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Dear reader,

The recent EU enlargement to include 12 new Member States — Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia in 2004 and Bulgaria and Romania in 2007 — was a historic milestone in the reshaping of a peaceful Europe after decades of destructive divisions. Europe as a whole gained from the assured political stability and security, as well as from the expansion of the internal EU market from 380 million to nearly 500 million people.

The enlargement has brought progress to the agricultural sector of all Member States, facilitating trade within the EU and supporting the modernisation of agriculture in the new Member States. As a result of the contribution of the new Member States, European agriculture has grown in importance in terms of area, production and number of farmers. The fears regarding the negative effects of the enlargement on the agricultural sector have proved to be unfounded.

Experience shows that in the enlargement process, farmers are among the most interested but also the most critical partners. Fears expressed in the past, such as the risk of income losses, market disturbances and quality problems, have not materialised following the accession of the new Member States. On the contrary, farmers’ income has grown, the internal market for agricultural products functions well and consumer choice has increased.

The current state of the European Union’s enlargement agenda comprises the western Balkans, Turkey and Iceland. The EU’s commitment to the enlargement process reflects the Member States’ conviction that it is in the mutual interest of the Union and the aspirant countries.

Because of its significant size, high number of the population active in agriculture and structural deficiencies, agriculture was and is still one of the most complex, sensitive and critical issues in the enlargement context.

The European Commission plays a key role in the enlargement process, including negotiations. Commission experts in the field of agriculture and rural development provide assistance and guidance to candidate and potential candidate countries in their task of preparing for future accession to the EU and more specifically in preparing for the common agricultural policy and rural development programmes.

As a result, significant financial support is provided for investment in rural areas, facilitating structural changes in agriculture.

It also has to be noted that the CAP is currently undergoing a reform process to prepare the programming period 2014–20. The candidate countries as well as the potential candidates will therefore need to closely follow the reform of the CAP and, when needed, to adapt to the new rules.
In conclusion, enhanced communication on enlargement issues with the farming community, food processors and consumers is necessary to best prepare them for future accession to the European Union. For the European agricultural sector, enlargement brings new challenges and increased competition for existing members and new Member States alike. However, it also offers huge new opportunities: more trade, a wider choice of products, better quality and food safety and stronger rural communities. Enlargement in agriculture and rural development can be managed so that both sides end up as winners.
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Over the last 50 years, a key EU objective has been to eliminate trade barriers between the EU Member States and to create a single market where goods, people, money and services can move freely. By creating a single market without borders and a single currency (the euro), the EU has given a significant boost to internal trade and employment.

Many farmers in the candidate countries have already benefited from membership ahead of enlargement. Targeted EU-funded rural development and investment schemes are in place in these countries, and the progressive liberalisation of trade in agricultural products with the EU has helped farmers to prepare for operating and competing within the enlarged market. Economic operators in the EU and the enlargement countries have gained from open borders and easier trading conditions. Turkey and the western Balkans increased exports of basic agricultural products and processed agricultural products to the EU under preferential trade provisions.

1.1. What enlargement means for all farmers in the EU

The latest enlargement rounds in 2004 and 2007 added a further 7 million farmers to the EU’s existing population of 6 million. The 12 new Member States brought to the EU about 55 million hectares of utilised agricultural area, in addition to the 130 million hectares existing within the EU-15. This represented a 42% increase in land, while production expanded only by about 10–20% for most products. However, the common agricultural policy (CAP) helped farmers to gradually develop a sustainable production potential. Upcoming enlargements will further strengthen the European agricultural sector.

1.2. Positive effects of greater competition

More farmers also mean more potential for Europe’s agriculture and more opportunities for specialisation and economies of scale. On the one hand, many farmers in the future Member States (candidate countries) try to target the relatively high-income consumers in the EU who demand high-
quality, and sometimes niche, products; on the other hand, EU farmers know that the predicted income growth in the future Member States will lead to growing markets. Furthermore, sharper competition benefits both EU consumers and those in the future Member States. The EU is striving to ensure that all EU farmers are given equal market opportunities.

1.3. Why are farmers in the new Member States better off in the EU?

Farmers in the new Member States will not only enjoy the benefits of free access to the EU single market; they also benefit from policies designed to develop their agriculture in a sustainable and profitable way. These include direct income support and support for restructing of rural areas. Rural development programmes are mostly co-funded with national governments, but generally at a higher rate of EU contributions than in the old Member States.

