

Impact of the CAP support measures on the agricultural sector in Lithuania

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SUMMARY: The paper examines an overview of the common agricultural policy, its main goals and developmental stages. The paper provides wide range of information concerning CAP support measures' impact on agricultural sector in Lithuania. The development trends of the future CAP and Lithuanian interior priorities in agricultural sector are also presented in the paper.

Evolution of the CAP

Common agricultural policy (CAP) formation was determined by the peculiarity of agricultural activity and society's dependence on agricultural products (Koning, 2006).

After the Second World War, Europe had faced with a food shortage. At that time agriculture still was the main "employer", so there was a need of such agricultural policies that would promote to produce the necessary amount of food. Thus, the real discussion about agricultural policy integration at European level had appeared and in fifties of the twenty century the CAP was launched (Jambor, Harvey, 2010, Zobbe, 2002). The CAP objectives were set out in the Treaty of Rome (Consolidated. ..., 1957):

1. to increase agricultural productivity by promoting technical progress and by ensuring the rational development of agricultural production and the optimum utilisation of the factors of production, in particular labour;
2. thus to ensure a fair standard of living for the agricultural community, in particular by increasing the individual earnings of persons engaged in agriculture;
3. to stabilise markets;
4. to assure the availability of supplies;
5. to ensure that supplies reach consumers at reasonable prices.

There were two circumstances that facilitated the origin of the CAP (Koning, 2006): first, the countries that joined the European Community had already a protectionist agricultural policy before and, second, these countries signed the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, by which the supply was regulated and the protection of the agricultural sector was ensured. The separate measures used by Member States (MS) were aligned and brought together into a single policy. The CAP has been based on principles of:

- a single market;
- community preference;

- equality and efficiency:
 - the convergence of income between farmers and other,
 - the output price reduction by increased productivity;
- common financing: CAP expenditure should be covered by the general budget, collected from import duties and other taxes.

Thus the CAP was one of the economy growth factor in the member states. Throughout its history, starting from the 1960s, the CAP has changed and evolved (Fig 1).

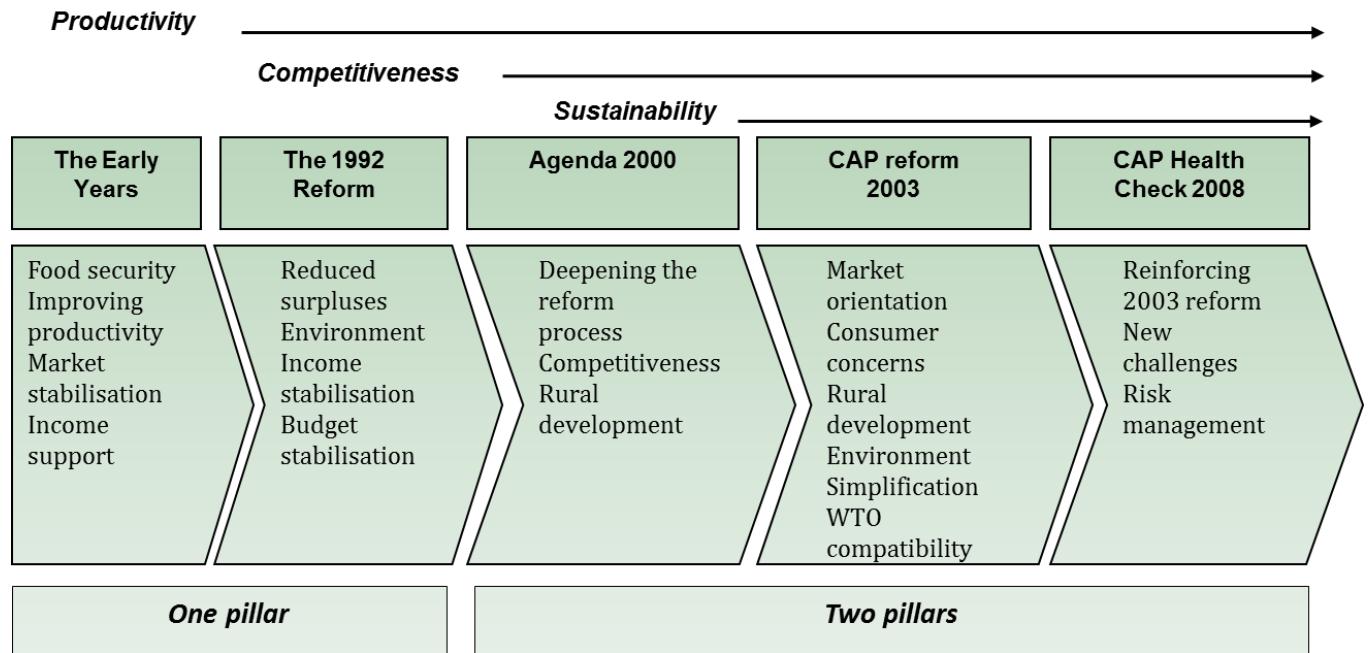


Fig. 1. Historical development of the CAP

Source: compiled by the author based on European Commission Agriculture and Rural Development (2009), 2012.

