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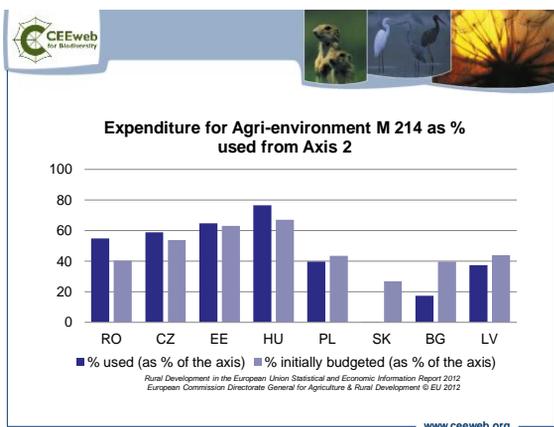
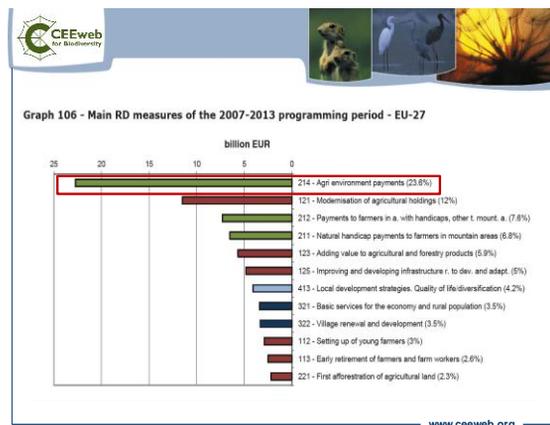


## Agri-environment measures and Natura 2000 payments from Central and Eastern European countries



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- RO – HNV measure biggest single measure in RDP. Target 1.45 m ha for basic package, of which 375,000ha also in higher payment non-mechanised package. Achieved 1.2 m ha in basic package, of which 940,000 ha in higher package. In terms of farms, target 180,000, achieved 275,000, owing to smaller size of farms than expected. Management needs to be better specified.
  - EE – HNV grassland measure target 35,000 ha (inc. 6,000 ha wood pastures) and 1500 farmers. Achieved 916 farmers and 24,000 ha. The support does not cover the costs of management of wooded meadows.
  - HU – Target 1.2 m ha. Achieved 1.15 m ha, 14,000 farmers. Of which arable is main scheme: 750,000 ha, 4350 farmers (av 172 ha) - basic 'integrated' arable scheme easy money for limited requirements. Basic grasslands scheme 316,000ha, 3,700 farmers (av. 85ha) - similarly relatively undemanding; in some areas advisory systems are insufficient resulting in fewer applications.
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- PL – PO1 – Maintenance of extensive meadows and PO2 – Extensive pastures - (16.000 applications in 2004-2006). Grassland measures – targeted 210.000 ha (2010) with additional 40.000 ha targeted by nature conservation measures' (valuable species and habitats protection). Low flexibility of the scheme, low uptake from small scale farmers and lack of regional approach, but high number and quality of experts and advisors.
  - BG – 2630 applications (2008-2012) for all M214 (20 million leva). Submeasure HNV and traditional season grazing practices (pastoralism) apart from organic farming are the most popular. 70.000 ha under AES in 2011. Supported HNV grasslands were 20,781 ha by 2009. Numerous administrative and technical mistakes.
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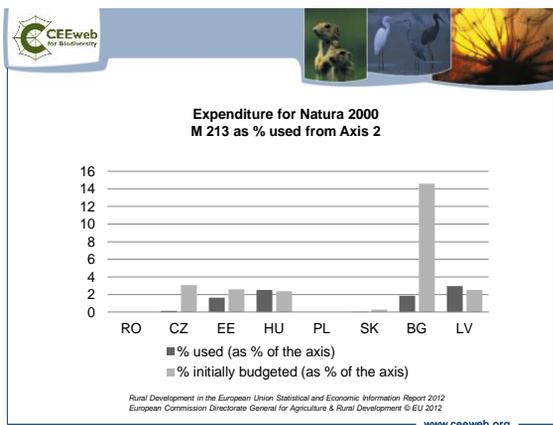


Romania had one of the highest uptake as per targeted surface (85% of the initial target). In terms of the number of farmers who participated in the scheme, their proportion out of the initially expected numbers varied between 75% in Latvia and 56% in Hungary. The lower percentage of farmer uptake in the latter was seen as a consequence of insufficient advisory systems in some regions.

Overall, agri-environment schemes have met with moderate to high success as far as the uptake is concerned. Nevertheless, there are concerns with regard to the efficiency of these schemes and their impact on biodiversity conservation, which at the same time is difficult to measure, considering that monitoring systems are inadequate or inexistent.

There are suggestions that the financial support should be differentiated based on the management difficulty of grasslands and top ups should be allowed for specific biodiversity related targets. It is broadly believed that lack of or inadequate monitoring is a preeminent hindering factor in analyzing the efficiency of the package implementation and its impact on the biodiversity. It is nevertheless agreed that the scheme helped to maintain valuable grassland ecosystems.

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**EE** – Target 1500 farmers, 38,000 ha, achieved 1460 farmers, 22,300 ha. The measure is not well targeted at b-d indicators, so no effective monitoring to measure qualitative outcomes. Support should be connected with preservation of HNV farming.

**HU** – Target 250,000 ha. Achieved 296,000 ha. "Success" - easy money with limited requirements. Has raised awareness of N2K, but stricter environmental requirements needed for example related to habitats and species.

**RO, PL** – no Natura 2000 payments; the payment package was not offered because there were no management plans for Natura 2000 sites and Ministry could not calculate compensation payments.

**BG** - 79 412 ha - 2400 applications are worth 2 million 700 thousand euro.

**LV** - 95% uptake. 5929 farmers on 65300ha. Easy - any grasslands in N2K area could apply, without additional management restrictions. Should be linked to restrictions in the future.

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It is generally agreed that the Natura 2000 payment support might have helped in preserving HNV grasslands and HNV farming, although the impact is not regarded as 'considerable'.

Overall, assessing the quality of the scheme's implementation is seen as difficult due to lack of systematic monitoring and enactment of such a system is seen as necessary for future evaluation.

Stricter requirements directed towards specific biodiversity conservation issues are considered essential for the efficient channelization of payment resources and increase in their contribution to biodiversity conservation.

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### Recommendations/Wish list

- Better incentives for farmers to participate (ease administration burdens, proportionate payments and optional top-ups)
- More adequate policy integration and cooperation with other ministries and stakeholders
- Awareness raising and advisory system is key – use EIP and national hubs
- Indicators and cost-effective monitoring system
- Political will of implementation

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Thank you for your attention!

Q&A

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