARLIAMENT AND THE COUNCIL
on the EUROPEAN AGRICULTURAL FUND FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT
(EAFRD)
2019 FINANCIAL YEAR**

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1. BUDGET PROCEDURE

1.1. Financial framework

Rural development expenditure in 2019 is funded within the multiannual financial framework (MFF) 2014-2020. The financial framework is provided by Council Regulation (EU) No 1311/2013. The allocation for rural development and the allocation for market related expenditure and direct payments after the annual technical adjustment of the MFF are presented in table 1.

Table 1 – Financial framework 2014-2020

HEADING 2. Sustainable growth: natural resources	In million EUR; current prices						
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
TOTAL	49 857	64 692	64 262	60 191	60 267	60 344	60 421
of which :							
- Rural Development ^{a), b), c), d), e)}	5 298.9	18 183.7	18 683.7	14 371.2	14 381.0	14 690.6	14 709.4
- Market related expenditure and direct aids, ^{a), b), c), d)}	43 778.1	44 189.8	43 950.2	44 145.7	44 162.4	43 880.3	43 887.1

a) After net transfer of EUR 351.9 million between EAGF and EAFRD for the financial year 2014 (see note f for details)

b) After net transfer of EUR 51.6 million between EAGF and EAFRD for the financial year 2015 (see note f for details)

c) After net transfer of EUR 28 million between EAGF and EAFRD for the financial years 2014-2020 (see note f for details)

d) After net transfer of EUR 4 313.9 million between EAGF and EAFRD for financial years 2015-2020 (see note f for details)

e) After the reprogramming of the EAFRD allocation of year 2014 following the application of Article 19 of MFF Regulation (EU) No 1311/2013 a total amount of EUR 8 705 million deducted from 2014 commitments was equally distributed to 2015 and 2016 commitments

f) The transfers to rural development (EAFRD) mentioned in notes a) to d) above involve: EUR 4 million transferred annually for the whole period 2014-2020 from the cotton sector (Greece) on the basis of Article 66(1) of Regulation (EU) No 1307/2013, EUR 296.3 million set for the voluntary adjustment transferred for the financial year 2014 (UK) on the basis of Article 10b and 10c(2) of Regulation (EC) No 73/2009, EUR 51.6 million for unspent amounts transferred each year for financial years 2014 and 2015 (SE and DE) on the basis of Articles 136 and 136b of Regulation (EC) No 73/2009 and EUR 4 313.9 million for the reduction of payments and the flexibility between pillars on the basis of Articles 7(2) and 14(1) of Regulation (EU) No 1307/2013

1.2. Draft Budget (DB) 2019

The Draft Budget (DB) 2019 was adopted by the Commission and proposed to the Budgetary Authority on 21 June 2018.

The Draft Budget included EUR 14 679 million in commitment appropriations and EUR 13 122 million in payment appropriations for the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) 2014-2020 programming period.

The Council adopted its position on the 2019 Draft Budget on 4 September 2018 and the European Parliament adopted its position on 24 October 2018. The Conciliation Committee had to be convened. The Conciliation Committee did not agree on a joint text within the 21-day time-limit. The European Commission presented a second draft general budget for 2019 on 30 November 2018. The amounts for the EAFRD were not changed as compared with the first Draft Budget. The Council and the European Parliament approved the joint text respectively on 11 December and 12 December 2018.

1.3. The adoption of the 2019 Budget

The 2019 Budget adopted on 12 December 2018 was, as regards the EAFRD, equal to the Commission's proposal.

Table 2

Adopted Budget 2019		
Budget Item	Commitment appropriations (in EUR)	Payment appropriations (in EUR)
2014-2020		
05.046001 (Rural development programmes)	14.656.460.137	13.100.000.000
05.010404 (Non-operational technical assistance)	5.034.000	5.034.000
05.046002 (Operational technical assistance)	17.115.400	16.725.400

1.4. The adoption of the Amending Budgets

None of the 2019 amending budgets concerned the EAFRD.

