

‘Setting up young farmers’ CAP measure in rural areas of Greece

The imbalanced allocation of age-classes with high share of older farmers against younger ones, and the difficult access of young and well trained farmers to the primary sector are important factors that negatively affect the rural areas in most of the European countries. ‘Setting up young farmers’ is a measure of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) that tries to answer these problems.

A Test Case Study was set up in the context of the LIAISE project in order to measure the direct and indirect impacts of ‘Setting up young farmers’ measure in rural areas. Among the various models and tools that could be used to understand Rural Development Programme (RDP) effects and measure its impacts, the Multicriteria Decision Analysis approach was selected. We used this approach to assess the impacts of the measure in rural areas (prefectures) of Northern Greece, focusing on economic and social impacts. The results of the Test Case highlight the importance of context-sensitive methods for generating and disseminating knowledge taking into account local information needs.

The “Setting up young farmers” RDP measure was implemented in two programming periods, 2000-2006 and 2007-2013 in the seven prefectures of the Region of Central Macedonia in Northern Greece.

LIAISE Policy Brief

This policy brief reports on the results from the LIAISE Network of Excellence.

The *LIAISE test cases* are about acting, participating in, supporting and observing concrete policy processes which use or could use IA tools. *Test cases* enable mutual learning about policy-makers’ and researchers’ needs, as well as learning on opportunities and barriers for interaction on IA tool use and development. Test cases involve researchers, tool developers, IA practitioners and policy-makers.

The *LIAISE test cases* study the use of selected IA tools, user requirements and science-policy interface at various thematic and governance levels. They include seven cases ranging from the EU-level to national and regional levels. They cover several policy areas including climate policy, agricultural policy, resource efficiency policy and land use policy. *Test cases* provide lessons from tool development and from the use or non-use of tools in IA processes. These lessons contribute to increased awareness on IA tools, improved communication between policy and research, and stimulating tool use and IA research.

Test Case: Impacts of the ‘Setting up young farmers’ CAP measure in rural areas
Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (AUTH)

Key findings

Impacts in general

The “Setting up young farmers” measure achieved its goals to transfer land to young, trained farmers, to offset the set-up costs faced by young people when established in farming and to provide assistance for the investments required on such holdings. Success of the goals depends on the characteristics of each prefecture and can be mainly attributed to changes in farm plans. Considering the different farm plans in each prefecture, it is clear that the results are highly dependent on programming periods, limitations and constraints of each prefecture.

Economic impacts

The ‘Setting up young farmers’ measure achieved, in both programming periods, to increase or to stabilise the farm income of the young farmers in almost all prefectures.

Environmental impacts

In four prefectures the environmental impacts were positive; in five other prefectures the impacts were negative and in five prefectures there was no important change.

Social impacts

The main aim of the ‘Setting up Young Farmers’ measure was to increase the Annual Work Units (AWU) for young farmers. The results show that this goal was achieved in three prefectures only (during the second programming period). In most prefectures there is no important change and in three prefectures there was a negative impact.

Comparison between 2000-2006 and 2007-2013 programming periods

The “Setting up young farmers” RDP measure had positive impacts in most prefectures during the Second Programming period (2007-2013) in comparison to the First Programming Period (2000-2006). Specifically, the results showed that in six prefectures the impacts (economic, social, environmental) turned from negative or stable in the First Programming period to positive in the Second.

Multicriteria Decision Analysis (MCDA) findings

The analysis included the implementation of an MCDA model for the farm plans optimisation and the comparison of selected indicators with those of the Second Programming Period. The MCDA model showed positive economic impacts in all prefectures and positive social and environmental impacts in most prefectures, in comparison to the Second Programming period (2007-2013).

General Conclusion

The “Setting up young farmers” RDP measure achieved its goals to transfer land to young, trained farmers, to offset the set-up costs faced by young people when establishing themselves in farming and to provide assistance for the investments required on such holdings.

Test case of the Region of Central Macedonia

The study was carried out in the Region of Central Macedonia in Northern Greece. The Region comprises seven prefectures (the second-degree organisation of local government, grouped into 13 regions): Imathia, Thessaloniki, Kilkis, Pella, Pieria, Serres and Chalkidiki.



