



FARM' IN

INCLUSION THROUGH
SOCIAL FARMING



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1.10. European legislative framework

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Different legal frameworks

Further differences exist due to different legal frameworks (O'Connor et al. 2010; Knapik 2018; Di Iacovo and O'Connor 2009, p. 30 ff.; Nazzaro et al. 2021, p. 11), but, generally, there are no specific laws.

Except: in Italy there is a specific legal framework that promotes social farming as part of agriculture; in Austria the organisation 'Green Care Austria' operates under private law and offers an important reference point for standardising and promoting social farming initiatives.

Harmonising power of EU law as a uniform legal framework for national regulations.

Evolution of EU policies in the field of social inclusion

- Cohabitation and balance competitiveness/social as EU historical approach to social inclusion
- 1990s - Social inclusion on EU agenda: Maastricht Treaty, Structural Funds; European Observatory on policies to combat social exclusion
- Social inclusion as participation and integration in society at the base of EU policy design (eg. rural development policy – networking, partnership, multilevel governance) - Social inclusion and the logic of cohesion at the base of EU Structural Funds (Shortall S., 2008; Shortall S., Warner M.E., 2010)
- 2014-2020: reinforced approach to cohesion in EU → common rules for 2014-2020 ESI Funds for better implementation of policy – EU Regulation 1303/2013: partnerships for Member States/Programmes for multi-level governance and open to 3rd sector
- Social Investment Package (EC), 2013, stimulating MS to maintain investments in social policy areas


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European and international framework

Social farming is an innovative approach that brings together two concepts: multipurpose farming and social services/health care at local level. On the one hand, it ties in closely with the multipurpose nature of farming and is part and parcel of the concept of rural development, giving farmers the opportunity to diversify their sources of income.

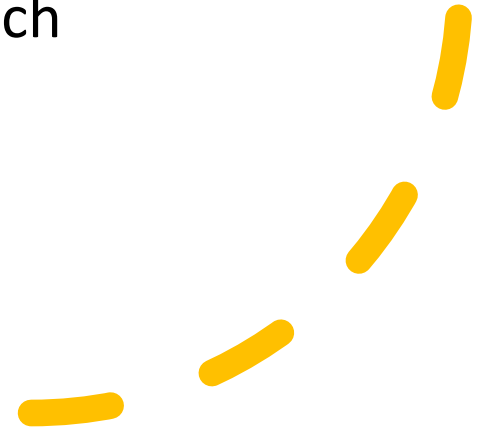
On the other hand, it benefits society by delivering social services and improving existing services for those living in rural areas by drawing on agricultural and rural resources in the broadest sense.

Opinion of the European Economic and Social Committee on 'Social farming: green care and social and health policies' (own-initiative opinion) (2013/C 44/07)

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Evolution of EU policies in the field of social inclusion

- EU 2020 Strategy - Focus on fighting against poverty and marginalization: active inclusion of vulnerable groups in society and labour market; overcoming of discriminations; integration of people with disabilities, ethnical minorities, immigrants
- Growing attention to social inclusion and social farming (SF) by EU policy and research



SF and
social
inclusion in
EU 2014-
2020
cohesion
policy

Social inclusion/fight against poverty translated into EU regulatory framework (objectives, tools, modes of intervention)

ESI Funds EU Regulations (2013)
→ conditions to foster SF practices in EU territories

Attention to SF by ESF: connection agriculture, social/health services, training sector.

SF and social inclusion in EAFRD and rural development policy

SF as an instrument of diversification of farms with social activities – Axis 3 Measures EAFRD 2007-2013

2014-2020: growing relevance of social functions of agriculture → farms were increasingly called to provide environmental and social services for society

EAFRD 2014-2020: «social inclusion, reduction of poverty and economic development in rural areas» one of 6 Priorities of rural development policy → specific Measures in RDPs

Opportunity of coordination with ESF interventions

EU cohesion policy in 2021-2027 period

In order to promote the harmonious development of the Union as a whole, the European Union shall strengthen its economic, social and territorial cohesion, in particular to reduce disparities between the levels of development of its various regions.

Special attention is paid to rural areas, areas affected by industrial transition and regions suffering from severe and permanent natural or demographic handicaps, such as the northernmost regions with very low population density as well as island, cross-border and mountain regions.