1.4. Real benefits for farmers — Experience

Well-targeted pre-accession assistance as well as sound results from negotiations (focusing more on rural development and moving from market support to direct income support) have enabled a smooth integration of the new Member States into the EU. Overall positive developments and new opportunities outweigh the challenges and costs of full integration into the common agricultural policy. Accession to the EU brought about substantial modernisation and restructuring of farming and food processing in the new Member States. This resulted partly from the opportunities offered by the single market, but also from capital investment within farm holdings co-financed by EU rural development funds.

1.5. Increased income

Farmers in the new Member States have clearly improved their income by joining the EU. Real income per full-time farmer increased fivefold between 2000 and 2011 in Latvia and more than threefold in Estonia, doubled in Lithuania, the Czech Republic and Poland and increased by more than 50 % in Slovakia (1). Between 2007 and 2011, farmers’ income in Romania doubled, and increased by more than 40 % in Bulgaria. This positive development in farm income in the new Member States is largely due to the improved market conditions after enlargement, the phasing-in of CAP direct payments and the effect of rural development measures.

An enlarged EU market has brought many possibilities for farmers and agri-food businesses, leading to increased intra-Union trade, strengthening the EU position on international markets, bringing more stability for farmers and allowing increased foreign direct investment without any major internal economic, social or food safety concerns.

After the successful accession of 12 new Member States, the European Commission is continuing to assist countries aspiring for EU membership with advice and financial and technical assistance in order to prepare them for future accession in respect of agriculture and rural development.

Accession process

Under the terms of Article 49 of the Treaty on European Union, any European state which respects the principles of liberty, democracy, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms and the rule of law, principles which are common to the Member States, may apply for membership.

2.1. Copenhagen criteria

Countries wishing to join the EU must fulfil the conditions known as the 'Copenhagen criteria' according to which a prospective member must:

1. have achieved stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights and respect for and protection of minorities;

2. have a functioning market economy as well as the capacity to cope with competitive pressure and market forces within the Union;

3. have the ability to take on the obligations of membership including adherence to the aims of political, economic and monetary union. This implies, inter alia, adopting and effectively implementing the common rules, standards and policies that make up the body of EU law. The Union’s capacity to integrate new members, while maintaining the momentum of European integration, is also an important consideration in the general interest of both the Union and the candidate countries. For the agriculture and rural development sector, two elements are of key importance:

2.1.1. Economic aspects = the situation in the country concerning the economic criteria for membership, consisting of: the existence of a functioning market economy, based on clear property rights, functioning markets, price liberalisation and macroeconomic stability; and the capacity to cope with competitive pressure and market forces within the Union, including imports of agricultural and food products.

2.1.2. EU standards = the country’s capacity to implement the EU legal and administrative provisions in the areas of agriculture and rural development, including: adequate capacity of agricultural administration, in particular in the area of agricultural policy formulation, analysis, implementation, support payments and respective controls; adequate administrative capacity for the formulation and implementation of pre-accession rural development measures (IPARD) and subsequently EU rural development programmes; legislative alignment and setting up of administrative capacities in the areas of organic farming, quality policy and other horizontal aspects; and, at agricultural market level, setting up of market mechanisms (marketing standards, price reporting, quota management, producers’ organisations, public intervention, etc.).
2.2. Screening — Opening benchmarks

Before launching the negotiations on a given chapter, the Commission conducts a ‘screening’ exercise, which is the formal and technical procedure for assessing the current level of alignment of each candidate country with the acquis, both as regards legislation and institutional capacities.

The findings of the screening for each chapter are highlighted in a screening report, in which the Commission proposes whether to start negotiations on this chapter if it considers that sufficient progress has been made by the candidate country to permit meaningful accession negotiations. Where progress is considered insufficient, the Commission recommends that the Council establish certain conditions (‘benchmarks’) to be met before negotiations can start in the given chapter.

2.3. Accession negotiations

Once the Commission and the Council have satisfied themselves that the country is sufficiently prepared for negotiations on the agriculture and rural development chapter, the Presidency invites the candidate country to submit its negotiating position to the accession conference with a view to opening negotiations on the chapter.

The EU agrees on European common positions in response to the candidate country’s negotiating position. Only then are the accession negotiations in a specific chapter considered open. Negotiations take place between the EU Member States and the individual candidate country in the framework of the accession conference. The Commission prepares the European Union negotiating positions and, in parallel, guides the candidate countries (and potential candidates) in gradually complying with the legal framework and administrative structures required by the acquis.