2. MANAGEMENT OF APPROPRIATIONS

2.1. Management of commitment appropriations

2.1.1. EAFRD rural development programmes

As regards commitment appropriations for the EAFRD rural development programmes, the 2019 voted budget amounted to EUR 14 656 million, all related to the 2014-2020 programmes.

Table 3

Management of commitment appropriations in 2019 – EAFRD	Budget Item 05.046001 (in EUR)
Appropriations at the beginning of 2019	14.656.460.137
Appropriations available in 2019	14.656.460.137
Appropriations used in 2019	14.656.460.137

2.1.2. *Technical assistance*

Article 51(1) of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013 provides that the EAFRD may use up to 0.25% of its annual allocation to finance technical assistance actions at the initiative of the Commission. In the 2019 budget, the initial amount available for this purpose was EUR 5.0 million for non-operational technical assistance and EUR 17.1 million for operational technical assistance.

2.2. **Management of payment appropriations**

2.2.1. *EAFRD rural development programmes*

For the rural development programmes 2014-2020, the payment appropriations of the voted budget 2019 amounted to EUR 13 100 million. In addition, the available assigned revenue transferred from the previous year amounted to EUR 12.4 million and the assigned revenue collected during the year, amounted to EUR 25.1 million. The payment appropriations were reinforced with the transfer of EUR 0.5 million from the line “EAFRD 2014-2020 contribution to European Solidarity Corps”, EUR 265.6 million with the global transfer and EUR 100 million with the end-of-the year transfer. In addition, the transfer of EUR 961.7 million of assigned revenue from prior to 2014 EAFRD programmes was executed to cover in full the Member States' declarations of expenditure of the third quarter of 2019. An amount of EUR 1.8 million was transferred to the operational technical assistance line. Taking into account all transfers, the total amount of payment appropriations available in 2019 amounted to EUR 14 463.4 million. In total, EUR 13 840.0 million of payment appropriations were used and EUR 623.4 million of assigned revenue were automatically carried over from 2019 to 2020.

Table 4

Management of payment appropriations in 2019 (in EUR)	
EAFRD (2014-2020) Budget Item - 05.046001	
Appropriations at the beginning of 2019	13.100.000.000
Transfer from "EAFRD 2014-2020 contribution to ESC" line	540.000
Transfer to Technical Assistance line of EAFRD 2014-2020	-1.800.000
Global transfer	265.580.630
End-of-the year transfer	100.000.000
Assigned revenue carried over from 2018	12.400.084
Assigned revenue collected in 2019	25.056.900
Transfer of Assigned revenue from EAFRD prior to 2014	961.659.440
Appropriations available in 2019	14.463.437.054
Appropriations used in 2019	13.839.996.951

2.2.2. *Technical assistance*

As regards the EAFRD technical assistance at the initiative of the Commission, total payment appropriations in the 2019 budget amounted to EUR 21.8 million. EUR 1.8 million were transferred from the EAFRD 2014-2020 programmes line to cover the payment needs. The final payment appropriations was EUR 23.6 million.

3. **IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 2019 EAFRD BUDGET**

3.1. **Implementation of commitment appropriations**

3.1.1. *EAFRD rural development programmes*

The total amount of commitment appropriations available in the 2019 budget for the EAFRD programmes 2014-2020 (EUR 14 656.5 million) was committed.

Table 5 shows, per Member State, the allocation established by Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013 as last amended by Regulation (EU) 2019/288¹ and the amounts committed in 2019.

¹ Regulation (EU) 2019/288 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 February 2019 amending Regulations (EU) N° 1305/2013 and (EU) N° 1307/2013 as regards certain rules on direct payments and support for rural development in respect of the years 2019 and 2020

