

Chapter 4

The Social Dimensions of the Common Fisheries Policy: A Review Of Current Measures

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4.1 Introduction

The third reform of the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) offers an opportunity to reflect on the achievement of fundamental objectives of the policy that, as the European Regulation R.2371/2002 reminds us¹, are threefold: to ensure sustainable economic, environmental and social conditions for the sector. In the 2009 Green Paper (EC 2009), the Commission highlighted the shortcomings of the current CFP and gave an indication of possible solutions by tackling, in particular, the environmental and economic aspects. The proposals for the reform of the CFP confirmed those orientations².

This chapter will not comment further on the current reform, but will rather aim to give a retrospective view on what has been done through the CFP with regard to one of its fundamental objectives: the social dimension. I intend to focus on initiatives that aim at helping those in the fishing industry, and fishing communities more broadly. Given its specificities, the analysis will be restricted to the harvesting sector, thereby excluding the other sectors, which traditionally make up the fisheries sector (processing and marketing of fish products, aquaculture and other related

¹ All legal texts referred to in this chapter are the European Union's R(egulations), Dir(ectives) or Dec(isions).

² EUROPEAN COMMISSION (EC), COM(2011) 416, 417, 424, 425. Also the Communication EC, COM(2011) 804 (European Maritime and Fisheries Fund: EMFF), as amended by COM(2013)245, is a part of the reform package.

The views expressed in this chapter are those of the author alone and do not necessarily represent the views of the European Commission.

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activities). It is, however, important to bear in mind that for every person employed in the harvesting sector at least three additional jobs are created in related economic activities (FAO 2010).

The goal of this short analysis is to consider what has been accomplished by the CFP over more than 30 years of the policy's existence and to seek to provide an assessment of its achievements regarding the socio-economic conditions of fishers.

4.2 The Legal Framework

The aims of the European Community (now the European Union, or EU) are those defined in the Treaty of Rome, and in the Acts that have subsequently amended it. The Treaty of Rome particularly emphasised farmers and the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) was designed to ensure the optimum utilisation of labour and a fair standard of living for the agricultural community by increasing the individual earnings of those engaged in agriculture. This objective of the CAP remains and is still stated with identical wording today, in Article 39 of the consolidated version of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU (TFEU), also known as the Lisbon Treaty (EU 2010). The only difference from the original provisions of the 1957 Treaty, albeit very significant in the present context, is that the term "agricultural shall be understood as also referring to fisheries".

Farmers (and fishermen formerly under the CAP in the 1970s, and subsequently under the CFP) are a category of professionals to whom the Treaty pays particular attention. Indeed, the Lisbon Treaty underlined the mission entrusted to the EU of establishing a 'social market economy, aiming at full employment and social progress' (Article 3.3) (Schmitt 2010). It is important to, therefore, examine what measures have been taken to provide support for farmers and fishers in order to fulfill the objectives laid down in the Treaty. It is important to note that such special treatment should also be extended to the communities to which these persons belong, that is to the social fabric, comprising people sharing the same values and way of living who reside in a specific area.

4.3 The Problems of Definition

In order to assess the measures adopted in favour of fishers and the fishing community, it is first important to provide some definitions. In the CFP (as in other legislation, for example the recent International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention concerning work in the fishing sector), 'fishers' refers generically to all persons engaged in a professional occupation on board any fishing vessel used for commercial exploitation of fisheries resources. The definition is thus derived from having a professional activity on board a fishing vessel, rather than on a precise activity. In general, there are no specific requirements regarding a minimum percentage of

income derived from fishing as a test of eligibility for EU funding though fishing should be seen to be the main source of income. Indeed, under the European Fisheries Fund (R.1198/2006) the pursuit of multiple jobs is actually encouraged. This definition, therefore, covers a rather broad range of jobs and so not only encompasses those workers on board vessels which are actually engaged in the capture of wild fish, but also workers carrying out related and auxiliary activities providing they perform such activities on board a vessel equipped for fishing. Duties and wages may differ, but the qualification of 'fisher' is extended to workers who do not actually harvest fish. The scope will be even broader under the new European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF), as fishermen may be charged with activities concerned the protection of the marine environment or the collection of waste. The reverse is also generally true in that harvesting fish along the shoreline does not qualify the worker as a 'fisher'. This may result in adverse consequences for some categories of worker who harvest living marine resources. In order to tackle this shortcoming, the new proposal extends the definition to persons professionally harvesting marine organism without a vessel³.

