

Situation, experiences and expectation in agriculture and agri-environmental measures after acceptance of European Common agricultural policy (CAP) in Slovenia

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Abstract

During the recent years of European Common agricultural policy (CAP) Slovenia supports two pillars - direct payments and agri-environmental payments. Agri-environmental support due to Slovenian Agri-environmental programme (SAEP 2003-2006) and Agri-environmental payments (AEP 2007-2013) include 22 and 23 measures, respectively. In Annex 2 of the AEP measures like crop rotation, greening of fields, organic agriculture, soil coverage in water protection areas, etc. are included, which influence the “greening” of agriculture. In Slovenia there were 38.900 measure applications for 286,070.48 ha in 2009 with the total payments of 73,704,057.92 € for agri-environmental measures from 2007-2013 (MKGP, 2010a). Farmers and public opinion supports present and future activities of CAP. However, the agri-environmental measures brought, with restrictive rules, a lot of administrative troubles to the farmers. The CAP needs to be clearly ecological oriented, and will not support partly “green washing” of conventional agriculture or “conventionalisation” of organic farming.

Key words: Common agricultural policy, agricultural payments, public opinion, Slovenian agri-environmental programme, Slovenian farming

Introduction

Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) is a system of the European Union (EU) agricultural programmes for farmers and rural areas providing them subsidies whose aim at the beginning was to maintain adequate supplies of food and feed, increase productivity and ensure that consumers and producers received a fair deal in the market. But during decades of development these priorities have shifted as environmental and animal concerns, as well as safety and health aspects have become more and more important. As a consequence, the CAP has moved from a production-based structure of subsidies to a market-oriented system, integrating standards for food safety, environment and biodiversity as well as animal welfare, etc. Furthermore, agri-environmental measures became the only obligatory set of measures within a rural development program (RDP) in each EU member country with the highest share of co-financing from the common budget. For many countries also support to less favourable areas (LFA) was/is essential. In Slovenia, out of all agricultural areas, 439,000 ha or 72.5% belongs to LFA (RDPRS 2007).

In the pre-accession period the Slovene agricultural policy decided for the strategy to include as much as possible of land use area into different agri-environmental activities and up to 2004 raise payments per area up to the EU-15 level to increase capacity for using EU funds after accession. It meant investment of national funds and was started with the first supports for organic and integrated production in the late nineties. In the year 2003 by introducing a CAP reform within EU, the amounts of agricultural payments given to the farmers in Slovenia were equal to the other EU-15 members and Slovene agriculture was easily incorporated to the CAP with additional possibilities for modernization and development of the agricultural sector.

The aim of this paper is to give an overview of agri-environmental measures as a part of CAP in EU and to present some experiences from the Slovene perspective. As the EU waits a new financial period 2013-2020 (MKGP, 2010b) and also due to some changes seen on the agricultural markets, some expectations for the future are presented.

Development of payment eligibility

After CAP reform in 1992 EU member states were required to implement agri-environmental programs (regulation No. 2078/92) as part of a bundle of measures, accompanying this reform. These measures were combined with the support program for farms in less favoured areas into the program for rural development in 1999. This program, dubbed “the second pillar“ of the CAP became a cornerstone of the Agenda 2000 reform. The policy for rural development has become a complement of “the first pillar of the CAP“ (named later axes 1), programs and policies for commodity markets. Since 2000, agri-environmental programs are elements of the program for rural development in the EU member states. In many cases they are designed in such a way, that farmers may choose whether to continue their farming practices using funds only from axes 1, or to join - usually by contract - particular schemes. In general, the programs are for a minimum duration of five years. Programs are established either at member state or sub-national level. Depending on the volume of average regional value added, programs are co financed by EU funds between 50% and 75% (Schmidt and Sinabell, 2006). Payments were mainly based on per hectare or per animal amounts, which were calculated according to costs of compliance with scheme requirements, income forgone and (initially at least) an incentive to participate payment. Unlike the mainstream commodity support programmes, which were 100% EU financed and applicable on a common basis across the EU, the agri-environment programmes could be implemented in different forms in each member state (and in regions within states) and were co-financed by the EU and member states according to fixed rules. As a result a very wide range of schemes and payment rates can be found across the EU (FAO 2010).