Table 5

Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013 (as amended) vs. amounts committed by the end of 2019		
Budget item: 05.046001		<i>(in EUR)</i>
MS	Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013 2019 Allocation	Amounts committed in 2019
	(a)	(b)
BE	102.912.713	102.912.713
BG	339.523.306	339.523.306
CZ	323.242.050	323.242.050
DK	152.367.537	152.367.537
DE	1.397.914.658	1.397.914.658
EE	127.277.180	127.277.180
IE	312.764.355	312.764.355
GR	700.043.071	700.043.071
ES	1.183.448.718	1.183.448.718
FR	1.984.761.729	1.984.761.729
HR	282.342.500	282.342.500
IT	1.498.573.799	1.498.573.799
CY	18.889.108	18.889.108
LV	159.374.589	159.374.589
LT	247.213.599	247.213.599
LU	14.464.074	14.464.074
HU	487.402.356	487.402.356
MT	13.876.504	13.876.504
NL	148.107.797	148.107.797
AT	565.713.368	565.713.368
PL	1.189.103.987	1.189.103.987
PT	581.637.133	581.637.133
RO	1.141.925.604	1.141.925.604
SI	120.384.760	120.384.760
SK	214.844.203	214.844.203
FI	343.198.337	343.198.337
SE	249.710.989	249.710.989
UK	755.442.113	755.442.113
Total	14.656.460.137	14.656.460.137

3.1.2. *Technical assistance*

For the programming period 2014-2020, the amount of commitment appropriations for operational technical assistance in the budget 2019 was EUR 17.1 million. Table 6 shows the consumption of the commitment appropriations available for operational technical assistance in 2019. The most important part relates to the European Network for Rural Development.

Table 6

<i>Operational technical assistance – Implementation of commitment appropriations</i>	
Budget Item: 05.046002 <i>(in EUR)</i>	
Description	Amount committed
European Network for Rural Development	4.980.794
Information technology*	3.111.799
European Innovation Partnership	2.736.732
European Evaluation Network	1.975.414
Corporate Communication	1.380.000
Technical Advisory Platform for Financial Instruments	500.000
Organic agriculture database	433.295
Audit and Controls	644.735
Total	15.762.767

* Including BCO (Broadband Competence Offices)

3.2. **Implementation of payment appropriations**

3.2.1. *EAFRD rural development programmes*

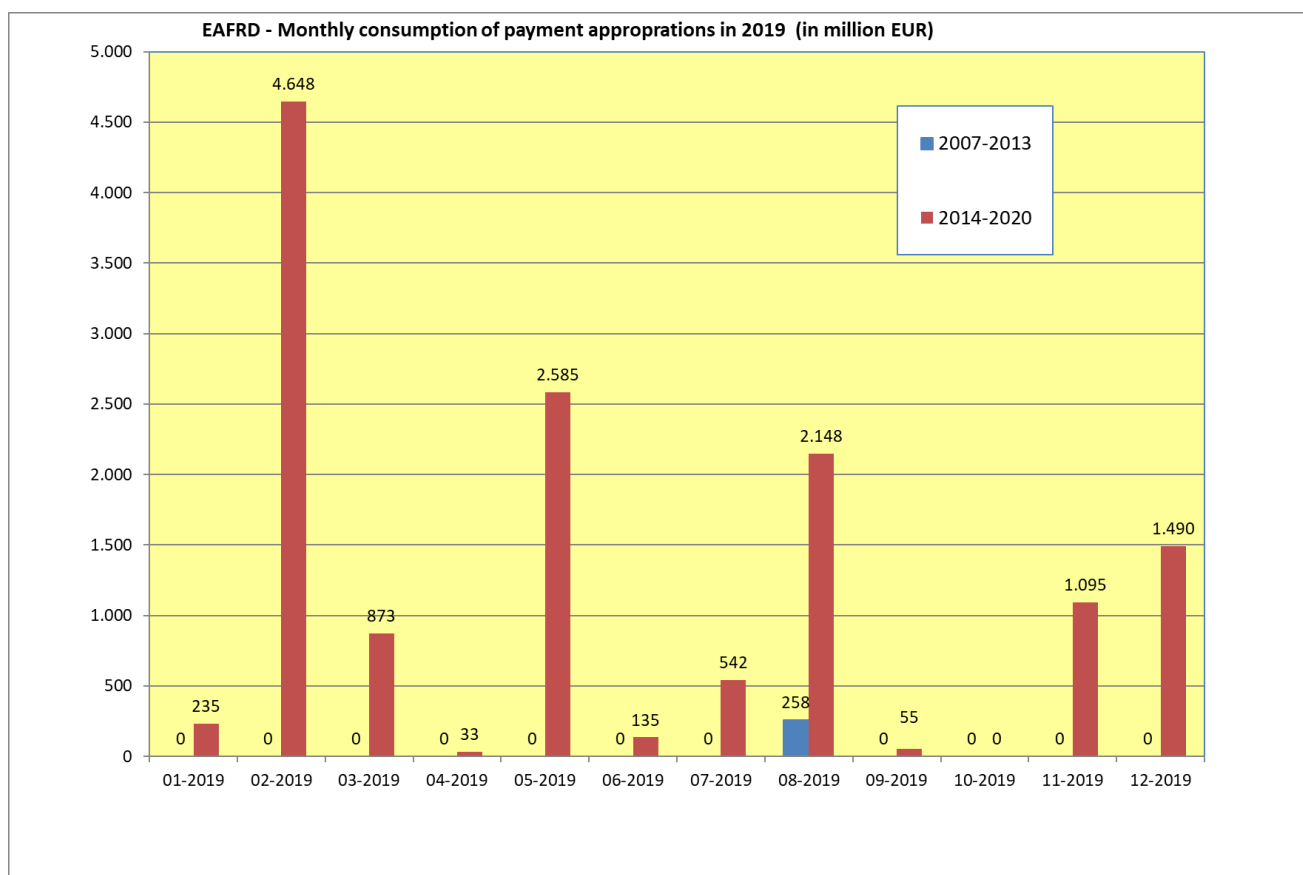
For the programming period 2014-2020, EUR 13 840.0 million of the payment appropriations were implemented out of EUR 14 463.4 million available. Table 7 shows the breakdown of payments made in 2019 by declaration period:

Table 7

<i>Payments 2019 for EAFRD rural development programmes (in EUR)</i>	<i>2007-2013</i>	<i>2014-2020</i>
Pre-financing 2014-2020 ²	-	2.714.793
Reimbursement of payment claims prior to Q4 2018	-	134.874
Reimbursement of payment claims Q4 2018	-	5.755.256.476
Reimbursement of payment claims Q1 2019	-	2.754.299.275
Reimbursement of payment claims Q2 2019	-	2.741.814.776
Reimbursement of payment claims Q3 2019	-	2.585.776.756
Closure payments 2007-2013	257.692.857	-
Total 2019	257.692.857	13.839.996.951

The monthly consumption of payment appropriations during the year (January to December 2019) is shown in the graph below.

Graph 1



²

The pre-financing paid in financial year 2019 concerns only pre-financing for the additional amounts transferred from direct payments to rural development

The breakdown per Member State and per declaration period of the amounts paid by the Commission in budget year 2019 is shown in tables 8a and 8b.

Table 8a: EAFRD 2007-2013

Payments effectively made between 01/01/2019 and 31/12/2019	
EAFRD 2007-2013 - Budget item 05.040501 (in EUR)	
MS	Closure
BE	
BG	97.225.956
CZ	
DK	
DE	
EE	
IE	
GR	
ES	
FR	160.466.901
IT	
CY	
LV	
LT	
LU	
HU	
MT	
NL	
AT	
PL	
PT	
RO	
SI	
SK	
FI	
SE	
UK	
Total	257.692.857