In the early years CAP had been solving the basic food security problem. However, the support measures for problem solving resulted an overproduction, increased pollution and other problems. Thus the significant changes in policy were needed (European..., 2012a, Jurkėnaitė, 2011).

Under the MacSharry reform in 1992, there was a significant shift from market support to direct payments to farmers and some environmental measures were introduced (Department..., 2012). On the one hand the need to reform the CAP was partly influenced by the U.S., but the real reason was the situation in the whole European Union (EU) and caused by national positions of member states. The overproduction problem was the sign that the CAP budget allocation was so attractive to farmers that they didn't react to the market signals. Another problem that had led to new policy measures was public concerns about the environment, food quality, animal welfare (Moehler, 2008).

After the reform in 1992 the situation in agriculture was improved, but the European Commission (EC) was concerned that the situation can be imbalanced because of probable overproduction caused by export restrictions. Moreover, stable situation in the agricultural sector could be complicated by the EU enlargement perspective, because the agricultural budget had clear boundaries and the main problem was the budget allocation.

The second reform - Agenda 2000 Agreement was based on the European model of agriculture and marked a further significant shift from market supports to direct payments. It also intensified the emphasis on food safety and the environment. Additionally, the budget for agriculture was fixed for the years 2000 to 2006 (Department..., 2012). In 2002, the European Council decided on the limits to be applied to agricultural expenditure for the EU of fifteen plus the ten Accessing Countries in the period 2007 to 2013. Agenda 2000 Agreement also divided the CAP into two pillars. The first pillar included direct payments and mechanisms regulating the market. Meanwhile a new rural development policy was introduced as a second pillar of the CAP. This new policy encouraged many rural initiatives while also helped farmers to diversify, to improve their product marketing and to otherwise restructure their businesses (Юркенайте, 2012).

The reform 2003 resulted decoupling of income support payments – the direct payments were no longer linked to production. The new elements of CAP such as the cross-compliance (with a range of food safety, environmental and animal welfare measures) and the modulation were also introduced. Moreover, funding for rural development continued to increase (Мельникене *et al*, 2011).

Other CAP stages of the development were mainly due to the EU's internal problems and changing societal needs and values. It was intended to boost the farmers' competitiveness that was insulted by strict production quality, environmental and farming requirements causing increase of local production and service costs.

On 20 November 2007 the Commission adopted the Communication "Preparing the Health Check of the CAP reform". The idea behind the Health Check is not to re-invent or re-reform the CAP, but to assess if it is working as well as it could in a larger European Union and in a shifting international context. The Health Check is therefore not a major reform but an effort to streamline, simplify and modernise the CAP and to remove remaining restrictions on farmers to help them respond to growing demand for food. The Health Check is to further break the link between direct payments and production and thus allow farmers to follow market signals to the greatest possible extent (European, 2012b).

Today's CAP structure is still the same as it was in 2000. The only significant difference is decoupled direct payments from agricultural production volumes. The CAP with such structure was the first agricultural policy of its kind for ten European countries in 2004 and for two additional countries in 2007.

Lithuania was one of mentioned ten countries, which farmers have been experiencing CAP for more than 8 years.

The CAP impact on the Lithuanian agriculture

Accession to the EU in 2004 has had a strong impact on Lithuanian agricultural sector. Farm structure has been changing rapidly in Lithuania whilst preparation for the accession and post-accession period. According to the Eurostat data 2010, the vast majority of farms in EU are small farms with holdings less than 5 ha; they account about 69.2 % by average (Fig. 2.).