Agri-environment measures are specifically aimed at achieving positive environmental management. EU member states can grant support to farmers for a range of environmentally favourable measures, including biodiversity related measures and conservation of high nature value farmland. The total area of agri-environment schemes in 2002 amounted to nearly 30.2 million ha in the EU-15. The share of agricultural land enrolled in agri-environment measures in total utilized agriculture area (UAA) has increased from approximately 20% in 1998 to 24% in 2002. In Finland, Sweden, Luxemburg and Austria large proportions (more than 75%) of the UAA are under agri-environment schemes (EEA 2005). Due to several similarities, part of common history and in some regions also some similarities in agro-ecological conditions and socioeconomic structures (i.e. Alpine part and the other hilly regions, forestry, small farms,..), but also climate conditions, Austria was for Slovenia as an example to learn and to get information and ideas in the pre-accession period. In the year 2002 total agri-environmental compensation in Austria amounted to 600 mil. € and the Austrian agri-environmental program ranks among those with the broadest coverage and attracted many participants. Approximately 60% of land and farms were participating in the basic scheme. In this scheme farmers commit themselves to stricter environmental standards and do not abandon land during the contracting period of five years. The second most important scheme is a soil coverage program which addresses soil erosion and nutrient leakage (Schmidt and Sinabell, 2006). In 2009 in Austria 118,000 farms (75% of all) were applying for payments for around 409,000 agri-environmental measures (on average 3.5 measures per farm) on 2.20 mio. ha or 87% of UAA using 550 mio. € annually. Also nowadays Austria is one of the most successful EU country in this development and found after the evaluation of the program several positive effects like: positive impact of organic farming shown in various studies (e.g. increase in biodiversity of “field weeds” from 35 to 80 over the last years, 18 out of 26 red-list species found on organic fields, etc.), on average humus content increased over the past years and is due to agri-environmental measures now approximately 0,4% higher than in 1993, soil erosion has been reduced up to >85% in vineyards and orchards (48.000 ha), on average soil erosion in Austria has been reduced by 800.000 t annually, better fertilizer-management caused reduction of nitrate leaching by 16% and reduction of phosphorus content in soils (Rebernig, 2010).

The agri-environmental measures were recognised as the most relevant for organic production because they provided the most significant support for organic farming. In quantitative terms, the overall level of support to organic farming is generally beneficial for organic farms compared to the conventional ones, with a positive relative advantage of most organic crops. For example, in Austria and Spain, organic farming

benefits due to the possibility of combining the organic farming measure with other agri-environmental measures, and in Austria the ceiling to payments for farms larger than 100 ha is higher on organic farms. However, similar budgets as for “Organic farming” were spent in Austria on measures which apply only to conventional farms, i.e. the measures “Reduction of Agricultural Inputs” and “Abandonment of Agricultural Inputs”. Furthermore, the closest alternative to organic farming, e.g. integrated farming, in most countries may receive nearly as high payments and is thus an interesting alternative for farmers. However, payments often are not sufficient to cover the income loss of organic compared to conventional production, particularly in horticulture, vine and olive production in Italy (Häring et al. 2004).

While the ideas of remuneration of positive externalities (RPE) and payments for environmental services (PES) have underpinned the EU agri-environment schemes from the outset, the implementation of these ideas has been more complicated in practice, due in part to the difficulties inherent in measuring the environmental outcomes. In practice, the guideline has been that schemes should deliver significant environmental benefits over good agricultural practice. This was reinforced following the 2003 CAP reform agreement and the introduction of cross-compliance and good agricultural and environmental practice (GAEP) requirements for Single Farm Payment eligibility from 2005.

