
European Added Value and the EU Common Agricultural Policy

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Julian T. Krzyzanowski¹

Abstract:

Purpose: The aim of the paper is to try to determine what is the EAV, what are its roots, how it is formed? It could be argued that the effect of added value is the third effect (next to the two known from the theory of economic integration: trade creation and trade diversion effects), resulting from the creation of integration links.

Design/Methodology/Approach: EU integration is strong in agriculture. Joint actions brought visible effect - implementation of CAP. The concept of European Added Value (EAV) can contribute to understanding and assessing the relevance of CAP to the EU. CAP is one of the few EU policies chiefly implemented at the EU level and closely linked to the subsidiarity principle. EAV derived from CAP has its own specificity. It creates new values in agriculture, and beyond. CAP's contribution to other areas and UN's sustainable development objectives is being shown. Further research studies on Added Value can contribute to the theory of regional economic integration. Document analysis, comparative methods are employed.

Findings: The research shows that EAV is an manifestation of the synergy effect, through cooperation at the regional level. European Added Value implemented under the CAP has its specificity: It creates new values in rural areas and agriculture. It also generates economic, social and environmental effects beyond agriculture. Many actions are of a cross-border nature, i.e. they concern other sectors. The CAP is linked to the Single Market, which in turn depends on global markets. Actions on common issues are more effective when undertaken at a higher level of centralization. The shared budget builds solidarity. Thus, projects can be implemented in the Member States or regions, even where there is a lack of local funding.

Practical Implications: The results of the research shall be of interest for scientists, politicians and decision makers.

Originality value: This is a new approach. Besides the trade creation and trade diversion effects as described in theories of economic integration one can find the third "added value effect".

Keywords: European Union, Common Agricultural Policy, Added Value.

JEL codes: A10, E00, F10.

Paper type: Research article.

¹Associate Professor, Ph.D., Institute of Agricultural and Food Economics – National Research Institute, Poland, e-mail: Julian.krzyzanowski@ierigz.waw.pl;

1. Introduction

The question what the Common Agricultural Policy owes its success to, is an interesting research issue. Undoubtedly, the constant adaptation of the Common Agricultural Policy to the changing world is one of the reasons. Its evolution and policy achievements to date are illustrated well by the EC Communication of November 2017 entitled "The Future of Food and Farming", announcing further reforms of the CAP after 2020 (The Future, 2017).

The EC Communication highlighted the key role of the CAP in the development of an integrated single market for EU agricultural products, which is reflected in providing consumers with food of proven quality. Direct payments introduced under the CAP (the principal aid instrument for farmers) provide income support to farms, affecting their viability and competitiveness.

These effects are also reinforced by the CAP market measures. Rural development support measures (Pillar II under the CAP), in turn, contribute - through targeted operations - to rural economic development, i.a. through support for investments, organisation of farmers and strengthening the food chain, development of farmers' skills and knowledge transfer, as well as through environmental / climate change combatting measures and new non-agricultural jobs.

Thanks to the efforts of the EU's agricultural and food processing sector as well as adequate trade policies and promotion strategies under the CAP, the EU is the world's largest exporter of agri-food products. At the same time, products which do not meet certain food safety standards and animal welfare criteria are not allowed to enter the EU. According to the Communication, the CAP shall contribute to tackling migration issues.

Those will concern agriculture-related trainings and projects in migrants' origin and transit areas as well as assistance provided to legal refugees to enable their settlement in EU countries and integration into rural communities. As it can be perceived, the CAP supports present day challenges, not necessarily directly related to agriculture. Out of the 17 sustainable development objectives by 2030 promoted by the UN, 12 are directly or indirectly implemented through the Common Agricultural Policy.

Thus, this is undoubtedly a policy of the future, which for more than 60 years has fostered the development of agriculture and rural areas and - through care for the environment and provision of food - the entire societies in the European Union.

However, how come the CAP manages to operate on so many levels with its effects not only in the agricultural sphere? And here, the concept of European Added Value (EAV) can be applied.