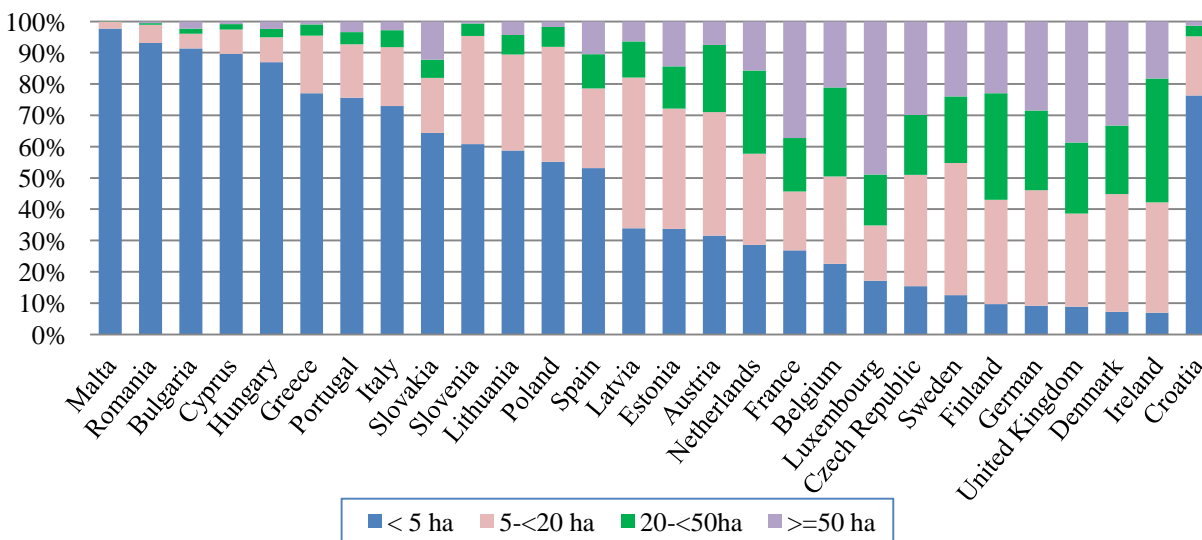


Fig 2. Farm structure across EU according to the number of holdings, 2010

Source: compiled by the author based on Eurostat data, 2012.

EU medium-sized farms (between 5 and 100 ha) account 28.1 % of all EU farms in 2010 and large farms (bigger than 100 ha) account about 2.7 % by average. In comparison to 2005 data, amount of large farms in EU increased about 31 %, amount of medium-sized farms increased a little bit less than 6 %, amount of small farms decreased more than by 3.1 %.

The structure of farms in Lithuania transformed towards strong polarization: the number of medium-sized farms and utilized agricultural area (UAA) of them decreased rapidly, while number of large farms and the area of these farms increased. In comparison to 2005 data farm structure in Lithuania in 2010 was as follow:

- the number of small farms with holdings less than 5 ha increased from 51.4 % to 58.7 % of all Lithuanian farms, UAA of these farms decreased from 13.1 % to 11.4 % of total UAA;
- the number of medium-sized farms (between 5 and 100 ha) decreased from 47.7 % to 39.4 %, UAA of these farms decreased from 58.5 % to 47.1 %;

- the number of large farms with holdings larger than 100 ha increased from 1 % to 1.9 %. Their UAA increased from 28.4 % to 41.6 %.

CAP support measures had enhanced the most influence to such polarization of farm structure in Lithuania.

The increase of smallest farms number can be explained by two reasons:

- 1) the decision of farmers, who got benefits from an *Early retirement from the agricultural activity* measure, to remain in the permitted size of private land for agricultural purposes;

- 2) the decision of people from urban areas to purchase a piece of land for residential house building in a rural location and register it as an agricultural holding, in order to take advantage of farmers' benefits.

Applicable model of EU direct payments, which provides that the amount of aid depends on the amount of declared hectares of UAA, enlarged number of large farms and affected rapid growth of these farms' overall UAA.

The economies of scale of large farms have been strengthened by 2007-2013 direct payment's model. A large amount of received direct payments has allowed large farmers accumulate financial resources that are needed to obtain support for efficient agricultural equipment. Absorption by large farmers of the major part of the subsidies influenced the decreasing ability of the medium-sized farms to compete in agricultural development process.

Lithuanian farm structure is in a shaping process and it is quite different from farm structure in other countries of Baltic Sea region. Although there is a tendency of becoming large-scale farms in all countries of the region, the number of medium-sized farms remains to be relatively stable, even in neighboring Latvia, where the farm concentration is also strong. In addition, medium-sized farms are viable and productive in such old MS as Germany, Denmark, Sweden, Finland, etc. Such farms perform well in Poland also, where number of small and medium-sized farms is dominative by farm structure as well as by overall UAA of these farms.