Agri-environmental measures were formally integrated with other rural development measures as a part of the Agenda 2000 reforms from 2000-2006. This has continued in the 2007-2013 framework, with agri-environmental (or land management) measures forming Axis 2 of the rural development programme. In broad terms, the types of instrument envisaged have not changed significantly, although agro-forestry was introduced as an option and has been adopted in a few countries, and options to introduce schemes focusing on animal health and welfare were also introduced (FAO 2010). Cooper et al. (2009) provide a detailed overview of the different schemes currently in place. Based on the experiences from Austria the most important issues for successful introduction of agri-environmental measures are: sufficient funding, scientific proof is necessary for validation of measures, acceptance of measures, education of farmers and evaluation of programme, and administrative costs in relation to impact of measure should be reasonable (Rebernik, 2010).

Worldwide agri-environmental payments vs. EU and Slovenian CAP payments

For the period 2007-2013, the *Commission Regulation (EC) No 1974/2006 of 15 December 2006* is laying down detailed rules for the application of *Council Regulation (EC) No 1698/2005* on support for rural development by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD). In its axis 2 the regulations defines under part (a) measures targeting the sustainable use of agricultural land through: (i) Natural handicap payments to farmers in mountain areas; (ii) Payments to farmers in areas with handicaps other than mountain areas; (iii) Nature 2000 payments and payments linked to *Directive 2000/60/EC*; (iv) Agri-environmental payments; (v) Animal welfare payments and (vi) Support to non-productive investments. Under its part (b) for sustainable use of forestry land the regulation provides for payments for: (i) First afforestation of agricultural land; and (ii) First establishment of agroforestry systems on agricultural land.

In EU and other OECD countries a wide range of approaches have been adopted (Table 1), reflecting both local environmental priorities and resource availabilities as well as differing policy perspectives on the roles that markets and policy interventions should play. Several different approaches are being used such as (FAO 2010): (i) Input-limiting schemes, which reduce or prohibit fertilisers and pesticides, for example: Schemes with specific input limitations; Integrated farming and/or organic farming schemes where inputs are restricted along with other requirements; (ii) Extensification schemes, particularly those that restrict livestock numbers on grassland; (iii) Habitat restoration and maintenance schemes, with specific management prescriptions to recreate or maintain habitats or species (including rare breeds); (iv) Land use change, or land retirement schemes, including conversion or crop land to grassland or (agro)forestry and farm woodland establishment schemes - with the increased emphasis on climate change issues, some schemes to reverse previous land drainage for agriculture in order to prevent further degradation of peatlands are also being introduced; (v) Capital investment to support investment in infrastructure for environmental gains, e.g. restoring stone walls and buildings representing cultural landscapes, fencing to protect hedges from browsing, or housing for livestock in winter to reduce damage to pasture; (vi) Catchment areas schemes, which aim to encourage all farmers in an area to participate, for example to maintain water quality.

Beside Slovene measures some Austrian agri-environmental measures could also be interesting for Croatia, i.e. renunciation of yield-increasing inputs on arable areas, renunciation of yield-increasing inputs on arable areas dedicated to green forage and on grassland, renunciation of fungicides on areas dedicated to cereal cropping, environmental friendly management of medicinal and spice plants, alternative crops and seed multiplication, integrated production (IP) of arable areas (potatoes, strawberries and beets from the 1st group or from the 3rd group cover cropping of arable land, direct seeding and seeding on mulch, underseed under maize and spreading of liquid farm manure and biogas semi liquid manure with a low level of nitrogen loss or some being introduced on the regional level like: regional project for groundwater protection and for the maintenance of grassland, preventive soil and water protection, management of arable areas particularly threatened by erosion and leaching.

But there are still debates whether to choose targeted measures which deliver specific outcomes, or more systems-based approaches delivering on a range of outcomes. Various agricultural economists concluded that systems-focused, multi-objective policies such as organic farming area support payments are not economically sound, as the policy goals could be achieved more efficiently by more flexible and targeted combinations of various specific agri-environmental measures. But Schader (2010) who has analysed this issue more detailed regarding cost effectiveness of organic farming as a tool to deliver agri-environmental goals in Switzerland found out that if provided systems-based approaches are part of a mix of options with targeted approaches, they can be a cost-effective means of delivering agri-environmental outcomes. This also applies to other integrated/sustainable farming systems, as well as to the more traditional farming systems identified by Cooper et al. (2009) as contributing public good provision. The focus on defined production systems may make it easier to link in market-based mechanisms to encourage them, but there is no reason conceptually why a specific standard for bundled eco-system services might not be developed as a basis for remuneration of positive externalities and payments for environmental services policies.

