

Rural Development Programme (RDP) of Netherlands

Plattelandontwikkelingsprogramma 2007-2013 voor Nederland (POP2) – version 18.2.2008¹

(Rural Development Programme 2007-2013 for the Netherlands (POP2))

Relevant Contact Details

Managing Authority Website:

<http://www.minlnv.nl>

Other useful links:

Rural Development Programme (RDP):

http://enrd.ec.europa.eu/rural-development-policy/country-information/thenetherlands/en/thenetherlands_home_en.cfm

National Strategy Plan (NSP):

<http://www.regiebureau-pop.nl/files/file622.pdf>

National Rural Network:

<http://www.netwerkplatteland.nl/>



Map of the Netherlands
(© European Commission)

General socio-economic situation in rural areas in the Netherlands

According to the RDP, the population density in the Netherlands is high (452/km²). The country is peri-urban and a large proportion (about 38%) of the 16 million population lives in rural areas. Land is used intensively (12%) for buildings and infrastructure and a considerable part (56%) is used for farming. Whilst there is significant contact between urban and rural areas across the country, the spread of urban areas could impact on the natural and social heritage of the countryside.

The RDP also indicates that there are currently 80,000 agricultural holdings, mainly in the dairy, arable, glasshouse horticulture and pig farming; yet in the past 10 years the number of holdings has decreased by 28%. 40% of the country's trade surplus is generated by agriculture and the sector makes a significant contribution to the overall economy. However, farm incomes are low which inhibits further reinvestment. Farmers tend to be highly specialised and have specific skills which facilitates their competitiveness but if this position is to be maintained further emphasis on innovation needs to take place. In addition, many farms have no successor to take over their business, land prices are high and the high costs makes entry into the market difficult for young people. Organic agriculture could also play a role to strengthen sustainable development, but at this stage the market share for organic produce is relatively low and could be expanded.

The countryside has strong natural assets and the most valuable areas are designated as National Parks. Yet biodiversity in rural areas is under threat and many nature reserves suffer from water depletion. Despite improvements, pollution from agriculture is also high (agriculture is responsible for 12% of greenhouse gases) and although nitrogen applications have been reduced there is still

¹ Latest updated RDP, following the adoption of the Health Check and The European Economic Recovery Package

room for improvement. Farming though has to increasingly conform to the demands from society in order to sustain a healthy and attractive environment.

Rural areas tend to lag behind urban areas, both economically and in terms of education levels. Yet new opportunities are opening up for rural businesses in the fields of tourism and recreation which need to be seized upon. Furthermore, many people consider rural areas to be an attractive place to live and urban–rural linkages are very prominent. However, in intermediate rural areas the quality of life is lower and environment and cultural heritage are at risk.

RDP strategic objectives

The RDP strategic objectives are:

- To strengthen entrepreneurship and the capacity to innovate within the sector;
- To better comply with demands from society regarding environmental quality, water management, food quality, animal health and wellbeing;
- To improve the physical conditions for agri-business;
- To improve the quality of produce and of the production process by strengthening the agri-chain;
- To sustainably manage Natura 2000 areas and strengthen biodiversity by agricultural enterprises in particular;
- To preserve and improve typical man made landscapes ('National Landscapes') as part of the Dutch cultural heritage;
- To increase afforestation of farmland, multi-functional use and sustainable management of (production) forest;
- To restore water systems through (economically and ecologically) sustainable water management, improved quality of ground and surface water, prevention of water shortages in agricultural land and natural areas;
- To diversify farm activities;
- To promote micro-enterprises in rural areas;
- To increase accessibility to rural areas and promote rural tourism;
- To improve the quality of governance and mobilize rural development capacity.

Taking into account the additional financing provided by the CAP Health Check and The European Economic Recovery Package, strategic priority, as outlined in the revised 2009 RDP, will be given to initiatives that address water management (which received 21% of the new RDP funds) climate change (23%) renewable energy (19%) biodiversity (23%) innovation (13%) and broadband (0.5%).

Expected impact / outcomes of the policies

The expected overall outcomes of the national policy to which the RDP contributes are: a balance between environmental quality of rural areas on the one hand and the use of the land on the other hand. More specifically: a strong and dynamic agro-food sector, enhanced biodiversity, agricultural lands and forests comprising natural values, the implemented water directive, mitigated climate change and a diversified economy and quality of life in rural areas.

² A full list of the RDP measures can be found in Annex I.