According to 2010 Farm Accountancy Data Network (FADN) data in Lithuania, large farms' (with more than 150 ha of UAA) gross profit with subsidies per 1 annual work unit (AWU) in Lithuania differed 12 times in comparison with farms up to 10 ha (EUR 25.2 thousand and EUR 2.1 thousand respectively). Farms with less than 40 ha of UAA gained gross profit with subsidies per 1 AWU (EUR 3.7 thousand) was less than the annual average salary of those employed. In accordance with weak opportunities of modernization and increasing of the value added of the farms with less than 40 ha of UAA, the number of those farms in Lithuania will continue to decrease in the future.

In accordance to higher revenues, amounts of direct payments and subsidies from rural development measures, large farms in Lithuania can outlive in expansion of agricultural land by offering a higher price or borrowing it at a higher price. According to FADN data in Lithuania, farms with more than 150 ha of UAA, invested EUR 41.8 thousand for agricultural land purchases in 2005-2010 period (approximately EUR 7 thousand per year) while farms between

30 and 40 ha of UAA invested EUR 1.6 thousand (~ EUR 260 per year) and farms between 40 and 50 ha of UAA – EUR 3.1 thousand (~ EUR 520 per year).

Subsidies granted to the farmers, the major part thereof consisted of direct payments, have contributed to the growth of value added in agriculture. In accordance to the Lithuanian statistical data, value added in agriculture retained the tendency of increase throughout the period of 2004–2008. Value added (excluding subsidies), created in agriculture, in the crisis year 2009 reached the level of 2002–2003; meanwhile the Lithuanian GDP fell down to the level of 2006. However, due to subsidies, value added in agriculture reached the years 2006–2007 (Fig. 3).

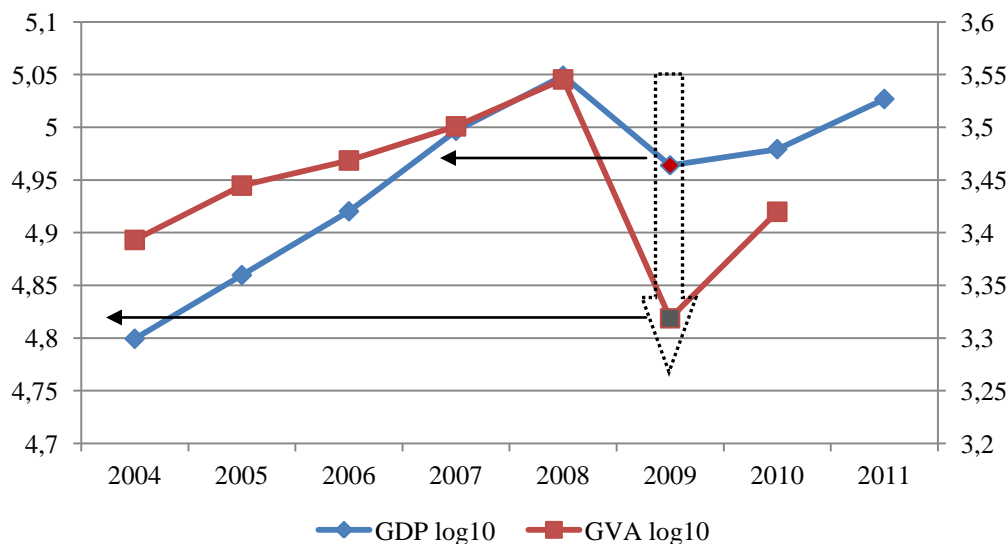


Fig. 3. Logarithmic data of GDP and GVA in agriculture in Lithuania, 2004-2011

Source: compiled by the author based on Statistics Lithuania, 2012

Application of direct payments in Lithuania intensified the farmers' dependence on the support and partly predetermined a weak response to the market signals. It is very important that in the period of 2014–2020 the direct payments would perform the social function as less as possible and the viability of real agricultural activities as a business unit would be maintained.

Following the implementation of support measures for rural development (SAPARD, 2004–2006 SPD Priority 4, 2007–2013 RDP) the Lithuanian agricultural policy was focused on the modernisation of agriculture and the increase of intensity. More than 11 thousand farmers participated in projects implemented under the modernisation of farm holdings, of which nearly 90 % were implemented in the period of 2007–2011. On average EUR 48.7 thousand was allocated per project. 2.8 thousand farmers were supported implementing projects under the setting-up of young farmers, the average support amounted to EUR 34.8 thousand. The investment support for farmers to modernise farms and financial instruments to facilitate farmers borrowing conditions increased farms' provision with capital, especially with modern agricultural machinery. In 2010, as compared to 2005, assets of farmers' farms per 1 ha of UAA increased by 89.7 %, and assets per 1 AWU – by 38.3 %. The most attention was focused on

agricultural equipment upgrade or replacement. According to the FADN data, it can be said that in the respondent farm investment structure, the investments into agricultural machinery accounted for 63 % in 2010.