Table 8b: EAFRD 2014-2020

Payments effectively made between 01/01/2019 and 31/12/2019							
EAFRD 2014-2020 - Budget item 05.046001							(in EUR)
MS	Pre-financing	Prior to Q4 2018	Q4 2018	Q1 2019	Q2 2019	Q3 2019	Total
BE	0	0	17.334.254	9.482.574	33.218.285	18.837.316	78.872.428
BG	0	0	55.344.911	77.499.583	107.997.278	67.792.991	308.634.763
CZ	0	0	52.848.870	204.165.511	86.450.814	50.362.856	393.828.050
DK	0	0	42.034.170	25.776.718	25.047.434	8.208.342	101.066.664
DE	0	0	596.910.906	291.497.999	208.933.806	176.253.592	1.273.596.303
EE	0	0	23.539.059	65.082.476	12.226.795	24.060.415	124.908.745
IE	0	0	157.269.176	30.982.563	39.397.304	96.373.396	324.022.439
GR	0	0	275.111.064	34.505.407	46.860.555	54.936.575	411.413.602
ES	0	0	527.423.244	148.716.407	278.660.313	210.819.806	1.165.619.770
FR	2.703.993	0	1.042.261.975	457.277.445	301.119.386	260.160.776	2.063.523.575
HR	0	0	74.467.768	73.992.801	98.848.103	52.326.860	299.635.531
IT	0	0	689.961.184	221.751.805	237.813.915	299.554.216	1.449.081.121
CY	0	0	8.867.428	2.616.579	2.550.300	6.918.518	20.952.824
LV	0	0	96.634.492	46.651.363	26.091.992	37.097.820	206.475.667
LT	10.800	0	73.287.933	49.310.142	34.191.233	24.451.057	181.251.164
LU	0	0	5.119.156	5.653.405	2.121.682	1.587.351	14.481.595
HU	0	0	184.133.619	133.238.829	97.309.058	96.688.026	511.369.533
MT	0	0	11.087.890	620.865	4.054.663	3.666.529	19.429.947
NL	0	0	13.721.305	53.369.141	6.469.479	16.838.579	90.398.504
AT	0	0	304.858.442	42.762.776	141.825.329	48.725.218	538.171.765
PL	0	0	341.817.663	278.763.628	241.914.834	229.788.859	1.092.284.985
PT	0	0	315.985.382	89.332.030	55.471.630	62.260.191	523.049.233
RO	0	0	323.746.321	136.212.495	224.930.153	282.184.080	967.073.048
SI	0	134.874	34.717.325	14.449.325	47.516.257	23.279.066	120.096.847
SK	0	0	56.642.464	37.855.996	65.152.780	49.710.435	209.361.675
FI	0	0	140.089.247	26.542.166	59.579.240	124.962.860	351.173.513
SE	0	0	134.063.084	33.824.471	32.298.532	26.112.103	226.298.189
UK	0	0	155.978.145	162.364.775	223.763.628	231.818.923	773.925.472
Total	2.714.793	134.874	5.755.256.476	2.754.299.275	2.741.814.776	2.585.776.756	13.839.996.951

Table 9 compares, for each Member State, the EAFRD 2014-2020 payments made in 2019 with the payments in 2018. Overall, the payments increased by 14% compared to year 2018 (EUR 13.8 billion vs. EUR 12.2 billion).