Table 1. Agri-environmental payments for farming practices in some OECD, some EU countries and EU candidate (Croatia); (Vojtech, 2010; AEP 2001-2013)

Programme/Country	USA	AUS	AUT	GER	IT	HUN	SLO	CRO
Payments for activity								
Land improvement (liming, soil erosion prevention)	*	*	*	*	*			
Nitrate reduction		*	*	*	*			
Nutrient management plan	*	*			*	*		
Extensive crop production			*	*	*	*		
Organic farming	*		*	*	*	*	*	*
Integrated prod. wine, fruits, vegetable			*			*	*	
Integrated farming			*			*	*	
Traditional methods			*		*	*		
Reduced tillage/Mechanic weed control	*	*	*	*	*	*		
Crop rotation	*			*		*	*	
Biological plant protection measures				*				
Green manure crops		*			*			
Green set aside/fallows	*	*	*			*		
Catch crops, green/winter cover	*		*	*			*	
Extensive management of all land					*	*		
Extensive land management (pastures/meadows)	*			*	*	*		
Conversion of arable land into grassland (pastures/meadows)	*			*	*	*	*	
Grassland/biodiversity/habitat schemes	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	
Biodiversity - local breeds			*	*	*	*	*	*
Biodiversity - local species and varieties of crops			*	*	*		*	*
Maintaince of wetlands and ponds		*			*	*		
Protected environmentally sensitive areas/vulnerable zones	*	*			*	*	*	
Shelter belts/buffer strips	*	*	*	*	*	*		
Landscape elements/Amenities			*		*	*		
Maintaining and improving groundcover	*	*					*	
Water conservation	*							
On-farm energy conservation		*						

Despite the variety of approaches, in general terms, there is broad acceptance of the principle that policy intervention in all these cases may be justified because there is evidence of market failure. This is most clearly the case where positive externalities and environmental services are provided by agricultural producers. These services are typically not purchased in a market framework because the benefits accrue to society as a whole, rather than individual consumers. Even in cases where a market may exist, e.g. consumption of landscapes via tourism, the sellers of tourism services (accommodation, restaurants, travel firms) may not be those that deliver the landscape qualities attracting the tourists (FAO 2010).

In case of Croatian law (MPRRR, 2010), additional to direct payments and rural development, just a few of environmental measures were mentioned like Nature 2000, environmental payments with no detailed information (payment 40 EUR per ha, organic farming and protection of local breeds and races).

With the increased emphasis on climate change and soil and water protection in addition to biodiversity conservation in the CAP Health check of 2008, the emphasis within agri-environmental measures has begun to shift, and may lead to more significant changes as part of the current CAP reform debate (FAO 2010). The CAP needs to be clearly ecological oriented, and will not support partly “green washing” of conventional agriculture or “conventionalisation” of organic farming.

Slovenian agri-environmental measures and situation

Among the measures which were financed from the budget of the RS in the preliminary programming period 2000-2006 it is necessary to point out the Slovene Agri-Environmental Programme 2001-2006 (SAEP) which laid special focus on the environment and was divided into three basic groups: Group I: reduction of negative impacts of agriculture on the environment (9 measures); Group II: preservation of natural features, biodiversity, soil fertility and traditional cultural landscape (8 measures); Group III: maintenance of protection areas (5 measures) and Group IV comprised training and promotion, which were not designed as measures of per area payments.

In that period the SAEP comprised 22 measures and training and promotion. Based on an annual decree at the national level the SAEP was initiated with 10 pilot measures in 2001, in 2002 12 measures were implemented and in 2003 already 14 measures. By 2003 agri-environmental measures were entirely financed from the national budget as state aid. From 2004 onward 21 measures of the SAEP have been implemented under the RDP 2004-2006, whereas training and promotion as technical assistance. The number of the measures was reduced from 22 to 21. The response of producers to the SAEP was relatively high as in the first year of the implementation about 20 percent of all agricultural holdings applied for agri-environmental payments. In total 1,393,680,692 SIT (app. 6 mio €) were disbursed, the most (41%) for the measure sustainable rearing of domestic animals. In 2001 agri-environmental measures were implemented by 11,400 agricultural holdings covering 93,736 ha; in 2002 by 11,859 agricultural holdings covering 110,849 ha and in 2003 by 12,422 agricultural holdings covering 124,838 ha. The extent of agricultural land under agri-environmental measures in 2002 increased by approximately 18% and in 2003 for 33% compared to the year 2001.

