

Workshop

Durability of Investments

Final agenda

14 December 2023

Hotel nhow Brussels Bloom

Rue Royale 250

1210 Brussels, Belgium



Introduction and aims

Since the beginning of the programming period 2014-22, the EU has supported, under the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD), a considerable number of private projects for farmers and SMEs for farming, agri-food and diversification purposes, as well as a great number of public and semi-public entities all throughout the Member States to improve public infrastructure and basic services in rural areas. Rural development funding, in both the 2014-22 and the 2023-27 programming periods, act as a source of grants but also for loans, microcredit, guarantees and equities, available to recipients in agriculture and rural areas. Public and private productive investments, both on-farm and off-farm, and both for agri-food businesses and for non-agricultural enterprises, have been supported during 2014-22 and will be supported during 2023-27 in rural areas¹. For both the public and private investments supported during 2014-22, the durability aim is to **last** five years of the final payment to the beneficiary or within the period of time set out in State aid rules, where applicable. Member States may reduce the time limit to three years in some cases for SMEs.

In 2022, The European Court of Auditors (ECA), examined whether investments aiming to diversify the rural economy and improve the rural infrastructure delivered **durable benefits**. They found that the legal durability requirements are largely met and three recommendations² were presented, which this workshop aims to address involving the Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development (DG AGRI), Managing Authorities from Member States (MS), beneficiaries, evaluators, and numerous stakeholders in Brussels on the 14th of December 2023 in a full day in person workshop.

The overall aim of the workshop is **to exchange best practices among MS**, particularly regarding the durability of public and private productive investments, and investments for non-agricultural enterprises in rural areas under the 2014-22 EAFRD, and to consider MS's approach under the 2023-27 CAP Strategic Plans (CSPs). To enrich the debate, it is encouraged for participants to provide available information applicable at national level for these investments during the 2023-27 CSPs, although such requirements are not foreseen by the legal acts.

Specifically, the workshop based on the ECA recommendations will aim to:

1. Target better spending on viable projects,
2. Mitigate the risks of diversion of funded assets for personal use,
3. Identify relevant approaches and sources of information on assessment of the continued operation of EU funded projects.

¹ The foregoing includes private on-farm Annex-I related investments (Investments in physical assets within holdings during 2014-22) and private off-farm ones (Investments in physical assets for the transformation and commercialisation of Annex I products).

²[Special report 12/2022: Durability in rural development](#)



Timing	Agenda Item
8:30 - 9:00	Registration
9:00 – 9:10	Welcome and introduction <i>David Lamb, CAP Implementation Contact Point of the EU CAP Network</i>
9:10 – 9:40	Framing presentation on durability of investments <i>Michael Pielke, DG AGRI / B.1</i> Durability of Investments and State Aid <i>Eva Dimovne Keresztes, DG COMP / H.6</i>
9:40 – 10:15	Good practice examples Member State experiences of good practice on durability of investments and future outlook <i>Yiannos Mavrommatis, Department of Agriculture, Rural Development and Environment, Cyprus</i> <i>Julian Gschnell, Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Regions and Water Management, Austria</i> <i>Dan Nica, Agency for the Financing of Rural Investments, Romania</i>
10:15 - 10:30	Q&A
10:30 – 11:00	Coffee break
11:00 – 12:30	Interactive session 1. <i>Key elements of durability</i> 2. <i>Eligibility conditions and selection procedures to target better project durability</i> 3. <i>Better methods for better durability results</i>
12:30 – 13:30	Lunch



<p>13:30 – 14:00</p>	<p>Evaluation perspective</p> <p>Presentation on recent evaluation examples from MS and identifying relevant approaches / sources of information</p> <p><i>Costas Apostolopoulos – Evaluation Helpdesk of the EU CAP Network</i></p>
<p>14:00 – 14:15</p>	<p>Q&A</p>
<p>14:15 – 15:00</p>	<p>Panel discussion</p> <p>Feedback from breakout sessions and key considerations for CSPs</p> <p><i>Tom Jones, European Rural Community Alliance, EU</i></p> <p><i>Viktor Nagy, Managing Authority, Hungary</i></p> <p><i>Paola Azzopardi, Paying Agency, Malta</i></p> <p><i>Poul Hoffman, DG AGRI / B.1</i></p>
<p>15:00 – 15:15</p>	<p>Concluding remarks</p> <p><i>Michael Pielke, DG AGRI / B.1</i></p>