Table 9

Payments made to Member States - Comparison 2019 vs 2018 - <u>EAFRD 2014-2020</u>							(in EUR)	
MS	2018			2019			Difference 2019 vs. 2018	
	Interim payments	Pre-financing	Total	Interim payments	Pre-financing	Total	(in EUR)	(in %)
BE	69.095.529		69.095.529	78.872.428	0	78.872.428	9.776.899	14,15%
BG	205.683.318		205.683.318	308.634.763	0	308.634.763	102.951.445	50,05%
CZ	324.647.223		324.647.223	393.828.050	0	393.828.050	69.180.827	21,31%
DK	89.687.155		89.687.155	101.066.664	0	101.066.664	11.379.509	12,69%
DE	1.117.668.890		1.117.668.890	1.273.596.303	0	1.273.596.303	155.927.413	13,95%
EE	128.104.065		128.104.065	124.908.745	0	124.908.745	-3.195.320	-2,49%
IE	318.709.149		318.709.149	324.022.439	0	324.022.439	5.313.290	1,67%
GR	579.944.832		579.944.832	411.413.602	0	411.413.602	-168.531.230	-29,06%
ES	899.726.086		899.726.086	1.165.619.770	0	1.165.619.770	265.893.684	29,55%
FR	1.708.849.535	16.198.977	1.725.048.512	2.060.819.582	2.703.993	2.063.523.575	338.475.063	19,62%
HR	206.150.392		206.150.392	299.635.531	0	299.635.531	93.485.139	45,35%
IT	1.045.757.040		1.045.757.040	1.449.081.121	0	1.449.081.121	403.324.081	38,57%
CY	14.530.171		14.530.171	20.952.824	0	20.952.824	6.422.653	44,20%
LV	192.664.101		192.664.101	206.475.667	0	206.475.667	13.811.566	7,17%
LT	217.968.861	1.502.340	219.471.201	181.240.364	10.800	181.251.164	-38.220.037	-17,41%
LU	14.530.735		14.530.735	14.481.595	0	14.481.595	-49.140	-0,34%
HU	385.929.544		385.929.544	511.369.533	0	511.369.533	125.439.988	32,50%
MT	9.391.195		9.391.195	19.429.947	0	19.429.947	10.038.752	106,90%
NL	78.872.378	1.800.000	80.672.378	90.398.504	0	90.398.504	9.726.126	12,06%
AT	512.804.158		512.804.158	538.171.765	0	538.171.765	25.367.607	4,95%
PL	944.569.722		944.569.722	1.092.284.985	0	1.092.284.985	147.715.262	15,64%
PT	503.033.323		503.033.323	523.049.233	0	523.049.233	20.015.909	3,98%
RO	1.146.152.415		1.146.152.415	967.073.048	0	967.073.048	-179.079.366	-15,62%
SI	110.943.349		110.943.349	120.096.847	0	120.096.847	9.153.498	8,25%
SK	200.196.868		200.196.868	209.361.675	0	209.361.675	9.164.806	4,58%
FI	351.787.931		351.787.931	351.173.513	0	351.173.513	-614.418	-0,17%
SE	195.642.880		195.642.880	226.298.189	0	226.298.189	30.655.309	15,67%
UK	580.998.528		580.998.528	773.925.472	0	773.925.472	192.926.944	33,21%
Total	12.154.039.375	19.501.317	12.173.540.691	13.837.282.157	2.714.793	13.839.996.951	1.666.456.259	13,69%

3.2.2. *Technical assistance*

For the programming period 2014-2020, the amount for payment appropriations available for the operational technical assistance was EUR 18.5 million. The original amount of EUR 16.7 million in the Budget 2019 has been reinforced by EUR 1.8 million transferred from the rural development programmes under EAFRD 2014-2020 line. The final implementation amounted to EUR 17.0 million.

Table 10 hereafter presents the payments grouped by main activities. The most important part relates to the European Network for Rural Development.

Table 10

<i>Technical assistance – Implementation of payment appropriations</i>	
Budget Item: 05.046002 <i>(in EUR)</i>	
Description	Amount paid
European Network for Rural Development	4.237.354
Information technology*	3.001.302
Technical Advisory Platform for Financial Instruments	3.064.333
European Innovation Partnership	2.648.305
European Evaluation Network	1.428.387
Corporate Communication	1.000.000
LIFE Programme	840.847
Audit and Controls	632.480
Organic agriculture database	139.108
LOGO protection	50.000
Total	17.042.118

* Including Broadband Competence Offices

3.3. **Analysis of expenditure declared by measure**

Table 11 shows the payment claims declared by Member State and by measure for rural development in 2019 (4th quarter of 2018 to 3rd quarter of 2019), the cumulative declared expenditure from the beginning of the programming period and also the financial plan of EAFRD 2014-2020 programmes.

The expenditure for EAFRD 2014-2020 in 2019 concentrated mainly in Measure 04 (Investments in physical assets), in Measure 13 (Payments to areas facing natural or other specific constraints) and in Measure 10 (Agri-environment-climate).

