

THEORETICAL AND ECONOMIC ASPECTS OF THE REFORMED COMMON AGRICULTURAL POLICY OF EUROPEAN UNION

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Abstract

Agricultural and food industries constitute a significant part in the economy of European Union (EU), thus providing 15 million jobs and creating 4.4% of the gross domestic product. EU Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) is adopted in all 27 member states and a significant part of budget is allocated to implement it - in 2008 it was 58.8 billion EUR or 44.5% of the total budget. This research performed the analysis of the theoretical, historical and economic aspects of the CAP. Eight main stages of the reform can be distinguished in the CAP development. They have their own characteristics, goals and main support tools. The process of the CAP reform has not been finished yet.

Key words: common agricultural policy, development, goals.

Introduction

EU CAP provided the framework for the measures of the agricultural and rural development of Member States. A wide range of scientists is studying the EU CAP and the tendencies of its development nowadays. In Latvia these aspects have been researched by E.Grīnovskis (1996), G.Lībermanis (2006), E.Deksnis (1998), D.Saktiņa (2000), G.Salputra and A.Miglavs (2007), D.Jasjko, A.Miglavs, D.Feldmans (2004), I.Pilvere (2007), R.Karnīte (2006), D.Auers (2007), Saktiņa D., Meyers W.H. (2005) and others. In foreign countries research has been performed by J.A.Usher (1988), M.Tracy (1996), J.Reiljan and D.Tamm (2008), J.P.Chauffour (2008), F.Tongeren (2008), K.Ash (2005) and others.

The leading international organizations have also gone into CAP research – Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) (2005), United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) (2008) and the World Bank (WB) (2008). These studies reveal the topical CAP issues of the respective period, but the common regularities in its historical development have been little researched.

It determined the **goal** of this research – to analyze the theoretical aspects and the historical development of CAP reforms. A research **hypothesis** was put forward: in more than 50 years of its existence CAP has been reformed several times and has developed according to the globalization tendencies in the world, thus changing also its initial goals.

The following **objectives** were derived from the research goal:

1. Analysis of CAP theoretical aspects and synergy with other policies.

2. Formation and characteristics of the stages of historical development of CAP reforms.
3. Evaluation of the goals of CAP reforms and research of multifunctionality.
4. Research of the main CAP indicators.

Materials and Methods

To achieve the objectives, the **methods** of analysis, synthesis and logical construction **were** applied, as well as scientific discussion.

Research of different authors - D.Saktiņa (2000), I.Vaidere, E.Vanags, I.Vanags, I.Vilka (2005, 2006), E.Grīnovskis (1996), I.Pilvere (2007), R.Karnīte (2006), J.Reiljan and D.Tamm (2008), K.Ash (2005) and others were used in studying the topic, as well as the research of international organizations - OECD, FAO and WB. Laws and regulations and information of EU and the Republic of Latvia were used.

Results and Discussion

1. CAP theoretical aspects and synergy with other policies

The beginning of CAP can be traced back in West Europe in the 50-ies of the 20th century, the society of which was injured by WWII and where agriculture was destroyed and could not satisfy people's need for food. CAP has developed constantly reflecting the changes of needs in both agriculture and society as such (EC, 2008 b). Over the course of time EU CAP transformed into the policy of rural development implemented within the framework of the policy of regional development with the help of structural policy. The need to facilitate the synergy of structural, employment and rural development

policy is also emphasized in the Basic Strategy Positions of Community Rural Development (Council decision ..., 2006).

Therefore, there appears a need to define several categories related to this development process: agricultural policy, policy of rural development and structural policy which has a significant role in the development of the industry and in increasing its competitiveness.

Agricultural policy is a notion that comprises the preconditions for the development of one industry. The historical development of EU CAP proves that it is impossible to analyze agricultural processes without the complex problems to be solved in the rural territory.

In the invalid Law on Agriculture of the Republic of Latvia (Law on Agriculture, 1996) agricultural policy was defined as the attitude of the state to agricultural manufacturing and a set of measures to implement it. J. Reiljan and D. Tamm (2008) also consider that the policy

of agricultural development is implemented with the help of a state introduced and regulated set of measures to facilitate the development of agricultural industry.

When analyzing work of different authors and the laws and regulations, it can be concluded that the main goals of agricultural policy coincide with the goals formulated in the framework of EU CAP. K.Ash (2005) distinguished two main directions of agricultural policy: providing balance or optimal resource allocation, which is related to providing income from agricultural farms, and correcting market deficiencies. The other goal is related to executing different social functions, such as nature protection, maintaining the rural landscape, water management, food safety because the market mechanism in agriculture does not provide for the results acceptable to all members of society. The latest OECD study (Tongeren, 2008) places the goals of agricultural policy into three groups based on their character of impact (see Fig. 1).

