European Commission

CAP CONTEXT INDICATORS 2014-2020

32. LESS FAVOURED AREAS / AREAS FACING NATURAL AND OTHER SPECIFIC CONSTRAINTS

2017 update

Agriculture and Rural Development

CONTEXT INDICATOR 32: LESS FAVOURED AREAS / AREAS FACING NATURAL AND OTHER SPECIFIC CONSTRAINTS

Under Article 32 of Council Regulation (EC) No 1305/13[1], the areas facing natural or other specific constraints (ANCs), in the past referred to as "Less-Favoured Areas (LFAs)", can be classified according to three categories, each of which describes a specific cluster of handicaps which threatens the continuation of agricultural land use:

1. "Mountain areas", which are handicapped by a short growing season because of high altitude, or by steep slopes at a lower altitude, or by a combination of the two. Areas north of the 62nd Parallel and certain adjacent areas are treated in the same way as mountain areas;
2. "Areas, other than mountain areas, facing significant natural constraints" if at least 60% of the agricultural area meets one biophysical criterion[2] covering climate, poor soil productivity and steep slopes;
3. "Areas affected by specific constraints" are areas where land management should be continued in order to conserve or improve the environment, maintain the countryside, and preserve the tourist potential of the areas, or in order to protect the coastline, or areas where at least 60% of the agricultural area is subject to a certain combination of biophysical criteria below the threshold value.

Information on the ANC area included under the ANC support for the period 2014-2020 has been submitted by Member States or regions in the Rural Development Programmes 2014-2020. However, areas under point 2 are undergoing a new delimitation exercise, composed of a delimitation based on the biophysical criteria listed in Annex III of Council Regulation (EC) No 1305/2013 and a fine-tuning exercise, which aims at excluding delimited areas where disadvantages have been overcome by investments and/or economic activity. Member States and regions should be ready to support the areas under the new delimitation by 2019. Several Member States have accomplished this commitment, some of them as of the beginning of the programming period 2014-2020 (Map 1), however, there are a number still discussing either the biophysical delimitation or the fine-tuning exercise with the European Commission. Meanwhile, the previous area delimitations remain in force (Map 2). Furthermore, there are Member States and regions where there is no need to establish a new delimitation as they have only mountain or specific areas or they will discontinue ANC support after a period of phasing out the former "LFA other than mountain" payments.

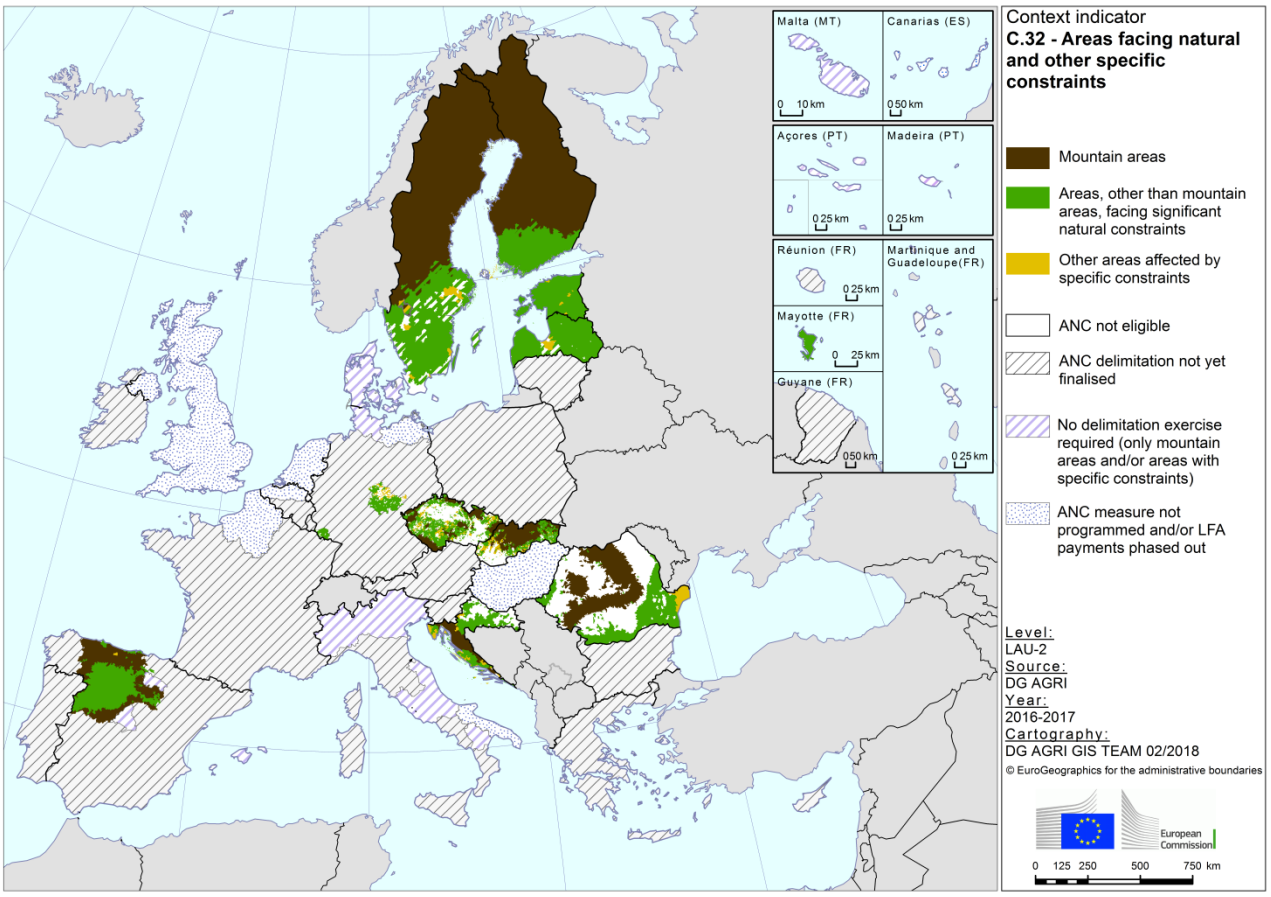
A comprehensive overview of the new delimitation for the 28 Member States should therefore be available only from 2019 onwards.