Figure 1. REGION OF CENTRAL MACEDONIA

The main selected tool was a Multicriteria Decision Analysis (MCDA) model. The implementation of the MCDA model optimised the Young Farmers farm plans taking into account the available resources (land, labour, capital). In this way, the MCDA model proposes alternative farm plans and agricultural land uses enabling policy makers to assess the economic, environmental and social impacts of the RDP measure in each prefecture. The impacts were assessed by measuring major economic, social and environmental indicators. The selected economic indicators were Farm income, Gross Revenue, Variable Cost and Gross Margin. The environmental indicators were Water Use, Fertilizers Use. The Social indicators were Labour Use and Annual Work Units.

The sample of the case study included 159 young farmers. 72.3% of them participated in the programming period 2007-2013 and 27.7% in the programming period 2000-2006.

Comparison between 2000-2006 and 2007-2013 programming periods

The “Setting up young farmers” RDP measure had positive impacts in most of the Second Programming period (2007-2013) cases in comparison with those of the First Programming Period (2000-2006). The results of indicator-based assessment concerning economic impacts showed that the measure helped in both programming periods to increase or to stabilise the farm income of the young farmers in almost all cases. Exceptions are the prefecture of Thessaloniki in the first programming period and the prefecture of Pieria in the second period. The environmental impacts of the measure vary among the seven prefectures. In four cases the environmental impacts were positive because of the decrease in the use of fertilisers and water. In other five cases the impacts were negative, and in five cases there was no important change.

Finally, the results show that the main social aim of the ‘Setting up Young Farmers’ measure, to increase the Annual Work Units for the young farmers, was achieved in three cases only (during the second programming period). In most cases there is no important change and in three cases there was negative impact.

	Economic Impact	Environmental Impact	Social Impact
Prefecture of Chalkidiki			
2000 – 2006	↔	↓	↔
2007 – 2013	↔	↓	↔
Prefecture of Imathia			
2000 – 2006	↔	↑	↔
2007 – 2013	↔	↑	↑
Prefecture of Kilkis			
2000 – 2006	↔	↔	↓
2007 – 2013	↑	↓	↑
Prefecture of Pella			
2000 – 2006	↑	↔	↔
2007 – 2013	↔	↔	↔
Prefecture of Pieria			
2000 – 2006	↑	↓	↔
2007 – 2013	↓	↑	↔
Prefecture of Serres			
2000 – 2006	↑	↔	↓
2007 – 2013	↑	↔	↔
Prefecture of Thessaloniki			
2000 – 2006	↓	↑	↓
2007 – 2013	↑	↓	↑

Multicriteria Decision Analysis (MCDA) findings

The second part of the analysis included Multicriteria Decision Analysis. MCDA is usually used in order to achieve better policy-making procedures by combining a variety of criteria taken into account by the farmers when they plan their farm plans, broadening in this way the traditional assumption of profit maximisation. The farm plans in each prefecture of the Region of Central Macedonia were optimised for the second programming period. The results achieved are compared with those of the real situation in 2010 using the selected indicators.

	Economic Impact	Environmental Impact	Social Impact
Prefecture of Chalkidiki			
MCDA	↑	↑	↑
Prefecture of Imathia			
MCDA	↑	↓	↑
Prefecture of Kilis			
MCDA	↑	↑	↓
Prefecture of Pella			
MCDA	↑	↓	↑
Prefecture of Pieria			
MCDA	↑	↓	↓
Prefecture of Serres			
MCDA	↑	↑	↓
Prefecture of Thessaloniki			
MCDA	↑	↔	↑

The results of the MCDA model showed that positive economic impacts were achieved in all cases and positive social and environmental impacts in most cases, in comparison to the Second Programming period (2007-2013) cases. Specifically, the MCDA model achieved positive environmental impacts in three cases and negative (with no import change around 0) in the other four cases. Finally, the MCDA model showed positive social impacts in four cases and negative with no important change in three cases.

We can conclude that in general the “Setting up young farmers” RDP measure achieved its goals to transfer land to young, trained farmers, to offset the set-up costs faced by young people when establishing them in farming and to provide assistance for the investments required on such holdings.

The main purpose of the **LIAISE Network of Excellence** is to identify and exploit opportunities to bridge the existing gap between the research and the policy community in the field of Impact Assessment, improving the use of IA tools in policy making. LIAISE combines the multi-disciplinary competence of a core group of European research institutes.

www.liaise-noe.eu

The Policy Brief Series presents the results of the work carried out in LIAISE to the policy world. It addresses topics of current concern and focuses on those aspects of the issue where the policymaker (and the public opinion) is seeking additional information.

