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Doctoral Dissertation Summary

Influence of the Common Agricultural Policy on the resilience of farming systems in Poland

Risk management and resilience of agriculture are among the most important issues in the ongoing discussion on the shape of the CAP beyond 2020. In the dissertation the resilience of European farming systems is investigated scientifically. **Farming System (FS) is defined** as system linking farms with other actors influenced by the farms and *vice versa*. Those FS face broad scope of risks and challenges, especially of economic, environmental, social and institutional character. Those external stresses change the context of FS's operations and increase the level of the vulnerability of these systems.

Since disturbances and pressures have a broad impact on farming systems, improving resilience entails assisting farms and farming systems in managing to be immune as much as possible. That requires from FS, on one side, the ability to responding to various disruptions, and on the other side, maintaining vital functions of FS. Among those functions are: agricultural production, providing jobs and generating revenue, as well as the preservation of rural regions, ecosystem services, and biodiversity. These issues require addressing and answering the question, weather the current and planned designs of the CAP and other policies are capable of supporting the resilience of farming systems.

This dissertation contributes to the literature through the exemplification and assessing the influence of the European Union policies on the resilience of Polish farming systems. **Resilience is defined** as the ability to retain system functions in the face of increasingly complex and accumulating shocks and stressors. For that matter, main method used is the metrics developed in a new Resilience Assessment Tool (ResAT), analyzing this influence in the context of resilience capacities. They are called: **robustness** (ability of the system to withstand stresses and shocks without major changes), **adaptability** (ability of the system to adapt in response to changing circumstances and continue to develop along the previous trajectory) and **transformability** (ability of the system to develop or incorporate new elements and processes to an extent that changes the operational logic). Their 12 main characteristics described in the dissertation in details. The research allowed to verify the usefulness of the proposed dynamic concept of the resilience by its application to assessment of the planning (goals) and implementation (measures) of public policies.

The **innovative aspect** of the proposed research is primarily the research methods and the framework used to describe the resilience, originating from the environmental studies but extended to economic

aspects. Previous research on resilience focused mostly at farm level while the ResAT is a new tool for testing resilience at the level of farming systems. It allows to assess how the policy goals and instruments encourage, enable, tolerate, or constrain the resilience of FSs. The ResAT has not been used previously to study the Common Agricultural Policy in Poland.

The **structure of the dissertation** is the following. It begins by systematizing the scientific knowledge on resilience, especially in the context of farming systems, and characteristics of resilience-oriented policies. This allows to prepare a framework for the analysis of the CAP in the context of farming system resilience. In the empirical part of the study, using top-down and bottom-up approach, the influence of the CAP on fruit and vegetable farming system is analyzed. These included ResAT, in-depth interviews and a workshop conducted with stakeholders.

The chosen **research method** was mainly the problem-based case study. The research was designed to examine policies at three levels: goals, instruments and implementation of the policy. The top-down approach allowed to examine the policy at the level of goals and instruments, bottom-up approach allowed observation of the outcomes of the implemented policy. It also allowed assessing how the needs of the system are met by the current policy implementation and to what extend changes in the policy may address those needs.

The **results** obtained from applied methodology indicate that policies support various resilience capacities of farming systems to a different extent. Relatively the highest support is directed to robustness (especially protecting status quo and buffer resources), and the lowest to transformability (least to long-term focus and in-depth learning). The main conclusion from the ResAT analysis is that at the level of instruments, the CAP is more focused on robustness than in case of the goals, where more balance is between robustness and adaptability.

According to the results of both interviews and the workshop - exemplified by horticulture system in Poland - it can be concluded that CAP provides a robustness-oriented strategy that is intended to buffer strains and disruptions, whereas adaptability gets less assistance, and transformability is overlooked. Policies should include a wider, and more integrated strategy for improving the resilience of farming systems leading to an optimal mix of the three capacities. It also should balance and compliment financial support with knowledge and incentive-based support, to make the farming system self withstanding rather than reliant on constant resource provision which destroys incentive to develop adaptability skills and withstands the transformation of the system.