When comparing the results of Lithuania and other countries, it can be concluded that the high production intensity reach the developed animal husbandry countries. The numbers of livestock in Lithuania have been falling gradually over the period of independence, but have significantly dropped after the introduction of direct payment scheme, which was designed to decouple support from production. Decreasing the number of livestock, abandoned and unused for production agricultural areas have emerge, under various evaluation criteria ranging from 500 to 800 thousand hectares.

The declining livestock numbers show a decreasing farmers' interest in the development of animal husbandry. The mixed farms with livestock create significantly less income per 1 AWU than the crop farms. According to the FADN data, in 2009 net income with subsidies per 1 AWU in the mixed farms with mainly grazing livestock was by 25 % lower than the national average and 2.3 times lower than in the most profitable farms growing cereals and oilseeds, while in 2010 – by 51 % and 2.5 times, respectively (starting 2010 has changed the classification by types of farming, so some data cannot be compared with the corresponding figures of the previous year). Similar tendencies prevailed over the entire period of 2004–2009 (Table 1). Direct payments and investment support encourage farmers to develop crop production. For example, according to the FADN data, in 2009 the total contribution (direct and compensatory payments and investment support) per 1 AWU to the mixed farms with mainly grazing livestock was less by 8 %, in comparison with the national average, and 2.4 times lower, as compared with the farms of cereals and oilseeds; in 2010 – by 4 % and 2.5 times, respectively.

Table 1. Net income with subsidies per 1 AWU in farmer's farms of different farming type, in comparison with the national average, in 2004–2010, %

Type of farming	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Specialist cereals, oilseeds	169	172	167	205	200	170	211
General field cropping	173	130	107	115	143	135	NA
Horticulture and permanent crops	100	72	77	94	82	82	93
Specialist dairying	103	126	121	86	79	90	91
Mixed cropping	57	49	68	67	52	61	NA
Mixed livestock, mainly grazing livestock	73	57	85	60	48	75	47
Field crops-grazing livestock, combined	85	116	101	80	99	87	85
Field crops and granivores, combined	102	68	34	69	67	70	NA
Average	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Source: FADN data.

Although the income per 1 ha UAA in the crop farms is lower than in the farms of mixed production, the costs, especially labour costs, are also lower.

Animal husbandry is considered as a priority branch of production, but the declining numbers of livestock indicate that the support measures and priorities, provided for this branch, is inadequate to the support that gain crop farms competing for economies of scale, when direct payments are decoupled from production. Therefore, it is important to adjust the current policy according to new threats and opportunities emerging for the agricultural sector and re-evaluate its potential, the economic and social importance.

The period after 2004 also has been distinguished by an especially rapid decline in the number of the employed in agriculture, as farmers, taking advantages of the SPD for 2004–2006 and RDP for 2007–2013 measures and receiving direct payments, invested heavily in efficient agricultural machinery, thus reducing the need for labour. In 2010, as compared with 2004, the share of the employed in agriculture and related services in the overall employment structure decreased from 15.2 to 8.2 %. Investments caused an increase in labour productivity and farmers' income. However, in recent years, the growth of labour productivity has slowed.

State policy is aimed at supporting employment in the countryside and reducing property differentiation as the farming is the equivalent of small and medium-sized business in other spheres, and the bigger the middle class segment in the countryside, the smaller the risk of social conflicts in the society. This fact is of special importance when speaking about the abrupt unification of direct payments at the EU level (which is of special popularity and grounded in the new MS). The European Union countries vary in terms of the standard of living, therefore after immediate convergence of direct payments across EU, a threat may arise in the new MS that the farmers' income will exceed considerably the income of other rural residents, thus increasing risk of social exclusion (Fig.4).