2.4. Acquis communautaire

To facilitate the accession negotiations, the entire body of EU law and policies, known as the ‘acquis communautaire’ is divided into 33 chapters, each corresponding to one policy area. One chapter covers all aspects of the agriculture and rural development sector, namely Chapter 11 — Agriculture and Rural Development.

2.5. Agricultural chapter

2.5.1. Legal framework

The agricultural chapter includes a large number of binding rules, many of which are regulations that are directly applicable. The proper application of these rules and their effective enforcement by an efficient public administration is essential for the functioning of the CAP. This includes the laws governing management systems such as a paying agency and the Integrated Administration and Control System (IACS), and also the capacity to implement rural development actions. EU membership requires the integration of a range of agricultural products, including arable crops, sugar, animal products and specialised crops, into the common organisation of the market.
2.5.2. Administrative structures

The implementation, management and control of the CAP require the creation, modification and/or strengthening of appropriate administrative structures (e.g. paying agency and IACS). In some cases, the acquis sets out detailed specifications for the required administrative structures. For other elements the CAP acquis simply uses terms such as the ‘competent authority’ to refer to the administrative structure that is needed. It is left to each Member State to designate the institution responsible for effective implementation of the acquis. However, the acquis specifies the objectives to be attained and the functions to be ensured by an adequate administrative body in the Member States.

2.5.3. Information requirements

It should be noted that it is the responsibility of the candidate country to carry out awareness campaigns, promotion and advisory services for farmers to ensure that they are aware well in advance of the implications of accession, the benefits to be gained from it and the rules and procedures to follow in order to benefit from EU support.

2.5.4. Negotiable and non-negotiable rules

Accession negotiations on the agricultural chapter focus mainly on the conditions and timing of the adoption, implementation and application of the acquis by the candidate countries. Any candidate must accept the rights and obligations of membership, which means that these rules as such are not negotiable.

Negotiations therefore focus on the procedures for future direct payments, support to rural development or the need for transitional measures facilitating integration into the EU, taking into account the specific circumstances of the agricultural sector in the candidate countries.

2.5.5. Future CAP

The enlargement negotiations between the candidate countries and the EU are conducted on the basis of the acquis as it stands at the moment of negotiations and not by anticipation of the future policy. However, the CAP is undergoing a reform process to prepare the programming period 2014–20 and will evolve shortly. The candidate countries will therefore need to be fully aware of and to adapt to the new rules. For instance, Croatia has negotiated its accession on the basis of the CAP as it currently stands. It needs first to adapt its legislation and relevant structures to be ready by accession, but is likely to have to make further adaptations to align to the new CAP, just a few months after its accession. The other candidates and potential candidates will also have to closely follow the reform of the CAP, which aims at strengthening the competitiveness and the sustainability of agriculture, preserving the environment and helping the development of rural areas.
CHAPTER 3

The enlargement countries

The governments of the EU Member States, in the framework of the European Council, have agreed to extend the EU perspective to countries in south-eastern Europe — Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia, Kosovo (1) and Turkey. In June 2010, the European Council decided to open negotiations with Iceland. Membership will only happen when the necessary requirements are met. A gradual and carefully managed enlargement process creates a win–win situation for all countries concerned.

3.1. Albania

Albania is a potential candidate country for EU accession following the Thessaloniki European Council of June 2003. On 18 February 2008, the Council adopted a new European partnership with Albania. The stabilisation and association agreement (SAA) with the country was signed on 12 June 2006 and entered into force on 1 April 2009.

3.2. Bosnia and Herzegovina

Bosnia and Herzegovina is a potential candidate country for EU accession following the Thessaloniki European Council of June 2003. On 16 June 2008, the EU and Bosnia and Herzegovina signed the stabilisation and association agreement (SAA) which will enter into force once its ratification process has been completed. An interim agreement on trade and trade-related issues, which was signed on the same day, entered into force on 1 July 2008.

3.3. Croatia

Croatia is an acceding country. The EU and Croatian leaders signed Croatia’s EU Accession Treaty on 9 December 2011 and the outcome of the referendum on the accession held in Croatia on 22 January 2012 was positive. Therefore, subject to ratification of the treaty by all the Member States and Croatia, Croatia will become the EU’s 28th Member State on 1 July 2013. As an acceding country, Croatia will have active observer status in most of the Council working groups as well as in Commission committees. The purpose is to allow Croatia to become familiar with the working methods of the EU institutions and to be involved in the decision-making process.