Table 11

EAFRD declared expenditure 2019 (Q4 2018-Q3 2019) & Total cumulative expenditure (Q4 2014 to Q3 2019*) compared with Financial Plans - EAFRD 2014-2020							
		Declared expenditure 2019 (Q4 2018 to Q3 2019)		Cumulative declared expenditure (Q4 2014 to Q3 2019)		Financial Plans 2014- 2020	
EAFRD Measure		(million EUR)	(%)	(million EUR)	(%)	(million EUR)	(%)
Measure 01	Knowledge transfer and information actions	93,4	0,7%	250,5	0,5%	973,6	1,0%
Measure 02	Advisory services, farm management and farm relief services	39,7	0,3%	87,1	0,2%	606,1	0,6%
Measure 03	Quality schemes for agricultural products and foodstuffs	37,1	0,3%	98,7	0,2%	368,6	0,4%
Measure 04	Investments in physical assets	2.801,0	20,2%	7.966,7	16,9%	22.860,8	22,8%
Measure 05	Restoring agricultural production potential damaged by natural disasters and catastrophic events and introduction of appropriate prevention actions	75,2	0,5%	235,8	0,5%	807,5	0,8%
Measure 06	Farm and business development	813,5	5,9%	2.838,8	6,0%	6.701,1	6,7%
Measure 07	Basic services and village renewal in rural areas	1.022,7	7,4%	2.403,2	5,1%	6.893,5	6,9%
Measure 08	Investments in forest area development and improvement of the viability of forests	411,4	3,0%	1.436,0	3,0%	4.257,4	4,3%
Measure 09	Setting-up of producer groups and organisations	24,0	0,2%	73,4	0,2%	266,4	0,3%
Measure 10	Agri-environment-climate	2.483,1	17,9%	9.841,7	20,9%	16.443,4	16,4%
Measure 11	Organic farming	1.321,1	9,5%	4.207,6	8,9%	7.451,3	7,4%
Measure 12	Natura 2000 and Water Framework Directive payments	92,6	0,7%	340,9	0,7%	606,6	0,6%
Measure 13	Payments to areas facing natural or other specific constraints	2.654,5	19,2%	11.916,0	25,3%	16.732,2	16,7%
Measure 14	Animal Welfare	309,8	2,2%	1.152,4	2,4%	1.809,1	1,8%
Measure 15	Forest environmental and climate services and forest conservation	15,1	0,1%	46,6	0,1%	240,0	0,2%
Measure 16	Co-operation	107,1	0,8%	246,1	0,5%	1.676,4	1,7%
Measure 17	Risk management	358,6	2,6%	884,4	1,9%	1.613,0	1,6%
Measure 18	Financing of complementary national direct payments for Croatia	-0,1	0,0%	108,2	0,2%	111,9	0,1%
Measure 19	Support for LEADER local development — community-led local development (CLLD)	857,0	6,2%	1.851,4	3,9%	7.011,4	7,0%
Measure 20	Technical assistance Member States	278,7	2,0%	794,3	1,7%	2.155,0	2,2%
Measure 113	Early retirement	42,9	0,3%	402,2	0,9%	493,8	0,5%
Measure 131	Meeting standards based on Community legislation	0,0	0,0%	0,0	0,0%	0,0	0,0%
Measure 341	Skills acquisition, animation and implementation	0,1	0,0%	0,5	0,0%	0,6	0,0%
Grand total		13.838,4	100,0%	47.182,5	100,0%	100.079,5	100,0%

*Member States declare their expenditure quarterly. However, for year n, Q4 declarations are submitted in January of year n+1. Consequently, the corresponding reimbursements by the Commission to the Member States in year n go from Q4 of year n-1 until Q3 of year n.

3.4. Implementation of EAFRD programmes

3.4.1. Programming period 2007-2013

Graph 2 presents the final absorption rate of rural development programmes 2007-2013 per Member State. The EU average reached 97%.