In the year 2007 a new Agri-environmental program (AEP 2007-2013) started mostly with increased amounts per ha (Table 2) with exception of integrated vegetable production, where the amount decreased from 241.20 to 184.91 €/ha. Payments in Austria are 250 (vegetable on the field in the year) to 350 €/ha (more vegetables in the same year) for open field production and under tunnel covered by foil 1,000 or by glass 2,000 €/ha. Additionally areas where predators are being used can receive 1,200 €/ha.

In the period 2006-2009 the number of farms in Slovenia included into agri-environmental measures increased up to 50%, although now new applications are not possible except conversion to organic farming. In 2009, 38,900 holdings were covering 286,070 ha or 58% of LUA (MKGP, 2010a). Approx. 25 mio. € is given, mainly as support for greening arable land, integrated field crop production, sustainable rearing of domestic animals and organic farming (Table 3). On average in Slovenia farms are participating in two agri-environmental measures.

Maximal amounts of payments from agri-environmental measures applying for different combinations have been defined and are in the period 2007-2013 for arable land 600 €/ha/ year, permanent crops 900 €/ha/ year and grassland including clover grass mixtures on the fields 450 €/ha/ year. Additional from the axis 2, farmers can also get LFA payments if area is eligible and payment rights for fields, permanent crops and greenhouses amounts to 332 €/ha and 133 €/ha for grassland and extensive orchards from axes 1.

In Slovenia, if the eligible area on a farm is over 100 ha, for areas over 100 ha payments are reduced for 50%, but in Austria payments are from 100 ha to 300 ha 92.5% from 300 ha to 1,000 ha 85.0% for areas more than 1,000 ha 75.0% (Rebernik, 2010), stimulating also bigger farms to enter into the schemes.

Among all above presented agri-environmental measures, beside very strict administrative controls and some site controls according to the EU rules, only integrated and organic farming practise are being inspected regularly at least once per year and certified also as products according to the EU community legislation and/or to national rules.

Table 2. Payments for different agri-environmental measures in Slovenia for the period 2007-2013 (ULRS, 2007)

Agri-environmental measure	Payment €/ha/year	Agri-environmental measure	Payment €/ha/year
Preservation of crop rotation	91.84	sustainable rearing of domestic animals	84.46
greening of arable land	172.20	extensive grassland maintenance	48.38
integrated field crop production	197.21	animal husbandry in central areas of appearance of large carnivores	29.11
integrated fruit production	336.61	preservation of special grassland habitats	66.83
integrated vine production	381.71	preservation of grassland habitats of butterflies	66.83
integrated vegetable production	184.91	preservation of litter meadows	143.91
organic farming:		bird conservation in humid extensive meadows in Nature 2000 sites	83.23
- fields	298.07	permanent green cover in water protection areas:	
- vegetables on field	551.45	- fields	83.64
- vegetables in greenhouses	487.90	- permanent crops	184.50
- fruit high density	554.73	- grassland	31.57
- fruit low density	237.80		
- grapes, hop, nurseries	578.92		
- grassland	227.55		
mountain pastures with herdsman	61.09	humpy meadows mowing	132.84
mountain pastures without herdsman	72.57	meadow orchards	93.89
mountain pastures slopes 35-50%	90.20	rearing of autochthonous and traditional domestic breeds	89.38*
Steep mowing slopes >50%	142.27	production of autochthonous and traditional agricultural plant varieties	102.91

* - per animal unit (500 kg)

Table 3. Number of Slovenian farms and land area under different agri-environmental measures in the year 2009 and paid support in the period from 2007 to 2009 (MKGP, 2010a)