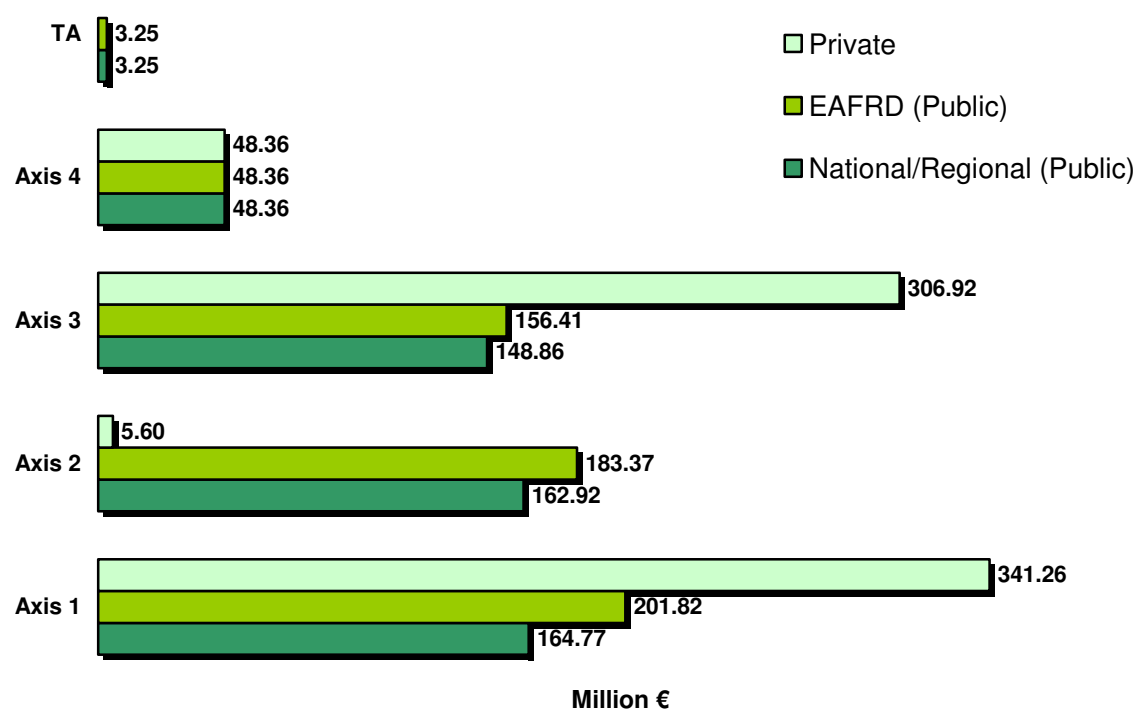
³ Please note that for measure 132, no private spending has been allocated.

⁴ For measures 212, 214 and 216 no private spending has been allocated.

⁵ For measure 413 no private spending has been allocated.

Following the RDP amendments in 2009, modifications for some measures have been made to output-indicator targets to reflect the increased emphasis on 'new challenges'. These include targets relating to measure 111 (increased number of participants for information and dissemination of knowledge related to water management); measure 214 (increased number of holdings supported to develop and maintain perennial field and riparian boundary and biobeds); measure 321 (creation of broadband notable backhaul facilities). Detailed information on impact indicators for individual measures is provided in the RDP indicator tables.

RDP budget breakdown by axis: Total expenditure (including national + EAFRD + private funding) of €1,823,483,667



The RDP budget allocations are broadly divided into four main areas of expenditure, known as axes (namely: Improving the competitiveness of the agricultural and forestry sector; Improving the environment and the countryside; Quality of life in rural areas and diversification of the rural economy; and Leader). Approximately 39% of the updated RDP budget in the Netherlands is allocated to axis 1 (€707.84 million); approximately 19% is allocated to axis 2 (€351.88 million), 34% to axis 3 (€612.18 million) and 8% to axis 4 (€145.08 million), with 0.36% available to fund Technical Assistance (€6.50 million).

Within axis 1, National public funding represents approximately 23% share of the axis funding; EAFRD 29%; and private funds 48%.

Within axis 2, National public funding represents approximately 46% share of the axis funding; EAFRD 52%; and private funds 1.59%.

Within axis 3, National public funding represents approximately 24% share of the axis funding; EAFRD 26% and private funds 50%.

Within axis 4, National public funding represents approximately 33.33% share of the axis funding; EAFRD 33.33%; and private funds 33.33%.