2. Materials and Methodology

The paper is based on the analysis of the literature in the field of economic regional integration and the European Union documentation. The analysis starts with a clarification of the concept of European Added Value followed by tracking the process of interest into this phenomenon. Subsequently, EAV and its creation under the EU Common Agricultural Policy actions and measures were discussed. On these grounds, some general conclusions have been drawn.

3. Theoretical Grounds

European Added Value (EAV) can be defined as "the value of EU actions that are additional to the actions of the Member States" (Europejska 2017). Generally, European Added Value means an added value (benefits) derived from actions (policies) implemented at the European level compared to the effects which would be achieved by separate policies of individual Member States within a given area (The European 2013). However, no uniform criteria for assessing European added value have yet been established at EU level (Rubio 2011).

The concept of EAV can contribute to understanding (and assessing) the relevance of the CAP to the European Union. The CAP is one of the few EU policies which is chiefly implemented at the EU level and closely linked to the subsidiarity principle, according to which the EU takes on tasks which it can implement more effectively than the Member State governments and regions (Europejska 2017).

The significance of EAV was strongly emphasised during the discussions on the EU budget for 2014-2020. Looking for the origins of European Added Value (EAV), it is necessary to go back to 1992/1993 and the Maastricht Treaty establishing the European Union. The concept of EAV derives from three principles: subsidiarity, proportionality and additionality, the first two are enshrined in Article 5 of the Treaty (eur-lex, 2022), and then further construed in a specific protocol (Protocols, 1997).

According to the principle of subsidiarity, in areas which do not fall within its exclusive competence, the EU starts operating only if and in so far as the objectives of any intended action cannot be sufficiently achieved by the Member States, either at the central level or at the regional and local level, and can therefore, by reason of the scale or effects of this action, be better achieved by the EU. In accordance with the principle of proportionality, the scope and form of action undertaken by the EU do not go beyond what is required in order to achieve the objectives of the Treaties.

The Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union provides for shared competences in the field of agriculture between the Union and the Member States, while establishing a Common Agricultural Policy with common objectives and common implementation.

In the current delivery model, the Union has made progress towards defining the basic policy parameters (CAP objectives, broad types of interventions, basic requirements), while the Member States take on greater responsibility and are more responsible for how they achieve the objectives and the agreed targets. In this context, the proposal for the post-2027 CAP continues to ensure a level playing field for Member States and farmers in the Single Market, guaranteeing food security across the Union and addressing cross-border and global challenges.

Figure 1. Sustainable Development Goals



Source: The Future, 2017.

The Protocol No. 30 to the Treaty states that, for the Community action to be justified, the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality must be attained: the objectives of any intended action cannot be sufficiently achieved by the Member States within the framework of their national constitutional systems, and can therefore be better attained by action at the Community level. When checking whether the above conditions have been met, the following guidelines should be followed (in accordance with the provisions of the Protocol):

- whereas the issue under consideration has transnational aspects which cannot be satisfactorily regulated by action by the Member States;

- action at national level alone or the absence of Community action would be contrary to the requirements of the Treaty or would otherwise significantly adversely affect the interests of the Member States;
- action at Community level would bring clear benefits by reason of its scale or effects compared to action at Member State level.

The potential of EAV derives from respecting the above principles. However, the concept of Added Value is broader. Subsidiarity and proportionality are intended to give legitimacy to action undertaken by the EU in the legal sense. An important aspect of how EAV is manifested comes from its economic relevance. The condition of its formation and the type of value created are important here. The creation of EAV is also not limited by the EU's borders. New value can be created, for example, in the form of development aid.

The concept of additionality is linked to the operation of the Structural Funds. EU funds are not intended to replace national funds, but to complement them.