Nor is the definition of a 'fishing community' straightforward. It remains unspecified, although it is generally understood to include, besides fishers and their families, all those living in an area where fishing activity, and those activities related to fisheries, have a particular economic, social, cultural and historical value. Due to economic development, such communities may have evolved over time, to the point where they lose their original features so that the activity of catching fish becomes essentially an historical reference (EC 2011f). A useful example of this wider definition may be found in the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, which states that "(T)he term 'fishing community' means a community which is substantially dependent on or substantially engaged in the harvest or processing of fishery resources to meet social and economic needs, and includes fishing vessel owners, operators, and crew and United States fish processors that are based in such community."

The intention that these communities should be given special treatment, has been restated several times in EU legislation, starting with Council Resolution of 3 November 1976 (the 'Hague Resolution') whereby "The Council recognizes ... there are regions in the Community ... where the local communities are particularly dependent upon fishing and the industries allied thereto. ... in applying the CFP, account should also be taken of the vital needs of these fishing communities"⁴. Some years later, in its Resolution of 30 May 1980, on the Common Fisheries Policy, the Council referred to a community 'dependent upon fishing' and stated that the CFP should ensure "fair distribution of catches having regard, most particularly, to traditional fishing activities, to the special needs of regions where the local populations are particularly dependent upon fishing and the industries allied thereto"⁵.

³ Subject to Member State recognition (Art. 3.2 (6), COM(2011)804).

⁴ EC, Official Journal of the European Union (OJ) C 105/1981, p. 1.

⁵ EC, OJ C 158/1980, p. 2

It is, however, not easy to define precise indicators for measuring a degree of dependency on fishing activities and related industries of a community or region. In fact, a real dependency on fishing activity, meaning the dependency of a community on the wealth generated from the quantity and value of catches landed at a port and processed in factories located a short distance from that port, is difficult to calculate. Nowadays, the question of dependency is even more debatable, as the contribution of the harvesting sector to local economies in Europe is very limited, save for a few exceptions of small coastal municipalities located in rather isolated, less developed areas, that have been unable to reconvert their economy.

In fact, specific indicators have never been set by the European law and the qualification as a fisheries area is left to each Member State. However, it is commonly accepted that the concept of dependency on fishing activity includes aspects other than the landing and processing of catches, so as to comprise also the history of the community, its tradition, culture, urban landscape and social fabric. If a stricter definition were to be adopted whereby a fishing community only exists where the fishery sector constituted the mainstay of the local economy, so that a drastic reduction in the harvesting activity would impact on the whole local economy causing its decline (Love 2010), this would only apply to a very few areas in EU 27. As statistical analyses show, out of 128 NUTS-2 coastal regions in the EU⁶, less than twenty have a significant ratio of dependency on the fisheries sector (EP 2007).

Legislation also uses the term of ‘fisheries area’, that, in this context, means a location where fishers live, not where they operate. Finally, the term ‘region’ does not necessarily refer to an administrative entity recognised as such under national law and may encompass more than one administrative entity.

4.4 Evolution of Employment in EU Marine Fisheries

It is a notoriously difficult task to calculate the number of active fishermen across the EU. In fact, because of disparate methodologies employed by individual Member States, there are no accurate statistics on the number of persons working as professional fishers in the EU. By using figures published by the European Commission, it was estimated that some 300,000 full- and part-time fishermen could have benefitted from EU financial intervention in 1990 when the EU comprised 15 Member States only but some 150,000 in 2008 (with 27 Member States) (EC 2006). After having increased during the 1970s and 80s, the employment in marine capture fisheries has more than halved over the last 20 years. Clearly, statistics do not cover the situation of informal work relationships in fisheries, which are not unusual in this sector. Although on a world scale, the number of fishers has increased over the same period, the steady decline in the number of those employed in the European harvesting sector, should not come as a surprise, since this is the natural trend of economic development that promotes a shift towards secondary and tertiary sectors.

⁶ NUTS—Nomenclature of territorial unit for statistics (R.1059/2003).

The decrease in the number of professional fishers is attributable to the reduction of the number of the vessels, a consequence of the technological development and the depletion of fishing stocks. In addition, fishing, and other traditional maritime occupations, is become less attractive. They are seen today as unrewarding, dangerous and not family friendly. The EU is seeking to counter this negative trend through specific measures aimed at restoring the reputation of these occupations. Some of these measures are considered in the Integrated Maritime Policy, launched in 2007 (EC 2007).