Within technical assistance, National public funding represents approximately 50% share of the technical assistance funding and EAFRD 50%.

As a consequence of the 2009 RDP amendments, the Netherlands has been allocated a total of €130,101,333 (including €97,576,000 EAFRD and a further €32,525,333 national public funds) to reinforce existing and new measures which tackle 'new challenges' (water management, climate change, renewable energy, biodiversity, innovation) and expansion of broadband.

Axis Information²

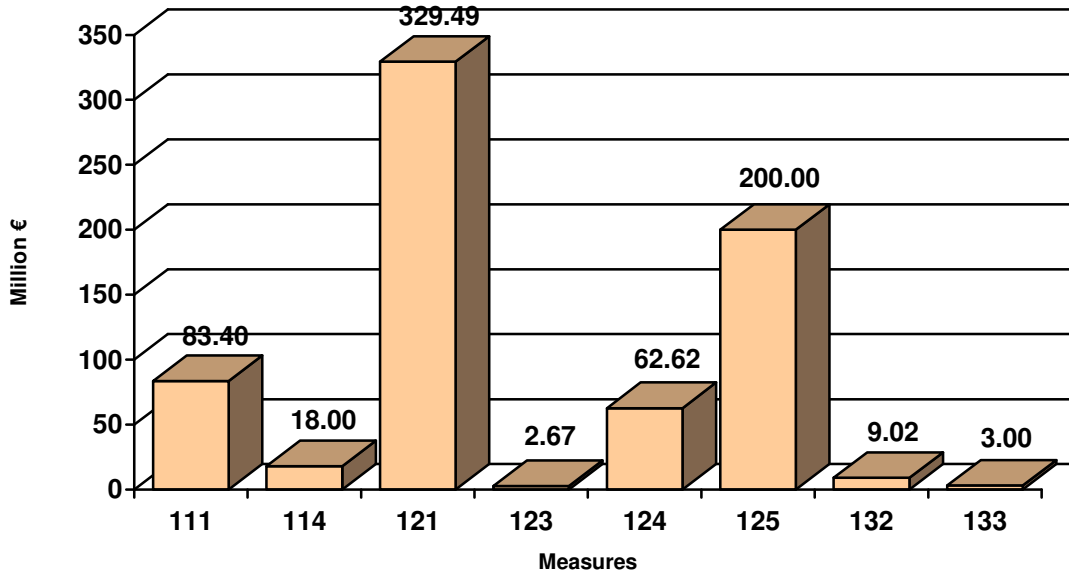
Axis 1 objectives: Improving the competitiveness of the agricultural and forestry sector

Axis 1 objectives are:

- To improve physical conditions for agriculture. Conditions encompass for example land layout, infrastructure and mechanization;
- To strengthen entrepreneurship and the capacity to innovate within the whole agricultural sector. This will enable the sector to respond creatively to changing boundary conditions. Young farmers as a special target group;
- To conform to environmental expectations of society, food quality and animal wellbeing. Climate and water are priority themes;
- To improve the quality of agricultural produce and the efficiency in the whole production chain.

Specific modifications to results indicators have been made to take account of the 2009 amendments to the RDP. Modifications to overall RDP output-indicator targets include measure 111 (participants for information and dissemination of knowledge: 1800 related to water management, 700 related to renewable energy, 1100 related to biodiversity, 400 related to climate change); measure 121 (50 farm holdings supported to facilitate biogas production using organic waste, 100 farms supported to facilitate processing of biomass, 50 farms supported to facilitate improvement of energy efficiency, 850 farms supported to facilitate improved efficiency of fertilisers); measure 124 (5 cooperating groups supported for processing of agriculture forest biomass for renewable energy, 5 groups supported for innovative operations to address climate change mitigation, 5 groups supported for innovative actions on renewable energy, 30 groups supported for innovative actions on water saving techniques, 5 groups supported on innovative actions on the conservation of biodiversity). For further information on output-indicator targets please refer to the impact indicators table in the RDP programme.

Axis 1 indicative budget breakdown by measure: Total allocated budget (including national public funds + EAFRD + private funds) of €707,840,000³



Following the RDP latest update, the total budget amount for axis 1 is €707,840,000 including an additional €74,100,000 (€55,575,000 EAFRD + €18,525,000 national public) that is targeted at actions including those as outlined above.