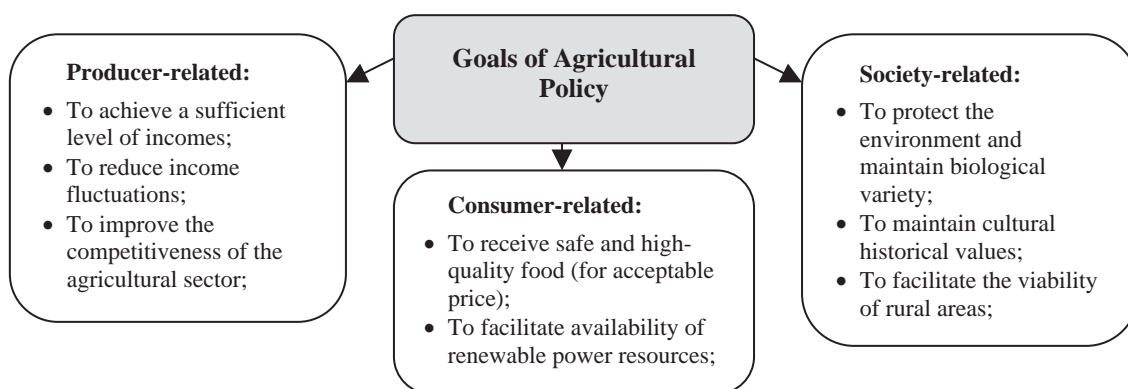


Figure 1. Goals of agricultural policy.

Source: author's construction based on F. Tongeren, 2008.

Regional development policy is a part of the total country's development policy. Regional development is directed towards a balanced and sustainable development of the territory and in the context of regional policy, development is understood as a progression of change processes of nature, environment, cultural environment, social environment and business activities beneficial for society. Regional policy tries to adjust free market economy to achieve two mutually related goals – economic growth and improvement of social distribution and the following objectives are usually set to achieve these goals:

- providing a balanced economic development of the region;
- even and effective allocation and use of the material, labour and other resources of all the regions of the country;

- facilitating the economic growth of underdeveloped regions;
- leveraging unfavourable differences between regions (Vanags et al., 2005; Vaidere et al., 2006).

Law on Regional Development of the Republic of Latvia (2002) provides that:

- *regional development* is "favourable changes in the social and economic situation in the entire territory of the country or some of its parts" and
- *regional development policy* is 'the position and targeted action of the government to facilitate regional development through coordinating development of industries according to the priorities of separate parts of the country's territory and through providing direct support for the development of separate parts of the country's territory'.

The author of the research considers that to concord the provisions of laws and regulations, *regional development policy* should be defined as 'the implementation of regional development policy in rural territories' because regional development and its policy provides both harmonized development of industries and inclusion of all the other aspects in the successful development of each separate territory and the entire country.

Although the notion 'structural policy' is widely used when analyzing different process of economy development, its definition cannot be found in the normative documents of Latvia. Structural policy as a part of agrarian policy has been studied by E.Grinovskis (1996) and I.Pilvere (2007). R.Karnīte (2006) has offered a definition of the structural policy of economy and has analyzed its correspondence to the goal of the economy development. D.Saktiņa (2000) has analyzed EU structural policy as a way of solving regional problems on EU scale. I.Vaidere, E.Vanags, I.Vanags, I.Vilka (2005, 2006) in their research have also defined structural policy as a constituent of regional policy. All the authors consider that structural policy is one of the constituents of the country's economical policy. R.Karnīte (2006) emphasizes that the goal of *the structural policy of economy* is the creation of the desirable economy structure, and it is defined in long-term strategic documents in the aspect of industries, problems or economy. According to the definition given by the economic explanatory

dictionary, structural policy reflects country's attitude to the development of separate industries and regions (Explanatory Dictionary ..., 2000).

E.Grinovskis (1996) has defined *agricultural structural policy* as a total of indicative planning measures that provide the dominating tendencies of the industry development and the parameters of its macro- and microstructure and the anticipated changes in them. It can be concluded that the goals of regional development policy and structural policy are similar although part of the authors consider that issues related to the economic development of the territory are solved within the framework of structural policy while the regional development policy attempts to balance both the economic and the social aspect.

Based on D.Saktiņa's (2000) definition and I.Vaidere's, E.Vanags' and others (2006) research, it can be concluded that in the practice of European Union the notions of regional and structural policy are often used synonymously because in the result of implementing regional policy, the economic and social structure of the regions and also of the entire country changes.

