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Rural development policy and multifunctionality of agriculture in Japan

Rural development policy in EU consists of two main strands. The first one concerns measures aimed at the agricultural sector; the second strand covers measures aimed at the more general development of the rural economy. Also in Japan rural development policy consists of two main strands. The first one aims at the agricultural sector, led by the Ministry of Agriculture, while the second strand is led by the Ministry of Infrastructure and Ministry of Transport and aims to minimize the regional disparity (Comprehensive National Development Plan since 1960s). Moreover the first strand is composed of three measures: (a) rural development projects (or public projects); (b) farm structural policies and (c) direct payments for Hilly and Mountainous Areas (HMA) since 2000. Rural development projects are financed either only by national government or at a fifty-fifty basis by national and local governments. Although the budget for farm structural policies and direct payments for HMA still amounts to a few percent of the total budget, it stimulates rural communities and contributes to prevent farmland abandonment.

CV

Tomoko Ichida is engaged in the policy analysis for agriculture and rural communities and the development of farm structure in the EU and Germany, with comparison with those in Japan. From 1985 to 2006 she was employed by Policy Research Institute, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (PRIMAFF) as a researcher. She got Ph.D. in agricultural economics at the University of Tokyo (Title of thesis: Policy for less favored areas in the EU: focus on Germany) in 2001 and appointed as Assistant Professor & Associate Professor of Meiji University, School of Agriculture (2006-2011), then appointed as Professor (2011-).