Axis 2 objectives: Improving the environment and the countryside

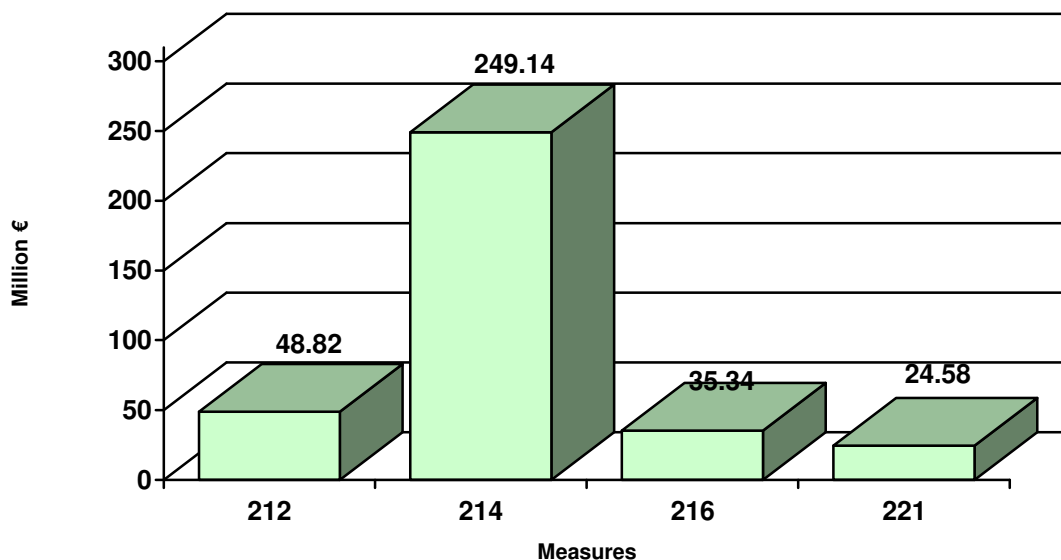
The purpose of measures under axis 2 is to improve the use of rural areas to achieve higher levels of sustainability. Users are encouraged to manage lands with positive effects on flora, fauna and the environment in general, including climate. Forests are used for multiple purposes, not only environmental but also for recreation. Specific objectives are:

- To reverse the declining trend in biodiversity in natural reserves and farmland by 2010;
- To improve the quality of the environment in general and of water systems in particular and create favourable conditions for nature. Species that were endogenous in 1982 should have suitable habitats by 2020;
- To increase the attractiveness of the Dutch manmade landscapes;
- To foster the conversion of agricultural land to forest which contributes to the reduction of CO₂ and multifunctional use of forests;

Farmers are compensated for their opportunity costs if they contribute to such objectives.

Specific modifications to results indicators have been made to take account of the 2009 amendments to the RDP. Modifications to overall RDP output-indicator targets include measure 214 (1650 holdings supported to develop and maintain perennial field and riparian boundary and biobeds); measure 216 (250 holdings supported to develop and maintain wetland restoration). For further information on output-indicator targets please refer to the impact indicators table in the RDP programme.

Axis 2 indicative budget breakdown by measure: Total allocated budget (including national public funds + EAFRD + private funds) of €351,880,000⁴



Following the RDP latest update, the total budget amount for axis 2 is €351,880,000 including an additional €40,900,000 (€30,675,000 EAFRD + €10,225,000 national public) that is targeted at actions including those as outlined above.

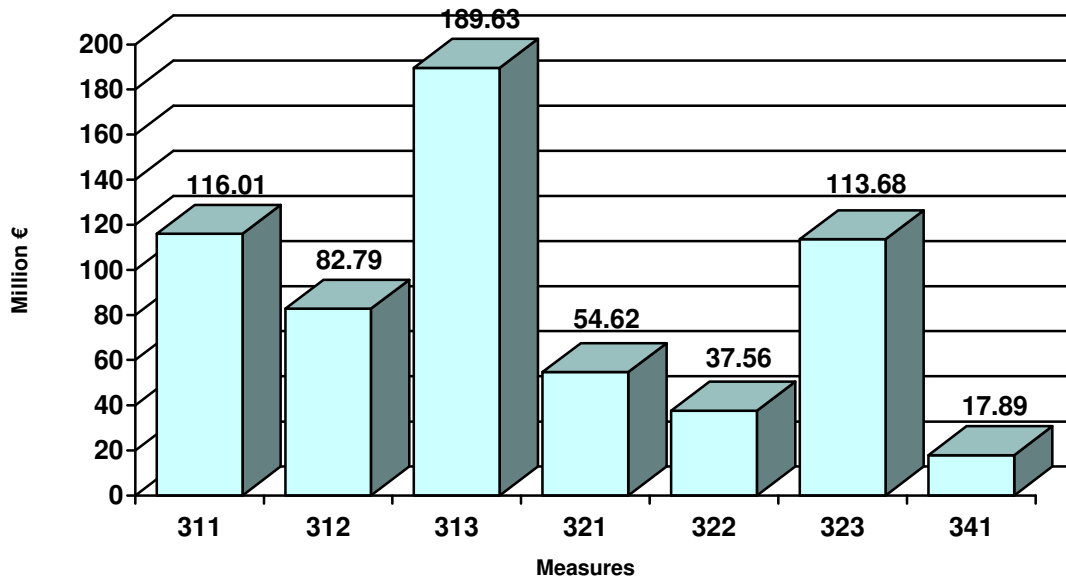
Axis 3 objectives: Quality of life in rural areas and diversification of the rural economy