EU cohesion policy in 2021-2027 period

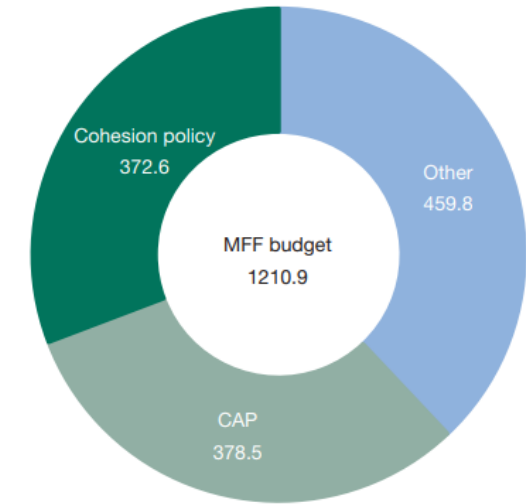
In 2021-2027 EU cohesion policy has set 5 policy objectives supporting growth. The Joint Action Plan includes actions on:

- a more competitive and smarter Europe
- a greener, low carbon transitioning towards a net zero carbon economy
- a more connected Europe by enhancing mobility
- **a more social and inclusive Europe**
- Europe closer to citizens by fostering the sustainable and integrated development of all types of territories



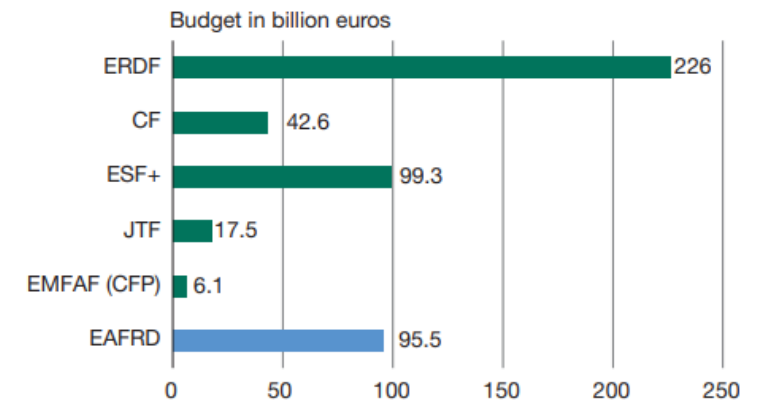
Current Cohesion policy

Cohesion policy makes up the second-largest share in EU spending
in billion euros



Note: Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) budget in 2020 prices.

- European Regional Development Fund: investments for competitiveness, innovation, the green transition and European territorial cooperation
- Cohesion Fund: targets environment and transport infrastructure in poorer regions in member states with gross national income per capita below 90% of EU average
- European Social Fund Plus (ESF+): concentrates on human capital development and social aspects
- Just Transition Fund: supports Green Deal implementation
- European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund (EMFAF): budget for the EU common fisheries policy
- European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD), managed by DG AGRI: contributes to regional development in rural areas, part of the common agricultural policy.

