



Europees Landbouwfonds  
voor Plattelandsontwikkeling:  
Europa investeert  
in zijn platteland



Take-over support for young farmers

**ENRD Seminar ‘Seizing the opportunities for improving RDP implementation in 2014-2020’**

Ariane Van Den Steen, Flemish Rural Network

# Take-over support for young farmers in Flanders

## □ Situation in Flanders

- Number of starting farm businesses in Flanders: under 200 per year
- More beginning farmers are needed in Flanders in order to keep the agricultural sector viable
- Reasons for the low number of beginning farmers: insecure and low income, legal uncertainty, increasing social demands, ...

## □ Flemish RDP

- Take-over support (start-up aid) for young farmers (M06)
- Specific training (M01)
- Business advice (M02)
- Investment support (M04)

# Take-over support for young farmers: who?

- ❑ Skilled farmers under 40 when the application has been introduced if they establish as an independent farm manager for the first time
  
- ❑ The farmers must meet the VLIF (Flemish Agricultural Investment Fund)-definition of farmer
  - ❑ Being registrated in the IACS database
  - ❑ Having professional skills (which he can attain through M01-trainings)
  - ❑ Agriculture is most important professional activity and yields min. 12,000 euros/year
  - ❑ Having the legal and fiscal statute as self-employed farmer
  
- ❑ Only small and micro enterprises, but Gross Farm Income  $\geq 40.000$  euro

# RDP priorities, focus areas or specific objectives the measure contributes to

## ❑ RDP-focus areas

- ❑ 2B: *'Facilitating the entry of adequately skilled farmers into the agricultural sector and, in particular, generational renewal'*
- ❑ Secondary effect on focus area 2A: *'Improving the economic performance of all farms and facilitating farm restructuring and modernisation, notably with a view to increasing market participation and orientation as well as agricultural diversification'*

## ❑ Horizontal goals

- ❑ Innovation
- ❑ No direct link with horizontal goals environment and climate change, but we expect young farmers to take up sooner environmental and climate issues

# How is it planned to work in practice?

- ❑ **Application** : Young farmers can apply for take-over support through 'e-loket' 24/7, 365 days/year
- ❑ **Selection criteria:**
  - ❑ Complete or incomplete take-over?
  - ❑ Is the seller also a farmer? Does the seller continue with farming?
  - ❑ Organic farms get extra weight
- ❑ Minimum every 3 months a ranking and selection is made - Farmers are informed very soon after the selection if the support is granted or not
- ❑ **Take-over support is granted**
  - ❑ Farmers get a flat-rate grant (depending on the gross farm income: 40.000; 50.000; or 70.000 EUR)
  - ❑ Payment is made in installments over a period of up to 5 years
  - ❑ Final payment: only if the business plan has been carried out correctly

# Communication of the measure to potential beneficiaries

- ❑ Start-up aid for young farmers was since RDP I an important support in rural development
  - ⇒ The **measure is very well known** by
    - Potential beneficiaries
    - Farmers organisations
    - Banks
    - Accountants
- ❑ Accredited training centres for agriculture communicate on the measure during **courses** for starters and other courses for farmers
- ❑ Flemish NSU will start an **action group on 'Young farmers'**
  - ❑ To inform them on the measures of the RDP
  - ❑ To discuss topics young farmers are interested in
  - ❑ To check if the RDP meets the needs of young farmers

# Administrative or management solutions in order to facilitate the take up and implementation

- ❑ Applications through **e-loket**
  - ❑ E-loket = online tool used by farmers to apply for direct support (Pillar I) -> farmers know this tool very well
  - ❑ 24/7, 365 days/year
  - ❑ Farmers can apply from home
  - ❑ Easy to use
  
- ❑ Selection procedure in blocks of maximum 3 months

# Coordinated use of the measure

- ❑ Start-up aid for young farmers is closely linked to
  - ❑ M01 ([training](#)): starters not having yet the required professional skills, can follow special trainings through M01
  - ❑ M02 ([advice services](#)): young starting farmers have more access to supported advices through M02
  - ❑ M04 ([investment support](#)): young farmers have extra weight in the selection procedure
  
- ❑ Accompanying measure: [start-up for small farmers](#)
  - ❑ No age limit, but young farmers have extra weight in selection procedure
  - ❑ Gross Farm Income between 20,000 and 39,999 euro
  - ❑ Lower aid support



# What are the practical and administrative constraints encountered? How to overcome them?

- ❑ Difficult to set up a selection procedure as the aim is to have as much as possible new entrants
  - ⇒ We set up relevant selection criteria, which are easy to measure. But :
    - ❑ We foresee enough budget
    - ❑ The minimum score to pass is quite low
  
- ❑ In RDP II the aid was a % of the costs made (with a maximum), to avoid overcompensation. In RDP III we need to use a fixed support aid. The variation of farms makes it difficult to fix a priori a relevant support aid
  - ⇒ We have fixed 3 amounts, depending on the Gross Farm Income