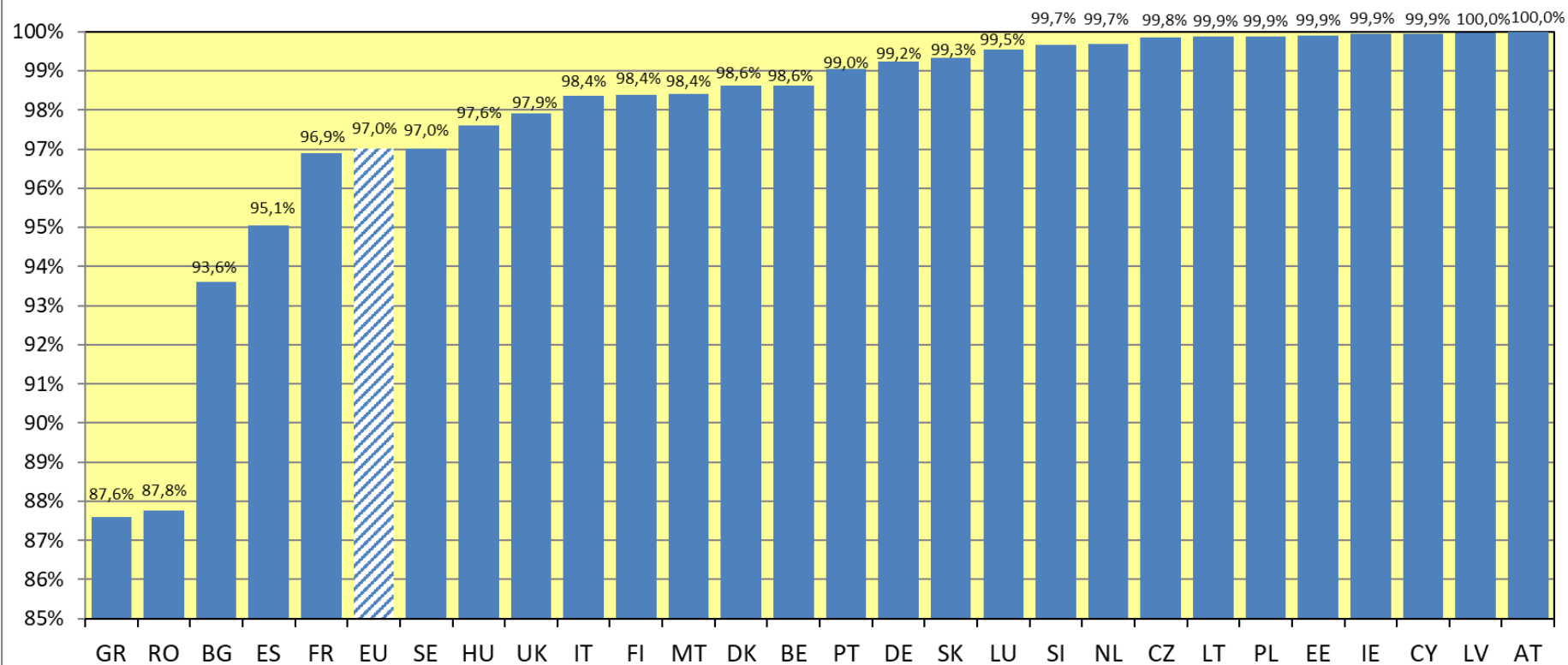
3.4.2. Programming period 2014-2020

Graph 3 presents the absorption rate of rural development programmes 2014-2020 per Member State: payments from the beginning of the programming period including payments made for the 4th quarter of 2019 that are reimbursed in financial year 2020 compared to the total 2014-2020 allocation.

In 2019 the level of consumption for the first time resulted in the decommitment of EUR 16.5 million.

Overall, the implementation of the EAFRD 2014-2020 rural development programmes reached by end 2019 on average an absorption rate of 56%. Programmes are generally well on track in terms of implementation, with the variation in the averages per Member State illustrated in graph 3 below.

Graph 2 - Absorption rate of 2007-2013 RD programmes by Member State (% of the EAFRD payments including closure payments done by 31/12/2019 compared with 2007-2013 allocations)



**Graph 3 - Absorption rate of 2014-2020 RD programmes by Member State
(% of the EAFRD payments including payment claims Q4'2019
compared to 2014-2020 allocations)**