2. Historical development of CAP

Table 1 summarizes the main stages of the development or reforms of the EU CAP and the policy changing measures performed during them, as well as development of the structural policy within the framework of CAP.

Table 1

Stages of Reforms of Common Agricultural Policy and Structural Policy within EU

Reform Periods	Stages of CAP Reforms		Development of Structural Policy
	Goals and Hallmarks	Measures Taken	
1958-1968	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food safety • Improving productivity • Market stabilization 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Target prices • Intervention prices • Minimum import prices • Export subsidies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund
1969-1983	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Income support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agro-monetary measures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Mansholt Plan – establishment of structural policy
1983-1988	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surplus production • Rapidly growing budget expenses • International discords • Structural measures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introducing quotas • Guaranteed purchase prices • Freezing support prices • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Directives for structural measures • Support for Mediterranean farmers • Integrated regional support programs •
1988-1992		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The system of stabilizers introduced • Program 'Leaving fallow land' 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing funding for structural measures • Determining priority goals • Principle of co-financing and complementation

Table 1 continued

Reform Periods	Stages of CAP Reforms		Development of Structural Policy
	Goals and Hallmarks	Measures Taken	
1992-1999	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reducing stock • Environment • Income stabilization • Budget stabilization 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transition from price support to direct income support • Reduction of intervention prices • Compensation for losses to farmers • Measures of rural development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • McSherry reform that comprises the programme of agricultural environment
Programme 2000 (<i>Agenda 2000</i>)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deepening the reform process • Competitiveness • Rural development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reducing support for intervention prices, export subsidies and manufacturing • Increasing direct payments • Environmental protection • Rural development policy 	
2003	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Market orientation • Consumer interests • Rural development and environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reforms in CMO* sectors • Common payment • Cross compliance • Modulation • Consultative system of fisheries • New measures of rural development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cross compliance
2007-2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase of the influence of the World Trade Organization • CAP optimization • Decentralization • Rural management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • European Agricultural Guarantee Fund • European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development • CAP 'health check' • Simplification of CAP • Revising budget expenses • Reducing customs tariffs, market liberalization • Further separation of direct payments from production • Increasing support for measures of rural development • Charge for managing 'public goods' • Increase of the role of national ministries in acquiring structural funds 	

*Common Market Organizations

Source: designed by the author based on research of various scientists.

Discussions about the CAP development in the future are still continuing because the last CAP reforms were evaluated as not sustainable and not compatible with further liberalization of the global trade. Future changes of the CAP system are determined by four tendencies: changing consumer interests, market liberalization, reduction of the number of rural residents and a new idea of the farmer's role (Auers, 2007).

3. Goals of CAP reforms and multifunctionality

The initial goals of EU CAP were formulated in Article 33 of Rome Agreement. As F.Tongeren (2008) indicates, formulation of the goals of agricultural policy is historically related to the attitude of public to agriculture in the respective period.

Current CAP strategic goals are to facilitate the existence of multifunctional environmentally friendly and landscape protecting agriculture, to increase the competitiveness of agricultural industry in the global market observing strict standards of the environment, food innocuousness and animal welfare and to facilitate sustainability and dynamics of rural economy. In the historical CAP development the political choice of society is observed – to continue to support EU agriculture simultaneously taking into consideration the desires of the inhabitants, tax payers and consumers and as little as possible distorting international trade (EC, 2008 b).

Table 2 compares the initial goals of CAP and the changes in these goals under the impact of CAP historical reforms and globalization of economics.

Table 2

Evaluation of the Current Topicality of EU CAP Goals

Goal in the Constitutive Agreement of European Community	Current Goal	Current Topicality of the Initial Goal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increasing agricultural production by facilitating technical progress and providing rational development of agricultural production, as well as rational use of production factors, special labour force 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensuring an acceptable level of life for EU farmers, at the same time creating the opportunity to update and develop agriculture Maintaining agriculture in all EU regions Care for the welfare of the inhabitants of rural regions 	Topical, but it is supplemented by the environment protection and food safety requirements
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing acceptable standards of life for farmers, especially increasing the income of those employed in agriculture 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintaining the environment for future generations Providing better health and welfare conditions for animals 	The emphasis is placed on the multifunctional role of agriculture
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Market stabilization 		Problem issues in the circumstances of market liberalization
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensuring production and resource accessibility 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing reasonable prices of food for consumers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing people with food harmless for health, for acceptable prices Improving the quality of European food products Guaranteeing food innocuousness 	Significant changes – from quantity to quality
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CAP implementation is possible with minimal EU budget expenses 	Current topicality increases due to the pressure of society

Source: designed by the author based on research of various scientists

CAP main goals are criticized by international organizations (World Trade Organization, FAO, OECD, WB), the activity of which is directed towards liberalization of the agricultural market to solve the world food crisis – to reduce the price for food and to increase the availability of food in all regions of the world.