4.5 Measures Intended to Benefit Fishers and Their Communities

This aspect—the central one in this chapter—concerns the measures the EU has put in place in order to fulfill the mission assigned to it by the Treaty, in supporting fishermen and their communities. Initiatives in the fisheries sector have been taken since the 1970s, when changes to the Law of the Sea and vested interests of some EU Member States triggered legislation regarding fish products and fisheries production structures, under the Chapter of the Treaty of Rome devoted to agriculture.

Given the overall perspective of this volume in focusing primarily on social issues, the measures under consideration relate principally to the allocation of fishing rights and the financial support for improving living standards. Although legislation designed to improve the health and safety conditions on board fishing vessels or working conditions is pertinent, their goals are fundamentally different to those pursued by Article 39 of the TFEU, which refers to a fair standard of living and, therefore, mainly to economic conditions. Despite the fact that these aspects are now critical in the attempt to attract the younger generation into this traditional activity, the goals of improving health and safety conditions are not specific to fishermen, as they concern every category of worker and will not be treated here.

The analysis will consider only the transfer to Member States of Community financial resources earmarked for the achievement of objectives of a socio-economic nature. Furthermore, this analysis will be confined to aspects directly concerning people. Aid granted for production or processing infrastructure (vessels, ports, factories), which comprise the bulk of the EU contributions until now, lies outside the scope of this analysis. The forthcoming European Maritime and Fisheries Fund, scheduled to come into operation in 2014 relating to the provisions of the revised CFP, is expected to alter the order of priorities, as compared to the actions financially supported under current legislation.

The allocation of fishing quotas (or, in general, the so-called fishing opportunities) to the individual fisher or to producer organisations are, of course, of great importance. However, the system is built in such a way that the recipients are the

Member States and not distinct coastal regions (Wakefield 2009). Only Member States are entitled to distribute quotas to operators according to national law, political goals and practices. No coastal community can claim exclusive rights to stocks found in the waters adjacent to its coastline, although restrictions may apply to access by the fleets of other states⁷. Further, the criteria for establishing the quantities that can be allocated are mainly based on a rational exploitation of the available resources as recommended by scientific advice, rather than on considerations of a social nature. Finally, although quotas obviously have an economic value, there is no public money at issue.

4.6 Financial Support from the EU

Even when support for fleet adjustment, the underpinning of the marketing and processing sectors, promotion of aquaculture and costs associated with fishing in third country waters are included, the amounts earmarked in the EU budget for the fisheries sector have never been massive when compared to other sectors of the economy. However, they may appear in a very different light when the total amount is set against the number of professional fishers in the EU.

EU financial support within the CFP was never designed to create new jobs in the harvesting sector. Its purpose is primarily to facilitate the restructuring of the sector as a consequence of the excessive fishing capacity and the depletion of stocks. The goal of EU intervention over the last 25 years has been to achieve a balance between fishing capacity and available resources as the prerequisite for a profitable industry. The changes in the characteristics of the EU fleet as a result of technological progress and environmental concerns, have clearly had an impact on the number of jobs on board vessels and on the professional qualifications of crew members (EC 2002). On the other hand, the downtrend in the economic performance of fishing businesses has had an unfavourable impact on the revenues of fishermen and on the retention of workers in the sector. If stocks were exploited at maximum sustainable yield, the catching industry would be profitable, fishermen would obtain higher revenues and many more jobs would be created (World Bank & FAO 2009; NEF 2012). This is precisely the aim of the current CFP's reform.

Until now, EU measures have been designed, above all, to cushion the blow of the social consequences of the decline of fishing activity, whether the inactivity be a consequence of a conservation measure or the poor economic results of a fishing business. However, as the new reforms suggest, a different approach has been chosen and many of the earlier measures are to be discontinued because of perceived ineffectiveness. This change in policy comes at a time when unemployment rates in Europe are historically high.

⁷ R2371/2002, Art. 17.

4.7 From Special Initiatives to Structural Funds for Fisheries

In 1971, Community funding from the agricultural budget was made available to the fisheries sector in order to develop a fishing sector which was in need of modernisation in the context of the European economy as a whole. When, during the 1980s, it became apparent that fishing capacity needed to be reduced, special measures were devised for scrapping vessels or limiting their activity. A premium was granted to vessel owners in exchange for a temporary or permanent reduction of production capacity. The amount was calculated on the basis of vessel tonnage and the number of ‘laid-up’ days. It was only in 1995, that measures of a truly socio-economic nature were introduced to aid those workers whose main occupation was as fishers on board operational sea-going fishing vessels⁸.