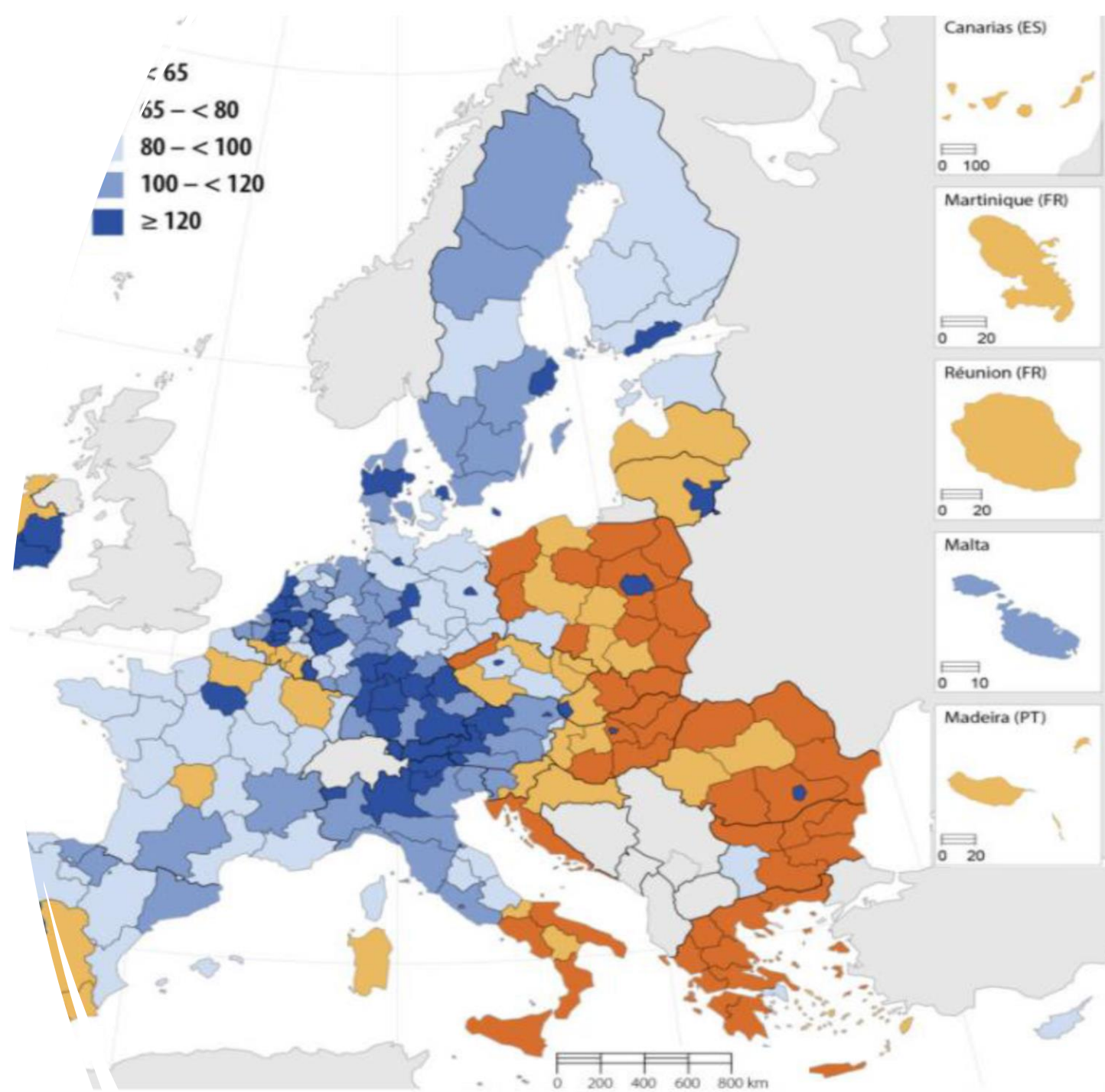


Notes: Budget of funds in billion euros for the current MFF period 2021-2027. ERDF: European Regional Development Fund; CF: Cohesion Fund; ESF+: European Social Fund Plus; JTF: Just Transition Fund; EAFRD: European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development.

Inclusion and cohesion in EU

Financial and legislative instruments that can support social inclusion and cohesion are also found in other European policies. Some examples:

- Research and innovation
- Health
- International cooperation
- Etc.



European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)

Strengthening EU economic, social and territorial cohesion by correcting imbalances between regions through programmes implemented by local authorities.

Cohesion Fund (CF)

The Cohesion Fund aims to reduce economic and social disparities and to promote sustainable development.

European Social Fund+

The European Social Fund+ (ESF+) is the EU's main instrument for investing in people with the aim of building a more social and inclusive Europe.

Erasmus+

Support the educational, professional and personal development of people in education, training, youth and sport.

Agriculture and rural development

European Agricultural Guarantee Fund (EAGF)

The EAGF funds income support for EU farmers and measures to stabilise agricultural markets.

European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD)

The EAFRD provides funding to support rural areas and strengthen the EU's agri-food and forestry sectors.

European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund

Common fisheries policy, maritime policy, aquaculture, sustainable development.

Migration and security

Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF)

Migration, Asylum and Integration; Common European Asylum System; Migration Management; Solidarity.

Internal Security Fund

Security of the Union; Tackling radicalisation, terrorism, cybercrime, organised crime; Protecting victims of crime.

References

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- De Vivo, C., Ascani, M., & Gaito, M. (2019). Social Farming and inclusion in EU ESI Funds programming. *Italian Review of Agricultural Economics (REA)*, 74(2)
- European Economic and Social Committee Opinion of the European Economic and Social Committee on ‘Social Farming: Green Care and Social and Health Policies’ (Own-Initiative Opinion) (2013/C 44/07). Official Journal of the European Union, C44/44-48, 15.2.2013. Available online: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52012IE1236&from=IT>