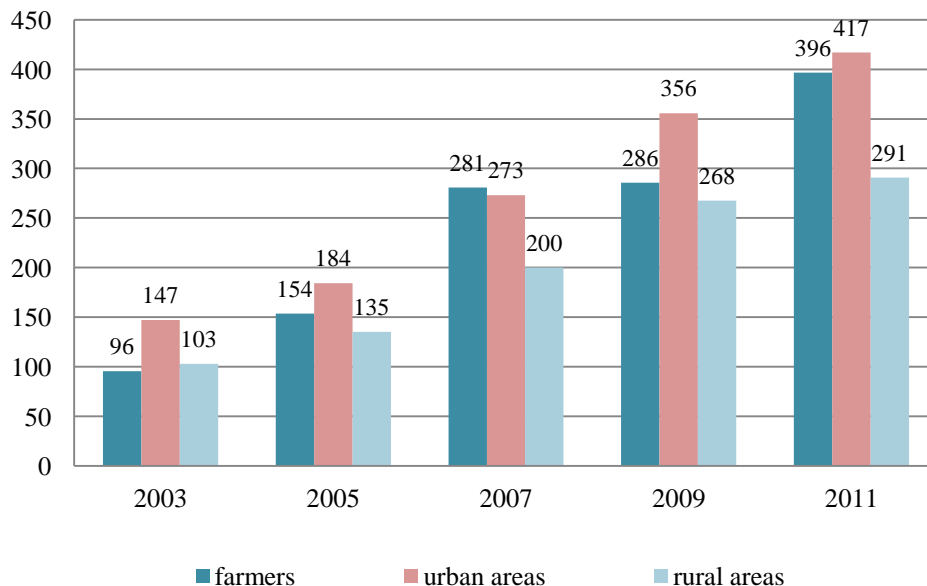


Fig. 4. Average disposable income per household per month by place of residence, EUR

Source: compiled by the author based on Statistics Lithuania, 2012

It is predicted that in 2013 at the existence of the present support level the average of disposable income of farmers and urban population would be up to 50% higher than of the other rural residents. Therefore it is most probable that abrupt unification of direct payments at the EU level would increase the social exclusion in Lithuania.

Results of CAP impact on agriculture in Lithuania and Lithuanian interior priorities for agricultural sector post 2013

Analyzing the impact of CAP on the Lithuanian agricultural sector, it is possible to insight several important elements of the Lithuanian CAP impact:

- Plant-growing has become economically more attractive than animal husbandry in Lithuania as a result of decoupling of direct payments from production.
- Due to emigration, the number of youth and employable population is decreasing in rural areas, therefore agriculture may experience workforce shortage, thus making workforce more expensive.
- Higher environmental requirements may have a negative impact on the farmers' activities, even though the application of advanced technologies and innovations in agriculture afford the opportunities for efficient farming and solutions of environmental problems.
- Small and medium-sized farms do not possess sufficient opportunities for investment in farm modernization and implementation of new technologies.
- Small and medium-sized farms are not able to compete with large farms as concerns land purchase; therefore small and medium-sized farms have no opportunities for expansion. Large farms, however, have reached the high-intensity production and are generating income enabling further modernization of production, have opportunities for export of their production, this being an alternative for its selling to the food industry.

All these elements are reflected in the tasks outlined in the 2014-2020 strategy of Lithuania (Fig. 5):

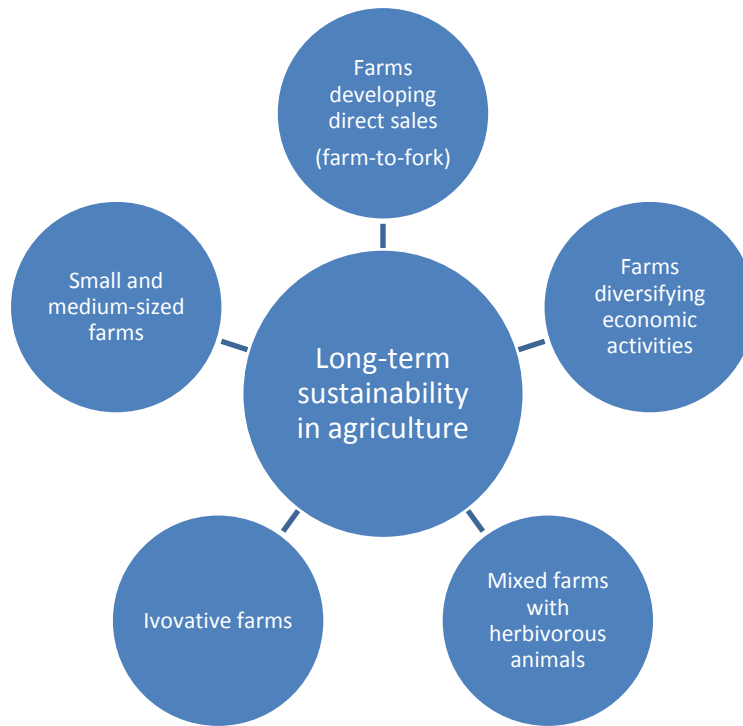


Fig. 5. Priority entities for agricultural support in Lithuania
 Source: LIAE, 2012

According to the Fig.5 the main tasks in agriculture for 2014 -2020 period in Lithuania is to increase the viability of small and medium-sized farms; to increase the value added created in the farms by implementing innovations and stimulating knowledge transfer; to develop animal husbandry by using more rationally the natural and human resources in the country; to create and preserve jobs in farmers' farms by diversifying the activity; to encourage direct sales in agricultural and food products and their integration into the food supply chain.

