

Comparative analysis of agricultural sectors and rural areas in the pre-accession countries: Agricultural policy developments, situation of the agri-food sector and economic context

Internal Kick off Meeting

For Objective 1: To update the analyses and data collection on agricultural policy developments in pre-accession countries carried out in 2019

Faculty of Agricultural Sciences and Food, Skopje, North Macedonia

10 February 2022

“Contribution to the methodology discussion”

Charalambos Kasimis

Agricultural University of Athens

I. Conceptual and policy framework

- We have to assume (and admit) that the two studies are not independent but rather interrelated. Competitiveness is indisputably a key policy goal.
- Agricultural policy developments should not be restricted to budgetary transfers and data collection.
- APMC should be treated as a trustful tool of analysis of budgetary transfers related to specific policy measures rather than as a conceptual framework.

I. Conceptual and policy framework

- As conceptual framework can be considered the three policy Pillars of Direct Payments, Market structures and Organisation and Rural Development, Pillars aligned with the EU policy agenda.
- The EU policy agenda of the new CAP and the Green Deal should be taken into consideration in the analysis framework.
- However, it has to be discussed whether the evaluation of the approximation process will be conducted with reference to the Chapters' requirements or whether it will involve (to a level possible) the framework of the new EU policies of CAP and Green Deal, as well as the country/territory institutional capacities for adjustment and implementation.

II. The environment of policy formulation

- The reviewing of policies, policy instruments and their political and social contextualization are crucial qualitative parameters for the understanding of the objectives and rationale of policies and policy measures.
- It is crucial to understand how policy is shaped. What the political and policy environment is and what the role of various pressure/interest groups and stakeholders.
- To that should be added the role in policy formulation of a public sector technocrat class
- In E. Erjavec's et alia words "agricultural policy choices in WB countries/territories result from two pressures: the EU's accession requirements and domestic drivers (pressure applied by various interest groups) under the constraints of institutional policy-making capacities."

III. Administration capacities and adjustment

- Identifying the gaps and deficits in data, policies and administrative structures is important for the improvement of policy design and policy implementation.
- Administration structural adjustment (Paying Agency, Monitoring Authorities and other required structures) and administrative capacities are critical parameters in the EU acquis adjustment process.
- The accession process does not necessarily require full harmonization with CAP requirements before accession itself, but rather demonstration of the capacity of WBCs to start the implementation of legislation and policy immediately after accession.

IV. Further policy remarks

- The cross-country analysis needs to be comparative not only at the level of successes and failures between WBCs, but also at the level of their convergences and divergences with regards to agricultural policy development.
- Policy successes or failures need to be explained/qualified so that the necessary conclusions can be drawn and policy adjustments adopted.
- In policy, the dilemma 'Direct Payments versus Rural Development measures' is misleading for countries in transition.
- Direct Payments can be considered an important 'protection shield/safety net' for farm households while Rural Development measures the means/tools for agricultural modernization and economic and social sustainability. Such policy issues again, need to be contextualised.
- Articulation and coordination of policies with the appropriate financial resources and/or financial instruments are also very important in our analysis.

V. In conclusion

- Data quality and analysis for budget transfers to specific policy measures are crucial for the monitoring of approximation and adjustment to EU acquis and policies. However, administrative structures and capacities (as well as the 'negotiation management' and consultation of domestic interest groups and stakeholders) are also considered determining factors in policy development and implementation.
- The adoption of qualitative methodology tools is important for the expansion and deepening of our analysis. Where necessary, we have to consider the possibility of investigating the 'unknown and grey areas' of policy formulation/development in our project with the use of semi-structured interviews with key policy officials (following the data collection and analysis).
- In short, more space should be given to qualitative methods and analysis to better understand the shaping and implementation of policy.

General outline of the Study I report

- Executive summary
- Project background and methodology
- Part 1: Regional synthesis report - Agricultural policy developments in the WBs and Turkey
 - Introduction
 - Agricultural strategic and policy framework in the WB and Turkey
 - State of harmonization of agricultural policies with EU requirements
 - Main successes and failures of agricultural policies in the WB and Turkey
 - Regional policy conclusions and recommendations
- Part 2: National reports
 - Albania – Agricultural policy developments
 - Introduction
 - Agricultural strategic and policy framework
 - Major changes in policy instruments
 - EU approximation process
 - Conclusions and policy recommendations
 - BiH
 - Kosovo*
 - Montenegro
 - N. Macedonia
 - Serbia
 - Turkey

Planning for activities

Activity	Who	Timeline, 2022
Internal kick-off meeting	All	10-Feb
Draft templates for: collection of data on agri-policy measures (APM), and outline for the country case studies	RE	10-Feb
Review of the previously used methodology and recommendations for improvements	SR	10-Feb
Final templates for: collection of data on agri-policy measures (APM), and outline for the country case studies	RE	28-Feb
Collect agricultural policy data in the respective country/territory (APM database)	NEs	30-Apr
Provide a cross-country harmonised and consistent database of the support level by specific policy instrument as well as aggregated support level of the individual policy instruments by the support type following the international classification of agricultural support.	RE	1-Jun
First draft country case studies (national reports) including: - Country specific analysis of agricultural policy developments and the EU accession process for all WB countries based on policy information collected - Major changes in policy instruments adopted in last years in the WB countries - Comparison of the agricultural policy in WB countries with CAP	NEs	1-Jun
Contribution to the first draft interim report - including preliminary results, based on the received input from the national experts, and outline of further steps	RE	15-Jun
Internal interim meeting	All	June
Interim report	SWG	30-Jun
Feedback to the National Experts on the first draft country case studies	RE	30-Jun
Second draft country case studies	NEs	15-Jul
Provide cross-country synthesis report including: - Comparison of agricultural policies in the WB countries and Turkey based on the policy information collected and country specific analysis - Evaluation of the EU approximation process of WB countries and Turkey - Identification of main successes and failures of agricultural policies - Policy recommendations	RE	15-Sep
Feedback on and contribution to the cross-country synthesis report	SR	30-Sep
Final report	SWG	30-Sep
Presentation of the findings in the Agricultural Policy Forum 2022	RE	19-Oct
RE - Regional Expert NEs - National Experts SR - Senior Researcher		

Overall Project's GANTT Chart

Month after signing the contract (21.11.21)/Activity	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov
Tasks (T)												
T1: Development of Methodology												
T2: Analyses of agricultural policy developments in the WBC & TR												
T 2.1: Collect information on agricultural policy developments												
T2.2: Conduct country case studies on agricultural policy developments												
T2.3: Conduct a comparative cross-country analysis of the agricultural policy developments												
T3: Comparative analysis of the competitiveness of the farming & food processing sector at sectoral & macro levels in the WBC & TRT												
T3.1: Cross-country analysis of main macroeconomic indicators												
T3.2: Cross-country analysis of main agricultural sector indicators												
T3.3 Data collection and cross-country analysis of market prices of the main agricultural products and revenues and costs												
T3.4: Data collection and cross-country analysis on outputs and yields for the main agricultural products												
T3.5: Inventory of data & cross-country analysis of rural/urban disparities												
T3.6: Comparative cross-country analysis												
Deliverables (D)												
D1: Inception report		31.01.22										
D2: Interim report							30.06.22					
D3 Draft final report										30.09.22		
D4: Final report												01.11.22
Project Meetings (PM) and Minutes (M)												
PM1: Kick off	13.12.21											
M1		13.01.22										
PM2: inception meeting			07.02.22									
M2			23.02.22									
M3: Interim meeting								07.07.22				
M3								21.07.22				
M4: Final										06.10.22		
M4											17.10.22	



Thank you for your attention