CAP goals that refer to entire society. Figure 1 of the research depicts the classification of the goals of agricultural policy that is compatible with the initial goals of EU CAP and their currently actual versions. Special attention should be paid to the target group that according to this classification refers to total society, because it indicates to the main priorities in the further CAP development. Basic strategic positions of EU rural development indicate to the multifunctional role of agriculture in providing sustainable rural development through producing healthy and high-quality products, using environmentally friendly production methods, creating renewable raw materials and providing protection of biological variety.

FAO (2008) emphasizes that nowadays farmers have become the managers of world's largest natural resources. Environmental services incurred as secondary

consequences from primary land management are defined as 'public goods' because people cannot avoid gaining benefit from consuming them and by using them, one person does not reduce the opportunities of other people to use these goods. From the economical perspective, the largest threat is the non-charge character of public goods because they do not belong to anyone, and thus there is no motivation to preserve them. There is no market tool either that would signal about their insufficiency or worsening of the situation - the value of these goods can be expressed only with the amount of expenses required to renew or substitute them. FAO distinguishes the following main groups of public goods managed and influenced by farmers:

- preventing significant climate changes by reducing the amount of emissions of agriculture;
- protection of water resources because agriculture industry uses more than half of the world's total water consumption;
- preserving biological variety by reducing production activity in biologically varied regions, facilitating biological variety within a farm and preserving the existing biotopes;

- developing and preserving the aesthetics of rural landscape (FAO, 2008).

As a result of discussion, it was found out that as a result of further reforms of agricultural policy, rural regions could have two categories of the employed directly involved in maintaining agriculture and rural environment: rural entrepreneur and rural manager. Part of the rural entrepreneurs and managers' functions are absolutely opposite. The objective of the rural entrepreneur is to develop an intensively producing

market oriented structural unit, simultaneously providing correspondence of agricultural production to a good practice of public goods management. It is anticipated that in the future the rural manager's functions could be completely separated from those of the rural entrepreneur.

The multifunctional role of agriculture and the employed in the context of common development of EU rural territories and under the impact of the globalization process of economics is depicted in Figure 2.

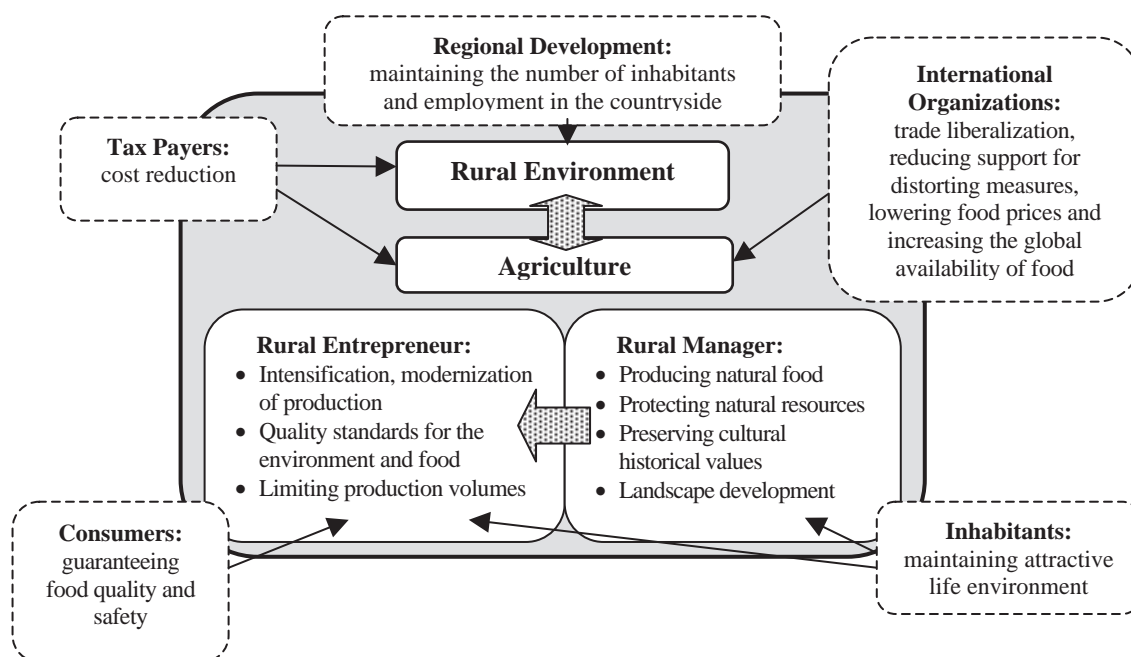


Figure 2. Multifunctional role of agriculture in the globalization of EU economics.