Group	Agri-environmental measure	Number of farms in 2009	Area in 2009 (ha)	Payed support 2007-2009 (in €)
I	-reduction of negative impacts of agriculture on the environment			
	preservation of crop rotation	2,072	17,711.17	3,112,723.93
	greening of arable land	4,887	59,876.26	17,683,926.17
	integrated field crop production	1,762	41,740.71	13,216,101.17
	integrated fruit production	855	3,327.96	1,949,171.31
	integrated vine production	2,292	8,432.72	5,638,816.20
	integrated vegetable production	276	895.10	299,190.11
	organic farming	1,740	24,889.38	10,961,700.53
II	- conservation of natural conditions, biodiversity, soil fertility and traditional cultural landscape			
	mountain pastures with herdsman	14	480.58	47,299.52
	mountain pastures without herdsman	117	5,168.73	572,932.44
	mountain pastures	2,136	14,025.05	2,434,861.66
	steep slopes mowing	15	5,374.69	1,472,856.86
	humpy meadows mowing	34	29.18	6,897.91
	meadow orchards	780	696.60	118,980.84
	rearing of autochthonous and traditional domestic breeds	1,151	16,160*	966,802.64
	production of autochthonous and traditional agricultural plant varieties	5,242	5,835.25	956,077.19

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Group	Agri-environmental measure	Number of farms in 2009	Area in 2009 (ha)	Payed support 2007-2009 (in €)
III - maintenance of protection areas				
	sustainable rearing of domestic animals	9,731	77,991.42	12,372,316.51
	extensive grassland maintenance	1,570	9,258.54	805,262.39
	animal husbandry in central areas of appearance of large carnivores	640	8,573.17	401,536.47
	preservation of special grassland habitats	169	420.64	52,006.45
	preservation of grassland habitats of butterflies	68	126.97	15,897.37
	preservation of litter meadows	3,062	26.33	6,526.41
	bird conservation in humid extensive meadows in Natura 2000 sites	20	309.20	39,685.61
	permanent green cover in water protection areas	270	870.83	73,277.28
	Total No. of applications for measures	38,900	286,070.48	73,704,057.92
	Total No. of farms and LUA in Slovenia	77,175 ¹	492,424.00	
	Share (%)	50.4	58.09	

* - number of animals, ¹ - in 2005

Development and situation of integrated farming

An obtained certificate for integrated production under a national quality scheme (Table 4) assures the consumer that the products were produced under the technological guidelines set out in advance and that they are compliant with the national rules laying down technological requirements and restrictions on integrated production of fruit, crops, grapes and vegetables. The scheme is available to all producers meeting the requirements on integrated production and providing a complete traceability of the products. Each year the producers are controlled by an inspection body appointed on the basis of the regulation governing the technical and organisation conditions (EN 45011) to be fulfilled by an organisation controlling the integrated agricultural products and foodstuffs. The inspection body controls the compliance with the provisions of the technological guidelines and the rules on integrated production (RDPRS, 2007).

Table 4. Development and situation of integrated production in Slovenia in 2009 as share (%) of area under integrated production, (MKGP 2010c, SURS 2010)

Year	Fruit		Vegetable		Grape		Field crops	
	No of farms	area (ha)						
2003	889	3,941.38	346	910.05	1,714	7,105.70	0	0
2004	1,047	4,373.15	417	1,134.22	2,188	8,540.30	920	28,487.08
2005	1,181	2,187.47	408	1,027.75	2,547	8,553.80	1,394	32,819.78
2006	1,197	3,798.35	379	1,099.26	2,559	8,512.14	1,572	36,459.85
2007	1,091	3,453.66	380	1,094.12	2,640	9,062.53	1,930	43,267.28
2008	1,080	3,273.97	356	1,075.95	2,594	8,910.60	1,882	44,357.92
2009	994	3,475.54	331	1,002.57	2,428	7,630.69	1,823	45,367.84
Total		8,928.00		1,708.00		16,086.00		180,303.00
Share (%)		38.93		58.70		47.44		25.16

As integrated field crop production can be considered as successful, integrated vegetable production is being decreased after EU accession due to not simulative payments and increased imports of vegetables from the other EU countries.