In order to harmonize national interests in the new period and the objectives of the CAP after 2013, it is important to pay attention on the common policy development trends, which are identified for the new period. Moreover, to evaluate the complexity of the achievement of the national objectives through the common policy with common rules and limited financing that distribution needs more fairness across EU.

Development trends of the future CAP

The main 2014-2020 CAP objective is still to provide sustainable agriculture throughout the EU. For this purpose, according to the content analysis, key challenges of the CAP for the 2014-2020 period were identified (Jurkėnaitė, Volkov, 2011). Rural development and farming conditions in the EU are determined by a large variety of challenges caused by different MS'

needs and expectations under the CAP. The current CAP cannot uniformly solve all problems of MS. Thus, it is often proposed that MS chose individual decisions itself for adopting and implementing measures (Jankowski, 2007). The CAP would simply provide a solid basis for responding to the current challenges.

In order to prepare for the new programming period 2014-2020 and to determine the problems of the current CAP, the European Commission has initiated various working groups. Many visions of the CAP post 2013 were received from experts of agricultural sciences, producer organizations, non-governmental organizations and national positions from MS, etc. The structure of the CAP evolves and gets new frame in accordance with the various problems in agriculture and rural development across the EU.

Summing up the results of the content analysis, the following CAP development trends can be singled out:

- Food security. Healthy and high quality food.
- Farmer income support.
- Strengthen of competitiveness in agriculture.
- Environmental protection.
- Innovation and research.
- CAP management challenges.
- Global challenges.

However, the difficulties of the new CAP formation are caused by wide difference of national interests due to the expansion of the EU (Volkov, Melnikiene, 2012). Although during the last decade the EU's common agricultural economic data presents positive trends (increase of total agricultural production, increase of exports volumes, etc.), many MS are facing new challenges and problems at the national level.

Taking the fact that with every reform the CAP covers more countries, it's getting more difficult to achieve objectives in agriculture of separate MS.

By 2012 CAP includes 27 European Union countries with different agricultural systems and different levels of rural infrastructure's development. These differences make the formation of the CAP 2014-2020 very complicated, as the political debates concerning new programming period includes larger number of members. Moreover, there has been instability in civic activity of participants representing different interests of society and their role in shaping the CAP. The complexity of 2014-2020 CAP formatting process is also caused by differences between EU-12 and EU-15 (for example, agricultural employment in new MS significantly exceeds the employment in EU-15; however, the productivity problem is more relevant to EU-12, as their yield is lower and less stable (Berthelot et al., 2011)). Major CAP-formatting participants are shown in Fig. 6.