4. Added Value as a Result of Action at Community Level

The link between subsidiarity and added value was also clear in the Commission's budget proposal for the second financial perspective (1994-1999), the so-called Delors II package. A document published shortly after the approval of the Maastricht Treaty states that, in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity, "the Community must always demonstrate that its financing provides added value" (The Community 2001, p. 15). A similar reference to added value is made in the Commission's Financial Proposal for 2000-2006 (Commission 1998). As in the previous Financial Reference Framework, in this perspective (Santer package) it was argued that the generation of added value is limited to the following areas of shared competence, i.e. so-called² "internal policies" (education, trans-European networks,

²*Shared competences (Article 4 TFEU): The EU and EU countries can make and adopt binding legal acts. EU countries exercise their own competences where the EU does not exercise or has not chosen to exercise its own competences. Shared competence between the EU and EU countries concerns the following areas: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/PL/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32012R0966&from=PL>:*

- *the internal market;*
- *social policy, but only with regard to the aspects specifically defined in the Treaty;*
- *economic, social and territorial cohesion (regional policy);*
- *agriculture and fisheries (except for the conservation of marine biological resources);*
- *environment;*
- *consumer protection;*
- *transport;*
- *trans-European networks;*
- *energy;*
- *an area of freedom, security and justice;*
- *common security concerns in public health matters, limited to aspects set out in the TFEU;*

research and development) and "external action" (cooperation and financial assistance to non-member countries). The two main areas of expenditure – agriculture and cohesion – which fall exclusively within the Council's remit have been left out from the value added test.

Judging by the number of times the term 'European added value' appears in official documents in the context of the EU budget, this concept has become a key determinant of EU spending. The term EAV is used 32 times in the Communication on the Multiannual Financial Framework (2014-2020), while the term was used only twice in the Communication on the Delors I package (1988-1992) and only once in the Communication on the Delors II Package (1993-1999). However, current definitions of the term "added value" and how they are quantified vary considerably (Rubio 2011).

The definition of the European Commission was given above. According to Rubio (2011), there are at least three other meanings of the concept of European added value.

One is when added value is interpreted as the benefits that result from good governance and implementation of EU policy programs. This is an ex-post evaluation to check whether specific EU programs provide the greatest possible added value. The second interpretation is when the value added relates to a³comparison of expenditure in different policy areas (identification of opportunity costs). As regards the third interpretation, the added value may relate to the side effects of EU actions additional to the main objectives of the project.

These different interpretations can be further illustrated. For example, the Committee of the Regions sees added value as "the opportunities it offers Europeans to develop their full potential as individuals beyond national borders"(Rubio 2011, p. 3). By contrast, Eurostep (2008 p. 4), which is a network of autonomous European NGOs, states that the added value of the various policies with regard to the internal market, agriculture and energy" lies in ensuring that these policies do not have a negative impact on developing countries".

What is important from an economic point of view: the division of tasks between the national and EU levels, using an assessment of added value in different categories of public expenditure, potentially increases the overall economic efficiency of the European economy.

Efficiency gains can be expressed in two ways: moving a task towards EU level means better efficiency if it allows for the same level of public service with fewer

• *research, technological development, space;*
• *development cooperation and humanitarian aid.*

³*This is discussed in more detail in the following sections.*

resources; or if a higher level of public goods and services can be generated at the same cost as under national programmes. Both savings and efficiency improvements are important for European finances. It is also important from a political point of view, as potentially better outcomes help to address conflicts between countries, net recipients and net contributors.

On the other hand, from a legal point of view, the concept of added value is important if the EU and the Member State have similar competences in a given action (Schreyer, 2011).

However, in recent years, EU actions on creation of added value has been based to a small extent on legal arguments (subsidiarity principle). The scientific background is drawn from the theory of fiscal federalism, which contains recommendations for the optimal distribution of tasks in multi-level management systems.

References to added value have been extended to all domains of the European Union. Hence, for example, the Commission's budget proposal for the Financial Perspectives 2007-2013 includes a paragraph which argues about added value as a justification for EU CAP spending (Commission 2004, p. 17)⁴. We will return to this argument later in this paper.

In 2017, ahead of launching negotiations on the post-2020 MFF, the Commission published a reflection paper on the future of EU finances in which it provided EAV with a solid conceptual framework. The purpose of it was to make EAV an effective tool for allocating appropriations within the future MFF and for pacifying the whole budgetary procedure (Realising, 2020).