For fishing vessel owners, the premium was an incentive to keep idle a production tool so as to reduce pressure on resources. For crew members, the measure was compensation for a situation where the employee is denied access to social welfare payments. We should also remember the widespread situation of share fishermen, who likewise may lack protection under national social security schemes in the event of cessation or insolvency of a fishing business⁹. The aid is particularly justified because these workers are exposed to the risk of not being able to find other jobs in the same region in which they live, as job opportunities for their skills are generally scarce. The measure was also an attempt to retain within the sector ‘dynamic and skilled’ workers¹⁰. Such compensation payments entail no additional costs for businesses that are often struggling for their own economic survival.

The situation of inactivity of vessels due to conservation measures has been extended to include the stoppage of activity following the termination of, or a delay in, the renewal of fisheries agreements with third countries¹¹, the compulsory abandonment of traditional fishing techniques imposed by a new law and, more recently, for a limited period, to the temporary cessation of fishing activities due to economic crises induced by the abrupt increase of fuel prices in 2008. Under this more generous scheme, part of the ‘basic salary’ of fishers employed on a vessel admitted into the scheme is charged to the relevant public authorities¹². In addition to these indemnities, legislation has also provided an incentive to fishers to take early retirement, through a contribution to the pension fund. These measures have been extended under the framework of the Financial Instrument for Fisheries Guidance (FIFG)¹³ (2000–2006) and the European Fisheries Fund (EFF)¹⁴ (2007–2013). A further extension of these socio-economic measures under the provisions of the next EMFF is not envisaged by the Commission’s proposal.

⁸ R.2719/95.

⁹ See Dir.2008/94 and EC, COM(2007)591, Reassessing the regulatory social framework for more and better seafaring jobs in the EU.

¹⁰ R.2468/98, recital 11.

¹¹ Dec.95/451.

¹² R.744/2008.

¹³ R.1263/1999.

¹⁴ R.1198/2006.

In short, the measures currently available with the aim of ensuring an income for individual fishermen are: the compensation to fishers and owners of fishing vessels for the inactivity of their vessels, and aid granted to workers due to their departure from the fishing sector, including early retirement. Other types of aid are also gathered together under the umbrella of ‘socio-economic measures’. They concern the enhancement of skills, within or outside the fishery sector, or facilitating the start-up of an entrepreneurial activity for a young fisher, though these are not necessarily specific to the fishing sector.

4.8 Assessment of the Socio-Economic Measures

Socio-economic measures, as they have been labelled in the legal acts, remained fundamentally unchanged during the two periods of financial programming for structural interventions from 1994 to 2006 (for further details see Suris-Regueiro et al. 2011¹⁵). Ex-post assessments of these schemes show that only compensation for temporary cessation of fishing activity as a fisher has had a significant effect, in terms of the members involved and the amounts disbursed. Conversely, actions aimed at the early retirement of those over 55 years, and the departure of workers from the sector, have been barely utilised. While the first scheme is well received, as it allows some flexibility to businesses, the latter actions are most probably unattractive when compared with existing labour market conditions and the public social schemes in force. In fact, the decrease of jobs in the harvesting sector is due essentially to the number of vessels removed from fleet registers and only partly replaced by new entries (usually more efficient and larger units). The data available does not allow calculation of ratios between jobs lost and tonnage or KWs withdrawn.

Conversely, it has been shown that, during the period under consideration, public aid has created jobs in the aquaculture or processing, marketing or related sectors (ports, shipyards, financial institutions, administration etc.), which have offset the reduction in the number of jobs in the fisheries sector. However, it is not possible to trace those fishers that have left the harvesting industry to take up jobs elsewhere in the fishing sector. The scarcity of information available on the attendance of fishers on retraining courses, financed essentially by an unspecific Fund, as it is the European Social Fund, makes it difficult to assess the numbers of workers who, after retraining, remain within the fisheries sector but with a different occupation.