Source: the author's construction.

4. Main indicators characterizing CAP

At present, both agricultural and food industry make a significant part of EU economics – they provide 15 million jobs (8.3% of the total number of jobs) and constitute 4.4% of the gross domestic product. EU is one of the largest world exporter's of food and the largest importer. Besides, food is mainly imported from developing countries. Farmers perform different functions, starting with producing food and non-food goods and finishing with managing rural territories, preserving nature and providing services of rural tourism. Agriculture and forestry uses 77% of EU land territory. Rural development is vitally important area of politics. According to OECD definition, based on the population density, rural regions

(municipalities in which the population density is less than 150 inhabitants per km²) constitute 92% of EU territory. 19% of the inhabitants live in regions with the dominating proportion of rural inhabitants, while 37% - in regions within a significant proportion of rural inhabitants. The mentioned regions create 45% of the gross added value in EU and they provide 53% jobs, but these lag behind other regions concerning several social economic indicators (Council decision ..., 2006).

As the most completely harmonized area, CAP is allocated a significant part of EU budget. However, it has reduced from the maximum possible – almost 70% of EU budget in the 70-ies of the 20th century – to 34% of the budget between 2007 and 2013.

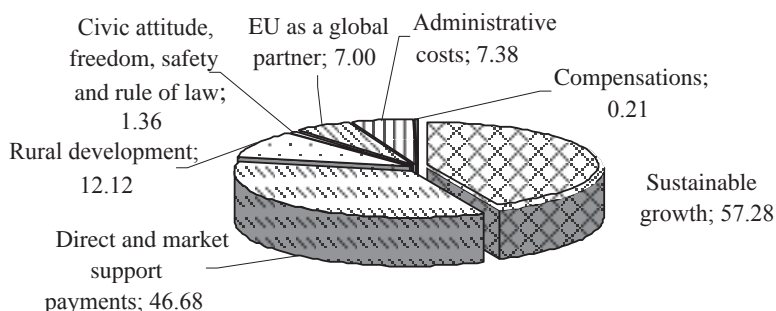


Figure 3. EU budget appropriation for 2008, billion EUR.

Source: EU general budget..., EC, 2008 a.

As a result of reforms, part of agriculture expenses is allocated for rural development (11% of the budget in the mentioned period) and for expanding other areas of EU responsibility. According to budget data from 2007-2013, it is planned to spend 43% of the total EU budget on environment protection, restructuring and diversification of rural economics, as well as on facilitating sustainable fishery. The distribution of EU budget appropriations for 2008 is depicted in Figure 3. In 2008, EUR 58.8 billion (44.5% of the total budget amount) are allocated for implementing CAP, including EUR ~ 47 billion or $\frac{3}{4}$ of CAP expenses for agriculture market and direct support payments, but EUR 12 billion or $\frac{1}{4}$ of CAP expenses – for rural development.

Conclusions

1. CAP notion comprises the synergy of several policies – rural development, regional development and structural policy. As a result of CAP reform process, structural policy has become a part of rural development policy.
2. The goals of agricultural policy are manifold and are aimed at three main target groups – producers, consumers and the entire society. The initial goals of EU CAP have partly lost their topicality or have

transformed. For example, the accent of food supply has changed from quantity of food to quality, but the increase of the production effectiveness of agricultural enterprises should be a subject to restrict to the requirements of environment protection, animal welfare and food safety.

3. During the globalization of economics the multifunctional role of agriculture is gaining more significance. Nowadays farmers have become the managers of the world's largest environment services or the so-called 'public goods'.
4. EU CAP is constantly developing and improving. Eight main stages of the reform can be distinguished in its development. Each of the stages has its own characteristics, goals and main support tools. The CAP reform process is not finished yet because the last CAP reforms are evaluated as not sustainable and not compatible with the further liberalization of the global trade.
5. Agriculture and food industries together constitute a significant part of EU economics – they provide 15 million jobs and constitute 4.4% of the gross domestic product. A significant part of the total budget (44.5% in 2008) is still spent in implementing the CAP. As a result of reforms, part of the agriculture expenses is allocated to rural development.

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