The objectives for a dynamic and sustainable countryside are:

- To diversify agriculture by making use of a wide range of opportunities;
- To strengthen micro-enterprises in rural areas;
- To improve infrastructure and facilities like enhanced access for tourism and better broadband facilities for inhabitants;
- To promote rural tourism.

Specific modifications to results indicators have been made to take account of the 2009 amendments to the RDP. Modifications to overall RDP output-indicator targets include measure 311 (10 beneficiaries supported for installation / infrastructure for renewable energy using biomass and other renewable energy sources, 15 beneficiaries supported for production of biogas using organic waste, 15 beneficiaries supported for processing biomass for renewable energy); measure 321 (creation of broadband notably backhaul facilities). For further information on output-indicator targets please refer to the impact indicators table in the RDP programme.

Axis 3 indicative budget breakdown by measure: Total allocated budget (including national public funds + EAFRD + private funds) of €612,181,333



Following the RDP latest update, the total budget amount for axis 3 is €612,181,333 including an additional €15,101,333 (€11,326,000 EAFRD + €3,775,333 national public) that is targeted at actions including those as outlined above.

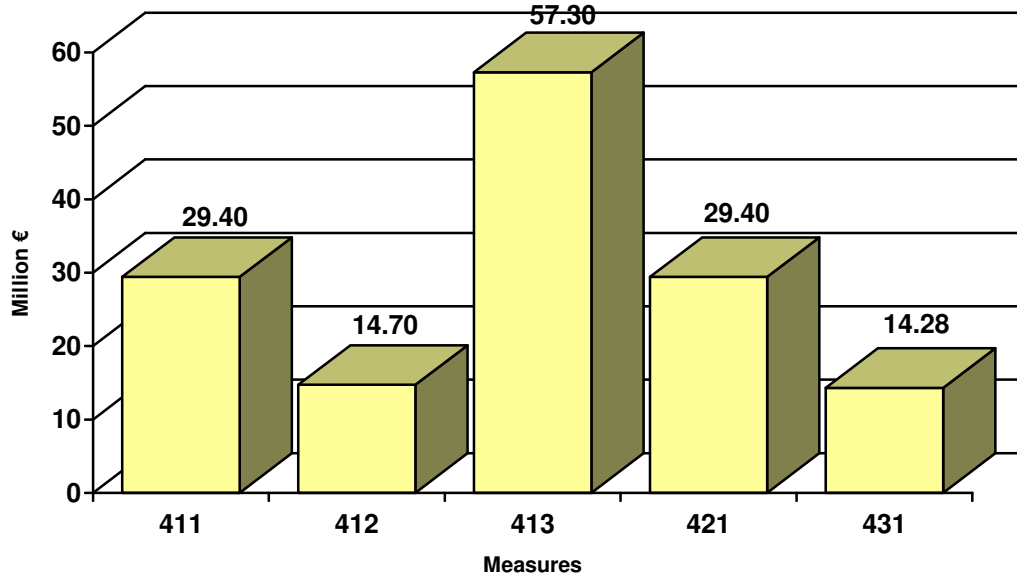
Axis 4 objectives: Leader

Objectives under axis 4 are to unlock available social resources for bottom-up development, to improve local governance and to encourage public-private partnerships. This objective focuses on the process and conditions to create development through collaboration and networking and fosters synergy across axes. Content-wise axis 3 is the most relevant one. The target of the RDP is to work in 35 Leader-areas, covering 50% of the country and 12% of the population.