What is clear is that it is the small-scale sector that has been the most adversely affected by a reduction of fishing activity on grounds of resource conservation measures, or the need to improve the economic performance of the sector. Communities that are heavily dependent on fishing and where fishers are unable to

¹⁵ 6 See also: EC, Evaluation ex post des programmes de l’IFOP pour la période 1994–1999, 2004; EC, Ex-post evaluation of the Financial Instrument for Fisheries Guidance (FIG 2000–2006), 2010; EC, Interim evaluation on establishing EU financial measures for the implementation of the CFP and in the area of the Law of the sea, 2007–2013, 2010.

find other professional occupations in the local area or alternative sources of income (e.g. social welfare payments) face the risk of irreversible decline if they do not embark on diversification of their local labour markets.

4.9 From Harvesting Activity to the Coastal Community

In 1994, the Commission adopted a specific Community initiative for the fisheries sector, known as PESCA¹⁶, in order to assist coastal regions facing loss of revenue due to the poor economic performance of the fishing industry. At that time, businesses were already struggling with limited catches and increasing costs induced, *inter alia*, by new rules on health and safety conditions on board vessels and stricter hygiene requirements for fish products in order to comply with standards in the single market.

250 millions Ecus were made available over the period 1994–1999 to regions deemed to be dependent on fisheries because of their relatively high employment rates in the sector and the added value of fish products within the local economy. The long list of regions eligible for such aid was created by the EU Member States. The initiative mirrored that concerning the rural world, known as LEADER (Liason Entre Actions pour le Development de l'Economie Rurale), operating from 1991 to 2006, and subsequently integrated into the current framework for rural development. The methodology involving a bottom-up approach, as well as the aim of facilitating the diversification of the activities, are identical. Although the two schemes—LEADER and PESCA—may have overlapped in some coastal regions, projects financed under LEADER did not include the fish harvesting sector.

The PESCA initiative was an attempt to redress a situation where, due to declining fish stocks, poor economic yields, new consumer habits or new patterns of trade, either the available employment opportunities were insufficient or the revenues generated were unattractive. In order to revitalise the local economies, the communities needed to become less dependent on the harvesting activity. In so doing, fisheries policy introduced elements of regional policy now referred to 'territorial cohesion'¹⁷, by supporting projects for economic development not directly related to the fishing industry as in pesca-tourism, gastronomic tours, leisure activities, museums of the fishing history, craft goods. In particular, fish workers could benefit from training and vocational education with a view to finding jobs outside the fishing sector.

The same objective of promoting sustainable development and an improvement in the quality of life in coastal areas with a significant, though declining, fishing activity, prompted the revival in 2007, of PESCA-like initiatives, supported by the EFF, to be carried out under the initiative of Fisheries Local Action Groups (FLAGs). It should be noted that in this framework, fishers and harvesting industry are no longer seen as the drivers of economic development in a fisheries area.

¹⁶ OJ C 180/94, p. 1.

¹⁷ Art. 174 TFEU.

Nowadays, themes like technical innovation, networking, food quality, environmental protection, waste management, energy saving and alternative energy, are more popular. It is expected that some 300 such groups will be established under the current programme (see Chap. 11). Some € 567 million has been set aside for the sustainable development of fisheries regions across the EU, which corresponds to 13 % of the EFF budget. It is too early to evaluate this measure, which has raised a lot of interest and will surely be extended in the future. It should be kept in mind, however, that these projects, because of their content, have only a limited impact on the economy and cannot on their own overturn a situation of decline in the sector. Hundreds of such initiatives of this kind cannot fundamentally change the situation for those municipalities, amongst the 6,600 located on the European coast, where fishers are suffering severely from poor economic performance of the fishing industry. Such initiatives should, therefore, be considered no more than a complement to the local economy. However, what is of particular importance is the possible spillover of innovation, good practice and the transfer of know-how which may trigger new dynamics in areas facing similar difficulties. This is made possible particularly through the network that underpins the FLAGs.

It is in this wider context, that the contribution of women to the fishing industry and to the fishing community has been recognised and attracted EU financial support with pilot projects launched as early as the late 1990s¹⁸. It is well known that the presence of women on board fishing vessels is a rare occurrence, and, therefore, they generally do not qualify as fish workers. Yet, they contribute to fish production, not only as shellfish gatherers, but women play an important role in the processing and marketing of fish products (see Chaps. 12, 13 and 14). Furthermore, their involvement, often unnoticed, in activities within a family run business is crucial. The entitlement of spouses of self-employed workers to benefit from the general system for social protection is a long-awaited and deserved recognition of their contribution¹⁹.