Agriculture plays an important role in Croatia, both as a share of the country’s total GDP and as an important source of employment. The country, in principle, has good potential for a prospering agricultural sector. However, it has also an

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(1) This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of Independence.
unfavourable structure of agricultural holdings, with the majority being small family farms and a low percentage of medium and large farms.

For agriculture, as for other sectors, accession will bring challenges and increased competition. But it will also bring benefits: farmers and agri-food businesses will have a lot of opportunities with the access to the EU single market of more than 500 million consumers.

Furthermore, the farmers will benefit from the CAP, a policy designed to develop agriculture in a sustainable and profitable way, bringing at the same time more stability for farmers. The EU’s rural development funds will also improve the quality of life in rural areas, increase the sector’s competitiveness and contribute to the diversification of incomes in rural areas.

3.4. The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia was the first country from the region to sign a stabilisation and association agreement (SAA) in 2001. This entered into force in April 2004. An application for EU membership was submitted on 22 March 2004. Subsequently, on 9 November 2005, the Commission adopted an opinion on the application, evaluating the country’s capacity to meet the Copenhagen criteria. Based on this assessment, the Commission recommended to the Council to grant the country candidate status. At the end of 2009, the Commission judged that the country had attained a sufficient degree of compliance with the membership criteria and recommended the opening of negotiations. This recommendation was repeated in 2010 and 2011.

3.5. Iceland

The Commission issued a positive opinion on Iceland’s application to the EU in February 2010. Accession negotiations opened on 27 July 2010. The screening meetings finished on 17 June 2011. After quite a long debate in the Enlargement Working Group in the Council, the screening report was agreed on 1 September 2011.

The accession negotiations regarding Chapter 11 (agriculture and rural development) of the acquis can start only after Iceland has fulfilled the opening benchmark set by the Council. Accession negotiations with Iceland started on 27 July 2010. The screening report on agriculture was adopted by the Council in July 2011, and an opening benchmark for the chapter has been set. It requests Iceland to present a strategy for aligning its agricultural policy and administrative structures with the agricultural acquis.

3.6. Kosovo

Kosovo declared its independence in February 2008; however, not all Member States have recognised it as a state. Nevertheless, Kosovo has a clear European perspective in line with the rest of the western Balkans. Kosovo participates in the Stabilisation and Association Process (SAP) and is a beneficiary of the autonomous trade measures.

3.7. Montenegro

Following Montenegro’s application for membership in December 2008, the Council granted it candidate status in December 2010, imposing seven key priorities for the opening of accession negotiations. In October 2011, the Commission confirmed that the seven key priorities have been met and recommended opening negotiations. On 9 December 2011, the Council agreed to open accession negotiations with Montenegro in June 2012 and invited the Commission to present a proposal for a framework for negotiations and to begin the screening process.

3.8. Serbia

In December 2009, Serbia submitted an application for EU membership. In October 2011, the Commission recommended granting it candidate country status, on the understanding that it re-engages in the dialogue with Kosovo and moves swiftly to the implementation in good faith of agreements reached to date. On 9 December 2011, the Council requested a further examination and confirmation that Serbia has continued to show credible commitment and achieved further progress. Following this further examination, the Council decided in March 2012 to grant Serbia candidate status.

3.9. Turkey

Turkey has had a long association with the European integration project. It made its first application to join what was then the European Economic Community (EEC) in July 1959. The EEC’s response to this first application was to propose the creation of an association between the EEC and Turkey, which led to the signature in Ankara of an association agreement in 1963.

An additional protocol was signed in November 1970, setting out a timetable for the abolition of tariffs and quotas on goods circulating between Turkey and the EEC. A customs union was established in 1995 and has contributed significantly to the development of trade relations.

Turkey was officially recognised as a candidate country at the Helsinki European Council of December 1999. The accession negotiations were formally opened in October 2005. However, negotiations have not been opened as yet on the chapter concerning agriculture, since Turkey has first to fulfil the relevant opening benchmarks.
Trade policy is an essential instrument in terms of contributing to the economic development, prosperity and stabilisation of the region.

