



# FACTSHEET

## The Single Area Payment Scheme



European Commission  
Agriculture and  
Rural Development

### The Single Area Payment Scheme

The Single Area Payment System (SAPS) is a transitional, simplified income support scheme which was offered to the Member States who joined the EU in 2004 and 2007 (EU-12) as an option at the date of accession in order to facilitate the implementation of direct payments. With the exception of Slovenia and Malta all others have decided to apply SAPS. This scheme replaces (with some exceptions) all direct payments with a single area payment. The level of the payment is obtained by dividing the country's annual financial envelope with its respective utilized agricultural area. It is simpler than the Single Payment System (SPS) because there is no need to establish and administer payment entitlements. However it does not offer to farmers the flexibility of entitlements based on individual needs, such as sales or lease. Originally, SAPS was established for a period of up to 5 years after the accession. Following the Health Check of the CAP Reform, SAPS will remain in place until the end of 2013.

### Complementary National Direct Payments

The direct payments are phased-in in all the EU-12 MS over a certain transitional period. In order to increase the overall direct support level above the phasing-in level, the MS have the possibility – subject to authorisation by the Commission – to top up any direct payments with complementary national direct payments (CNDPs).

The role of the complementary national direct payments goes beyond just being a simple tool permitting the increase of the direct support level. The CNDPs allow differentiating the total direct support level received by the various sectors. Most EU-12 MS target CNDP support on the livestock sectors or sectors where the application of the standard EU support scheme would result in a much higher per hectare support rate than the SAPS area payment. However, it must be emphasized that as regards the possibilities to grant coupled support, the same limits are applicable to both SPS and CNDP. Once a direct payment is decoupled under SPS, the corresponding CNDPs should be granted in a decoupled form as well.

### Legal References

Basic Act: Regulation (EC) No 73/2009.

Regulation (EC) No 1120/2009 concerns the implementing rules of the Single Payment Scheme including "Article 68" specific support.

Regulation (EC) No 1121/2009 concerns support schemes other than the Single Payment Scheme.

Regulation (EC) No 1122/2009 concerns Cross Compliance, modulation and IACS