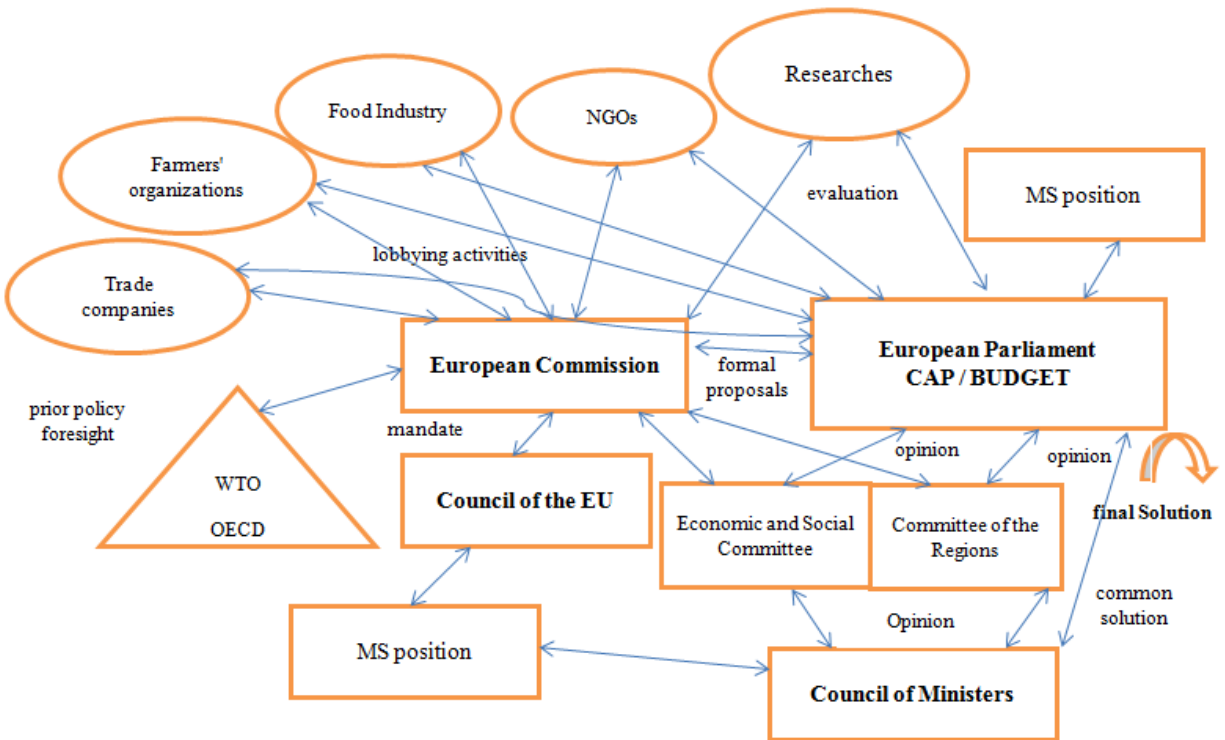


Fig. 6. CAP frame: participants in political debate

Source: compiled by the author based on J. Berthelot et al. (2011), 2012

According to Fig. 6, in order to accept all the challenges in the new CAP period significant part of the common political decisions across the EU must be reached and various suggestions on the CAP have to pass such a long way to create formal proposals regulating the CAP after 2013.

Conclusions

1. From its beginning the CAP had been one of the economy growth factor in the member states. CAP had been reformed several times. The today's CAP structure of two pillars didn't change since CAP reform - Agenda 2000 Agreement. The CAP with that structure was the first agricultural policy of its kind for ten European countries in 2004.
2. Accession of Lithuania to the EU has had a strong impact on its agricultural sector. CAP in Lithuania caused a rapid change in farms' structure towards strong polarization, which means that the number of medium-sized farms and utilized agricultural area of them decreased rapidly, while number of large farms and the area of these farms increased. The economies of scale of large farms have been strengthened by direct payment's model. Lithuanian farm structure is still in a shaping process and it is quite different from farm structure in other countries of Baltic Sea region.

3. According to FADN data in 2010, gross profit with subsidies per 1 AWU of farms with more than 150 ha of UAA differed 12 times in comparison with farms up to 10 ha in Lithuania. Gross profit with subsidies per 1 AWU of farms with less than 40 ha of UAA was less than the annual average salary of those employed. In accordance with weak opportunities of modernization and increasing of the value added of the farms with less than 40 ha of UAA, the number of those farms in Lithuania will continue to decrease in the future.
4. Large farms in Lithuania can outlive in expansion of agricultural land by offering a higher price or borrowing it at a higher price. According to FADN data in Lithuania, farms with more than 150 ha of UAA, invested EUR 41.8 thousand for agricultural land purchases in 2005-2010 period (approximately EUR 7 thousand per year) while farms between 30 and 40 ha of UAA invested EUR 1.6 thousand (~ EUR 260 per year) and farms between 40 and 50 ha of UAA – EUR 3.1 thousand (~ EUR 520 per year). Comparing difference among farm groups by investing per holding's ha of UAA, the difference is still huge (up to 300 %)
5. Following the implementation of support measures for rural development (SAPARD, 2004–2006 SPD Priority 4, 2007–2013 RDP) the Lithuanian agricultural policy was focused on the modernisation of agriculture and the increase of intensity. Numerous investments in efficient agricultural machinery reduced the need for labour in Lithuania. In 2010, as compared with 2004, the share of the employed in agriculture and related services in the overall employment structure decreased from 15.2 to 8.2 %.
6. The plant-growing has become economically more attractive than animal husbandry in Lithuania as a result of decoupling of direct payments from production. The mixed farms with livestock create significantly less income per 1 AWU than the crop farms. According to the FADN data, in 2009 net income with subsidies per 1 AWU in the mixed farms with mainly grazing livestock was by 25 % lower than the national average and 2.3 times lower than in the most profitable farms growing cereals and oilseeds, while in 2010 – by 53 % and 2.5 times.
7. According to the CAP impact on agriculture in Lithuania, main strategy tasks for the 2014-2020 period were outlined as: to increase the viability of small and medium-sized farms; to increase the value added created in the farms by implementing innovations and stimulating knowledge transfer; to develop animal husbandry by using more rationally the natural and human resources in the country; to create and preserve jobs in farmers' farms by diversifying the activity; to encourage direct sales in agricultural and food products and manufacturers' integration into the food supply chain.

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