The number of LAGs operational in the RDP areas as of March 2010 was 31.

No modifications were made to axis 4 during the 2009 RDP update.

Axis 4 indicative budget breakdown by measure: Total allocated budget (including national public funds + EAFRD + private funds) of €145,080,000⁵



Monitoring and evaluation strategy

The Common Monitoring and Evaluation Framework (CMEF) forms the basis for the monitoring and evaluating system of the RDP. A hierarchy of indicators has been developed. Lead indicators (baselines) from the Rural Development strategy have been used to develop the RDP and to subsequently adjust the strategy. Besides (financial) input indicators, indicators to measure wider impact of the RDP, the results per axis and the output of measures have been developed. Additional indicators are listed in: <http://www.regiebureau-pop.nl/files/file353.doc>. The MA is responsible for monitoring and evaluation, which is considered as a continuous management tool. If possible, use is made of existing programmes and databases. Annual progress is submitted to the supervisory board before it is presented to the EC. A mid-term evaluation by an independent party will take place in 2010. The outcome will be used to adjust the programme. Towards the end of the programme the RD strategy will be evaluated and in 2015 the ex-post evaluation of the RDP will take place.

Communication and publicity

The aim of communication is: i) to inform and provide knowledge, ii) to create awareness and encourage involvement and iii) to pass on knowledge and thus influence prospective beneficiaries. The primary target group of the RDP communication plan consists of: i) coordinators of the RDP and representatives of the MA, ii) NGO's acting as intermediary, iii) officers of the national and provincial administration and iv) potential beneficiaries. The general public represents the secondary target group. For each target group, the level of knowledge and their role in the RDP is analysed. The communication activity is devised accordingly. Communication is based on direct and personal approach through various tools and is supported by additional activities. National and regional media and billboards at project sites are essential to reach the secondary target group. Information desks play an essential role in providing relevant information from different sources.

Annex I – measures

Measures selected by the RDP	Measures selected by the updated RDP
------------------------------	--------------------------------------

Axis 1 - Improving the competitiveness of the agricultural and forestry sector	<i>Promoting knowledge and improving human potential</i>	111	Vocational training and information actions	
		112	Setting up of young farmers	
		113	Early retirement	
		114	Use of advisory services	
		115	Setting up of management, relief and advisory services	
	<i>Restructuring and developing physical potential and promoting innovation</i>	121	Modernisation of agricultural holdings	
		122	Improvement of the economic value of forests	
		123	Adding value to agricultural and forestry products	
		124	Cooperation for development of new products, processes and technologies in the agriculture and food sector and in the forestry sector	
		125	Infrastructure related to the development and adaptation of agriculture and forestry	
		126	Restoring agricultural production potential	
	<i>Quality of agricultural production and products</i>	131	Meeting standards based on EU legislation	
		132	Participation of farmers in food quality schemes	
		133	Information and promotion activities	
	<i>Transitional measures</i>	141	Semi-subsistence farming	
		142	Producer groups	
143		Providing farm advisory and extension services		
Axis 2 - Improving the environment and the countryside	<i>Sustainable use of agricultural land</i>	211	Natural handicap payments to farmers in mountain areas	
		212	Payments to farmers in areas with handicaps, other than mountain areas	
		213	Natura 2000 payments and payments linked to Directive 2000/60/EC	
		214	Agri-environment payments	
		215	Animal welfare payments	
		216	Non-productive investments	
	<i>Sustainable use of forestry land</i>	221	First afforestation of agricultural land	
		222	First establishment of agroforestry systems on agricultural land	
		223	First afforestation of non-agricultural land	
		224	Natura 2000 payments	
		225	Forest-environment payments	
		226	Restoring forestry potential and introducing prevention actions	
Axis 3 - Quality of life in rural areas and diversification of the rural economy	<i>Diversify the rural economy</i>	311	Diversification into non-agricultural activities	
		312	Support for business creation and development	
		313	Encouragement of tourism activities	
	<i>Improve the quality of life in rural areas</i>	321	Basic services for the economy and rural population	
		322	Village renewal and development	
		323	Conservation and upgrading of the rural heritage	
			331	Training and information
			341	Skills-acquisition and animation measure with a view to preparing and implementing a local development strategy
Axis 4 - Leader	<i>Implementing local development strategies</i>	411	Competitiveness	
		412	Environment/land management	
		413	Quality of life/diversification	
			421	Implementing cooperation projects
			431	Running the LAG, skills acquisition, animation