The concept of European Added Value is used extensively in academic circles. This is the case in Begg's demand (Begg, 2009) for strong arguments to prove that EU funding for public goods creates added value, or in Cipriani's claim that the evidence on the EU added value of EU spending is crucial in convincing people that neither the scale nor the effects of the proposed action can be sufficiently achieved by the Member States. Most EU governments also interpret added value in this way.

They expressed this in their responses, as part of the Commission's consultation on the review of the EU budget 2007-2008. For example, the German contribution to the EU budget consultation indicates that European added value is closely linked to the principle of subsidiarity, while the UK government's contribution argues that the EU should only act where there are clear co-benefits from joint action or European

⁴“Consequently, the CAP has actually been producing value added over time at a lesser cost than would have been the case had the Member States continued with their separate agricultural policies”.

added value compared to individual or joint action by Member States. Added value is also used in this sense in Commission speeches and documents on the EU budget.

The EC Communication on the EU Budget Review of October 2010 (EC, 2010) includes a section entitled "European added value". This section stresses the need to concentrate resources in areas where EU level means a better deal for citizens than action at national level.

At the same time, European Added Value was highlighted in the theory of regional economic integration (Robson, 1998), while analyzing externalities. European Added Value is a value which comes from the fact that an individual action is not undertaken at the Member State level but at the EU level.

The mere establishment of a common approach for dealing with a given issue can be considered an added value, since it creates a single framework for action and ensures the operation of the EU single market, which is considered as an example of EAV. The specific structure of trade in the EU Member States, where the trade in goods with other EU countries is higher than the one with third countries (Gorzalak et al., 2017) is also considered a manifestation of added value.

However, it can be concluded that EAV is not a mere added value. In fact, EAV is an manifestation of the synergy effect, through cooperation at the regional level.⁵ Currently, EAV has been increasingly identified with the synergy effect (Assessment, 2017).

Community-level actions form EAV because:

1. Many actions are of a cross-border nature, i.e. they concern other sectors. For example, the CAP is linked to the Single Market, which in turn depends on global markets. Climate, water and air quality issues are clearly of a cross-border nature.
2. Actions on common issues are more effective when undertaken at a higher level of centralisation.
3. The shared budget builds solidarity. Thus, projects can be implemented in the Member States or regions, even where there is a lack of local funding there.

Just in the case of the budget it can be assumed that these funds bring more benefits than if they were spent by individual Member States. Here the theory of "fiscal equivalence" can be applied (Olson, 1969). According to it, state-level structures

⁵**Synergy** (synergy effect, *gr.* *συνεργία* "cooperation")^[1] - interaction / cooperation of various factors, the effect of which is higher than the sum of individual separate operations. As a result of synergy, for example, merged companies generate a higher profit than the sum of profits of individual companies before their merger. The main reasons for synergies are: reduction of costs and increase in the sales of each company (Corning, 2003).

should be organised in such a way that, when the state provides a public good, there should be convergent interests of beneficiaries, decision-makers and taxpayers. If this is the case, there are no cross-border (negative) external effects and public goods are provided efficiently.

Thus, it can be argued that European public goods should be provided at the EU level (ECORYS 2008, Collignon 2011). It refers to, among others:

- border control,
- defence policy,
- internal security,
- regulations on the common market,
- trade and competition policy,
- environment, combatting climate changes, energy policy,
- R&D and education policy.

It can even be argued that the European integration creates new European public goods which can only be provided effectively at the European level. They include, for example: lowering trade barriers, migration policy, flows of production factors. It can also be proved that managing the implementation of tasks from the EU level lets the Member States to achieve better results than their all actions at the national level and above all to reduce (save) resources. This is when EAV is created (Heinemann, 2011).

5. Results and discussion

European Added Value implemented under the CAP has its specificity:

1. It creates new values in rural areas and agriculture
2. It generates economic, social and environmental effects also beyond agriculture.