Development and situation in organic farming

The first organic farms were registered and inspected in Slovenia in 1998. According to DG AGRI reference data in 2002 organic farming was carried out on 15,400 ha of Slovenian agricultural land. In the years 2006/2009 organic farming was carried out on 1,876 / 2,067 agricultural holdings on 26,830.62/29,398.43 ha of agricultural land, respectively. In the recent years the organic agricultural land increased from 2.4 to 6.2% where permanent grassland, field crops and orchards dominated (Table 5), although goal 15% organic LUA up to 2015 probably will not be achieved (APOF, 2006).

Table 5. Land use area (ha) on organic farms in Slovenia in the year 2009 (SURs, 2010)

Land use	Total	organic farming	in conversion	all under organic	share of total (%)
Utilised agricultural area - total	492,424	25,816	3,572	29,398	6.2
Arable land	180,303	2,382	540	2,922	1.6
of which vegetables and strawberries	3,545	112	12	124	3.5
Permanent grassland	285,973	22,669	2,764	25,433	8.9
Orchards	8,928	648	132	780	8.7
Vineyards	16,086	91	113	204	1.3
Olive groves	910	27	23	50	5.5
Nurseries	224	-	-	-	-

According to the RDPS (2007) one of the most efficient ways for sustainable agricultural use of natural resources is organic farming, as it significantly contributes to the provision of public goods, preservation and improvement of biodiversity, preservation of drinking water sources, an increase in working places, conservation of agricultural landscape and environmental protection (Bavec and Bavec, 2006, Bavec et al., 2009, Turinek et al., 2009). Furthermore, it ensures the production of healthy and high-quality food with high nutritional content. Organic farming has the best possible impact on sustainable management of the renewable and non-renewable natural resources with special mission to exerting the principle on adequate animal rearing, well human-being and promoting health. In this way organic farming represents the basic benefit for social change and real green care (Sempik et al., 2010; Dessein and Bock, 2010). According to the mentioned functions organic farming is the basic ecosystem service in agriculture with interdisciplinary functions of whole chain (from biodiversity, to quantity and quality of food, just regional transport, organic food in public kitchens, etc.).

Organic farming is widely perceived as being more environmentally friendly than conventional farming. As a form of sustainable agriculture, it receives substantial support from policy for its contribution to environmental protection as well as the provision of amenities such as biodiversity and cultural landscapes. Consumers are attracted to organic foods as they are produced without synthetic chemicals and comply with higher animal welfare standards. Although organic farming certainly has the potential to fulfil these expectations, studies have shown that some certified organic farms do not. Their practices comply with the regulations, but not with the principles of organic farming and we could describe them as conventionalised organic farms. Assessment is needed whether or not the observed changes comply with the principles and values of organic farming (Danhofer, 2010).

According to the report "Funding for Farmland Biodiversity in the EU" (Farmer et al., 2008) in some countries or regions organic farming can be beneficial for biodiversity, but this is not the underlying objective of supporting such a system. Also due to the opinion of European Economic and Social Committee (NAT/471) the importance of biodiversity maintenance has still not come to the affront of political discussion and action. With the 2013 reform of agricultural policy, biodiversity maintenance criteria must play a major part in the CAP, in order to resolve the current conflict between economic production and nature conservation. But also in these new document (NAT/471) a lack of some actions between linear linked biotopes, species and/or ecosystem services exists.

The mission of organic farming in Slovenia is (due to mentioned facts, development of organic farming in Slovenia and experiences from the farmer, professional and scientific sides) well established. In general, for an organic "greening" of the CAP a lot of lacks exist, because of very complicated administrative support, undeveloped processing and marketing systems, lack of use of organic foods in public kitchens and undeveloped organic tourism, and "green" care in organic farms. Also field hedgerows and margin strips have many agronomic, environmental, recreational and wildlife functions, but their indicators are very rarely involved into green CAP, and they are often in contradiction with organic farming rules, production and cross-compliance (Bavec and Bavec, 2010).