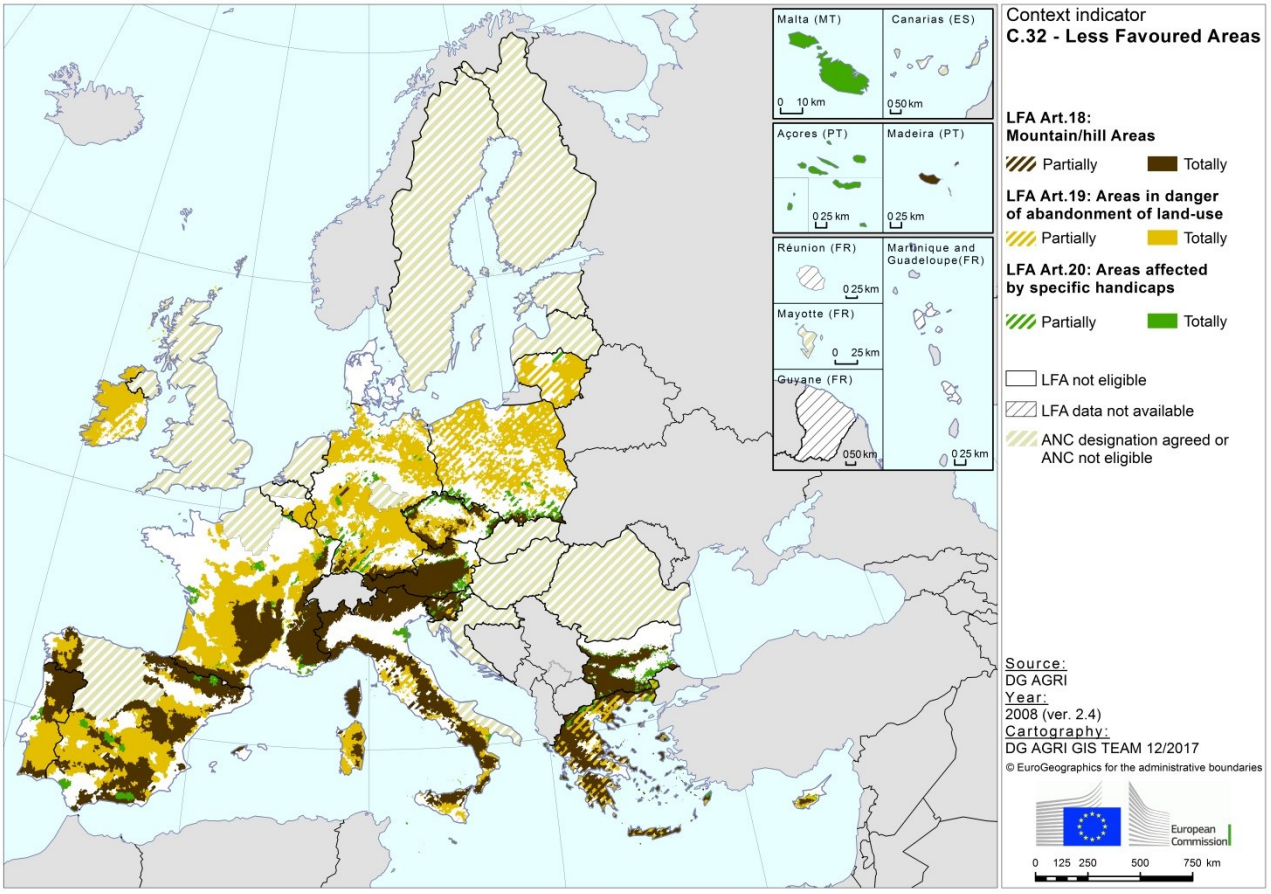
Context indicator	**C.32 Less Favoured Areas**
Comments on methodology and data	For data, see the 2015 update. https://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/sites/agriculture/files/cap-indicators/context/2015/c32_en.pdf

[1] Council Regulation (EC) No 1305/2013 on support for rural development by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) repeals Council Regulation (EC) No 1698/2005.

[2] Biophysical criteria for the delimitation of areas facing natural constraints are listed in Annex III of Council Regulation (EC) No 1305/2013

Map 1 - ANC



Note: ANC delimitation available for Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Germany (Saarland, Thuringia), Finland, Sweden, France (Mayotte), Latvia, Romania, Slovakia and Spain (Asturias, Cantabria, Castilla y Leon).

Map 2 - Less Favoured Areas