Point 1: The CAP pursues the objectives specified in the Treaty of Rome, among which food security for Europe is crucial. The CAP provides affordable food to consumers, bringing household expenditure on food (and non-alcoholic beverages) in the EU down gradually to 13.0% of total expenditure in 2023 (compared to over 30% in the 1960s) (Household, 2024). This is undoubtedly an added value. Similarly, the EU saved €23 billion a year compared to the case without the CAP (The European, 2013).⁶ The Common Agricultural Policy plays the role of a guarantor of the European agricultural model, which is a relevant social asset.

⁶*In the case study conducted for 21 Member States covered by the CAP, the authors of "The European Added Value of EU Spending: Can the EU Help its Member States to Save Money? stated that "from 2007 onwards, the likely national agricultural policies (in case of no CAP) would exceed the CAP expenditure. Expenditure by the national agricultural policies could*

Without the CAP, many European countries could quickly concentrate and intensify their agricultural production (as it is e.g., in the USA) and set up industrial-scale agricultural businesses with all its social and environmental effects. Apart from food security, the Common Agricultural Policy now provides EU citizens with access to a wide range of agricultural public goods (Cooper, 2009, What, 2011), such as: appropriate state of the natural environment (including water and air quality, soil functionality), vitality of rural areas, animal welfare, landscape elements and structure or biodiversity.

Many of these goods are “non-marketable” and of cross-border character (e.g. air quality, climate, water). They make an integral part of the high standard of EU citizens' living and one of the key elements of the integrated approach to public health. The CAP facilitates effective prevention and reduction of negative effects of natural and climatic phenomena and crises related to plant and animal diseases, which occur more and more often in recent years and affect more than one EU Member State.

Point 2: The CAP is not just a sectoral policy any more. Further reforms of this policy, taking advantage of the multifunctionality of agricultural activities, have included - within the CAP - various EU-relevant areas, i.a. the ones related to environmental protection (e.g., combating biodiversity loss) or preventing climate changes.

The CAP has been playing an increasing role in the introduction of a new economic model in the EU i.e., the circular economy, as an alternative to the linear economic model ("we produce, use and dispose of"). The CAP also sets up a common framework for the operation of the agricultural sector in the EU (Mariniello, 2015).

The absence of the CAP would prevent the emergence of an efficient common agri-food market in the EU because the Member States would compete with one another with the level of their support for agriculture, which could also lead to increased expenditures in their national budgets for agriculture (The European, 2013). Competition disturbances would result from differences in the level of aggregated budget support and the measures applied.

The operation of the single market is also facilitated by the quality standards of agri-food products introduced by the CAP. The absence of common food safety and quality standards would significantly impede trade within the European Union. The CAP provides (in fact irreplaceable) cross-border public goods at the EU level. The CAP also effectively counteracts the external effects of agricultural activity and protects European citizens against global threats.

be € 23 billion higher than that of the CAP alone in 2010. Vide The European Added Value of EU Spending: Can the EU Help its Member States to Save Money? Exploratory Study, Bertelsmann Stiftung 2013.

6. Conclusions

The CAP is active on many economic and social levels also beyond agriculture. It can be said that its effective operation is made possible by the creation of European Added Value (EAV). According to many researchers, EAV is created through actions undertaken in the field of regional integration. It is also an effect of synergy. EAV is an interesting concept in cognitive terms. It is created not only in agriculture, but also wherever there is any joint action at the Community level.

The result of the debate on value added and its interpretation will have important consequences for the direction of the future CAP and rural development programmes (Ferrer, 2006, p. 4).

For further research, taking the European Union as a model, it can be analysed whether such added value is created in other emerging economic groups being at various stages of their integration development. If the answer is positive, it would confirm the hypothesis that the creation of added value is a universal process, directly resulting from integrative operations.

Going further, it could be argued that the effect of added value is the third effect (next to the two known from the theory of economic integration: trade creation and trade diversion effects), resulting from the creation of integration links. Which is a small contribution to the theory of economic integration.

List of abbreviations:

CAP – Common Agricultural policy
EAV – European Added Value
EC – European Commission
EU – European Union
SDGs – Sustainable Development Goals
UN – United Nations

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