4.1. Western Balkans

In 2000, the European Community granted autonomous trade measures (ATM) involving exceptional unlimited duty-free access to the EU market for nearly all products originating in the western Balkans, without quantitative restrictions. These measures include almost all basic agricultural products except for some fishery products, ‘baby beef’, wine and sugar, for which zero or reduced duties within preferential quotas have been set.

The EU is by far the most important export market for the western Balkan countries and the trade preferences have created an enabling environment for an increase of exports. Western Balkan exports to the EU of basic agricultural products are on an upward trend, rising by over 70% between 2005 and 2011. Serbia had a positive trade balance of over EUR 500 million in 2011. However, the EU still enjoys a significant overall trade surplus with the region (EUR 1.5 billion in 2011), as Figure 1 below shows.

Until 2005, Croatia was the largest exporter in the region of basic agriculture products, providing the EU with nearly half of its imports from the western Balkans. Since 2005, imports from Serbia have increased substantially, representing at present 60% of total EU imports from the region (2011 data). Together with Croatia, the imports from those two countries represent 80% of the total value. The export performances of these two countries are therefore an important determinant for the development of exports from the region as a whole.

Reciprocal trade agreements allow for the gradual opening up of the markets of the western Balkan region to EU products. Between 2006 and 2011, EU exports of basic agriculture products to the western Balkans rose by around 30%. Croatia remains the largest importer of EU basic agriculture products, accounting for around 40% of all EU exports in the Balkan region (2011 data). Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina share second place, importing around 16% of EU’s exports of basic agricultural products to the region.

EU exports to the region are largely cereal preparations, yeasts, live animals, tobacco products and pork meat, while the top imports from the western Balkans are sugar, fruits (raspberries, cherries), grain and seeds, animal and vegetable oils, vegetables, raw hides and skins.
4.2. Turkey

The EU and Turkey enjoy a substantial trade relationship: the EU is Turkey’s largest partner by far for both imports and exports, while Turkey is the EU’s seventh-largest supplier and fifth-largest export market.

The EU has a net trade deficit in agricultural products with Turkey (see Figure 2). The deficit has been largely stable over the last decade, although there has been a reduction in the last 5 years (from EUR 1.7 billion in 2007 to EUR 0.8 billion in 2011). Turkish exports to the EU are dominated by fresh, dried and processed fruit, vegetables and nuts (accounting for over half of Turkish exports), while imports from the EU are spread over a wider selection of products, with tobacco products, cotton, essential oils, oilseeds and hides and skins being the most important in value terms.
Formal trade relations with Turkey date back to 1963, with the signature of the Ankara Association Agreement between the EEC (European Economic Community) and Turkey. This agreement envisaged the progressive establishment of a customs union which would bring the two sides closer together in economic and trade matters.

The customs union was completed in 1995 (Decision No 1/95 of the EC–Turkey Association Council) but did not cover basic agricultural products, which are regulated under a bilateral trade agreement which entered into force on 25 February 1998. The relevant decisions establish mutual trade concessions for agricultural products.

4.3. Iceland

The EU is Iceland’s main trading partner with regard to all commodities, as well as for agricultural products. The 2011 trade balance was in favour of the EU to the extent of EUR 52 million, with EU exports reaching EUR 127 million against imports of EU 75 million. EU imports from Iceland consist mainly of (fish) fats, sheep meat, horses and fur skins. Economic relations are governed by the EEA agreement, which provides for free movement of goods except for agricultural and fisheries products. The trade in agricultural products is regulated by Article 19 of the EEA agreement, which foresees that the parties undertake efforts to achieve progressive liberalisation of agricultural trade. A further round of liberalisation is expected to take place in 2012.
Financial and technical assistance

Agriculture is one of the most complex, sensitive and critical issues in enlargement preparations. This is due to its significant economic weight in each candidate country in terms of share of gross domestic product (GDP), the high proportion of the population depending on agriculture for their livelihoods and structural deficiencies (subsistence and semi-subsistence farming). A demanding transition phase of preparation is required from the candidates and potential candidates for this sector before joining the EU.

In technical terms, ‘agriculture and rural development’ is one of 35 chapters of EU legislation and policies under negotiation (the full EU body of laws and policies was divided into chapters to ease the negotiation process). The candidate countries have to align their agricultural policy with the common agricultural policy (CAP) to be fully integrated from the day of accession. Running the CAP requires the setting up of a paying agency and management and control systems such as the Integrated Administration and Control System (IACS), and the capacity to implement rural development measures. New Member States must be able to apply EU legislation on direct support schemes and to implement the common market organisation for various agricultural products.