Priorities, performance and expectations of European vs. Slovenian public opinion beyond 2013

EU General Directorate for agriculture gave the call for public opinion on the 12th of April 2010. The aim of public debate was about the future of EU CAP, its principles and aims. The questions were focused on whole public, professional public, corporations and institutes and were placed on a Web portal. About 5,700

answers (also many repeated e-mails) were sent to the Commission. The key questions are as follows: “Why do we need a European common agricultural policy?“, “What do citizens expect from agriculture?“, “Why reform the CAP?“ and “What tools we need for the CAP of tomorrow?“ Main findings were focused on where there was a general consensus among the contributions received, and are that: (i) the 2nd pillar has proved valuable and should be maintained within the CAP; (ii) the preservation of the diversity of farm production systems is essential both for sustainable food production and the delivery of public goods; (iii) it is important to meet environmental objectives and support the vitality of rural areas, both in an integrated perspective; (iv) regional targeting should be more embedded in the policy; (v) Leader and other local approaches should be maintained or reinforced; (vi) greater simplification is required for effective delivery; (vii) coordination with the other EU policies applied in rural areas should be strengthened; and (viii) many specific and more detailed suggestions were made regarding how to improve delivery through existing measures and tools and new measures (PD-CAP, 2010). More relevant is the opinion of Eurobarometer (2010) based on 26,761 face to face interviews at EU level vs. 1,017 interviews of Slovenian citizens. The majority of European/Slovenian citizens (90% vs. 95%) regard agriculture and rural areas as important for the future. But 57% Europeans and 45% of Slovene did not hear about CAP; and additional 28% and 39% of citizens really do not know what it is, respectively. There is an overall preference for the European vs. Slovenian level to manage agricultural issues, particularly environmental protection (65% vs. 72%), securing food supply (53% vs. 65%) and ensuring that agricultural products are of good quality, healthy and safe (51% vs. 43%). The local or regional levels are not preferred for both of the issues measured. However, CAP ensuring fair standard of living for farmers for EU/Slovenian farmers at EU level in 45%/36%, at national level 39%/47% and at regional level 11%/16% according to the asked citizens, respectively. It means that the Slovenian citizens showed more preference for CAP than the EU average. According to the results, the EU needs to help farmers to change the way of work, in order to fight climate change (82% of EU and 91% of Slovenian citizens have this opinion. The questionnaire of priorities and performances of CAP showed that 59% of EU and 72% of Slovenian citizens expect that the CAP is ensuring that agricultural products are good quality, healthy and safe, 41% vs. just 33% ensuring that CAP needs to support a fair standard of living for farmers, respectively. The fact is that in EU and Slovenia citizens have the same opinion that CAP fulfils 32% living standard for farmers under low protection of family farms (47%, 58%) and rather well just 29% vs. 33% according to EU vs. Slovene opinion, respectively. The public opinion favours the CAP policy to support farmers until today and for the next 10 years. 43% Slovenians support the increase of financial support for farmers and 39% agreed with no change in this support, but 11% mentioned that financial support needs to decrease in the future. According to the global crises it is understandable. The fact is that EU agricultural budget represents about 40% of the total EU budget. 48% of EU and 57% of Slovenian citizens agreed that this proportion is adequate, 17% vs. 14% that is too high. The budget is sufficient for 20% of EU and Slovenian citizens.

Conclusions

An overview of Slovenian situation, experiences and expectations in agriculture after acceptance of the European Common agricultural policy shows that:

- (i) In Slovenia CAP plays an important role for financing direct measures for agricultural activities (Axis 1) and decreasing negative environmental impacts (Axis 2), improving the farmers economical situation and living standard.
- (ii) Agri-environmental measures, with the support of 73 mio. € in the period 2007-2009, enable better adaptation to nature protection.
- (iii) Public opinion supports CAP, with good understanding of gaps and benefits.
- (iv) Future of “green“ agriculture depends on initial ideas and development of organic farming, which is the real promoter and the mirror for other production systems, how to manage agriculture more sustainable. Their ecological intensification need to depends on simple and clear ecological oriented CAP, which will not support partly “green washing“ of conventional agriculture or “conventionalisation“ of organic farming.

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