In preparation for applying the CAP, candidate countries and potential candidate countries are eligible for pre-accession assistance in order to set up the relevant administrative structures to implement this policy. Financial support is made available through the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA), which provides financing for institution building and associated investments.

Candidate countries also have access to a specific rural development component of IPA, the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance in Rural Development (IPARD), whose objectives are twofold:
- to provide assistance for the implementation of the legislation concerning the common agricultural policy;
- to contribute to the sustainable adaptation of the agricultural sector and rural areas in the candidate country.
5.1. IPA components

1. Transition assistance and institution building
2. Cross-border cooperation
3. Regional development
4. Human resources development
5. Rural development

In the case of the candidate countries, all five components are available. Components 3, 4 and 5 aim, in particular, at preparing for the implementation of EU cohesion and agricultural policies after accession. As far as the potential candidate countries and Kosovo are concerned, the assistance under the IPA concentrates on components 1 and 2. The Commission’s official documents, such as multi-indicative planning documents (MIPD) and the accession/European partnerships, define the priorities for each area of the acquis, including agriculture and rural development.

5.2. Priorities for agriculture and rural development

Within component 1 (Transition assistance and institution building), the priorities for assisting national administrations in the area of agriculture and rural development are diverse and depend largely on the specific context of each country.

5.2.1. Priority for candidate countries

For candidate countries, the main focus is on a comprehensive legislative alignment and the building up of adequate administrative capacity to implement the acquis that constitutes the common agricultural policy. For instance, technical assistance can be provided for the setting up of a direct payment system (including control mechanisms and paying agency), certification schemes for organic production, provisions of the single common market organisation and definition of rural development plans.

5.2.2. Priority for potential candidate countries and Kosovo

For potential candidate countries, the main priority of institution-building assistance is to support the gradual adoption of EU standards. In the field of agriculture and rural development, the following main priorities can be noted:

— strengthening the administrative capacity of agricultural administrations, in particular in the area of formulation, analysis, implementation and control of agricultural policy; the development of reliable agricultural statistics and registers (land, crop, animal and farmer) is the main priority at an early stage;

— building up administrative capacity for future implementation of pre-accession rural development measures (IPARD); among other issues this includes the development of programming and analytical capacity, paying structures to be accredited according to EU standards, conditions of access to affordable credit by farmers/rural businesses, effective research, extension and advisory services and effective inspection structures.

5.3. Support to rural development in candidate countries

With the rural development component (5), candidate countries will be assisted through a specific instrument called IPARD (Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance in Rural Development). Its objectives are:

— improving market efficiency and implementation of EU standards;
— preparatory actions for implementation of the agri-environmental measures and local rural development strategies;
— development of the rural economy.

5.4. Three priority axes

These objectives are to be met by implementing the various measures under three priority axes:

5.4.1. Axis 1 — Measures for improving market efficiency and implementing EU standards

1. Investment in agricultural holdings to restructure and upgrade to EU standards
2. Investment in processing and marketing of agricultural and fishery products to restructure and upgrade to EU standards
3. Supporting the setting up of producer groups

5.4.2. Axis 2 — Measures for preparatory actions for implementation of the agri-environmental measures and Leader

4. Preparation for implementation of actions relating to the environment and the countryside
5. Preparation and implementation of local rural development strategies
5.4.3. Axis 3 — Measures for development of the rural economy

6. Improvement and development of rural infrastructure
7. Development and diversification of rural economic activities
8. Training

In addition, technical assistance is provided for the administration in order to implement the IPARD programme (Monitoring Committee, interpretation, expertise, preparation of measures).

During the period 2007–13, an amount of EUR 11 500 000 000 (current prices) was devoted to support IPA, of which EUR 1 133 686 000 is specifically devoted to accession preparations in the area of rural development.

In its communication of June 2011 on ‘A budget for Europe 2020’, the European Commission proposed to allocate an amount of EUR 14 110 100 000 (current prices) to the new Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance for the period 2014–20. The part of this amount to be spent on agriculture and rural development remains to be determined, based on the needs and capacities of the beneficiary countries in this policy area. Also, a set of priorities and measures for IPARD II for the period 2014–20, taking into account the changes to the rural development policy for the Member States as well as the specific accession-related needs of the beneficiary countries, will have to be established.
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