As this territorial-based approach is now the favoured avenue for the economic development of coastal areas, such initiatives seem certain to be extended under the new general framework for EU support from 2014 onwards and is currently under discussion in the Council of Ministers and in the European Parliament. In the new context, the need to insert coastal development into the wider Integrated Maritime Policy and the specific investments including maritime spatial planning, as well as the attainment of the targets fixed by the Europe 2020 Strategy²⁰, will be taken into account.

4.10 Governance

Over the period under analysis, financial allocations earmarked for implementing measures of a socio-economic nature have largely been underutilised. One of the reasons cited for the poor performance is the difficulty for those most likely to

¹⁸ See OJ C 216/97, p. 31.

¹⁹ Dir.2010/41.

²⁰ EC, COM(2010)2020.

benefit to voice their concerns when the measures are being elaborated. With regard to governance in the fisheries sector, important steps have been made in recent years and particularly since the 2002 reform of the CFP when Regional Advisory Councils (RACs) were introduced. It is, therefore, useful to recall the opportunities available to economic operators, workers and NGOs to make their voices heard when new measures are being prepared in Brussels. Consultation is an essential feature in the production of EU law and embedded in the Lisbon Treaty.

In the law-making process, apart from the possibility of engaging directly in public consultations, interested parties may be represented through several different organisations including the longstanding Advisory Committee on Fisheries and Aquaculture (ACFA)²¹ established in 1971 and the Sectoral Social Dialogue Committee (SSDC) for marine fisheries in 1974²². Two other committees are of relevance: one is tasked with the implementation of the programme established in the context of the EU structural fund for fisheries, the Monitoring Committees appointed for each Member State in a local partnership approach, and the other the Regional Advisory Councils (RACs) created for each of five regional seas together with Councils representing the distant water and pelagic fisheries²³. The RACs are entitled to submit recommendations and suggestions to the Commission and Member States, and to contribute to the achievement of sustainable economic, environmental and social conditions.

Due to its very composition, the RAC has a key role in representing the interests of the components of a fishing community in a multinational set-up. Those entitled to RAC membership includes vessel owners, small-scale fishers, employed fishers, producer organisations, processors, traders and other market organisations, women's networks, environmental organisations, aquaculture producers, consumers and recreational or sport fishers. Given their wide ranging stakeholder membership, RACs are today probably the most powerful instrument for expressing stakeholder views currently in the hands of the fishing community (Long 2010). It is up to RACs, possibly with enhanced competences and administrative capacity, to interact with other actors with an interest in coastal zone management. Their effectiveness could be enhanced by stronger producer organisations and other influential social partners. Should the RAC be deemed inadequate to represent the fishing sector in the coastal management process, as recommended by the FAO's Code of Conduct for 'responsible fishing', and endorsed by the EU, changes can be made²⁴.

4.11 Conclusions

At the outset of the CFP in 1968, a document relating to the anticipated social pillar in the set of proposals elaborated by the Commission was not finally tabled. It was deemed that strengthening production and marketing structures would be more

²¹ Established by Dec.71/128, revised in 1999.

²² Established by Dec.74/441, revised in 1998.

²³ Dec 2004/585.

²⁴ See EC, COM(2011)425, Art. 54.

effective in sustaining fishing-dependent communities. However, measures to alleviate the emerging difficulties introduced in the late 1980s—and largely still in force today—have failed to secure a stable and sufficient income for fishers or the improvement of living conditions in fishing communities in parts of the EU. It is true that, where requirements for health and safety and improved working conditions have been complied with, significant improvements have taken place as a result of new legislation and related financial support. But a mechanism specifically designed to guarantee a stable and adequate income for all professional fish workers has never been achieved, in marked contrast to what has been done for farmers through the provisions of the EU Treaty. Clearly the two EU policies are quite differently implemented (Wakefield 2009).

This analysis has referred neither to measures adopted for improving the skills of fish workers, nor to actions focusing on the small-scale/artisanal fisheries and may in this respect be seen as incomplete. In fact, notwithstanding Article 41 of the TFEU which refers to measures in the spheres of vocational training within the CAP, other sectors of EU intervention are perhaps better suited than the CFP for dealing with programmes for vocational training or retraining of fishers. Measures relating to small-scale fisheries do exist as exemptions from certain regulations that apply to larger vessels and in higher rates of financial assistance than those which apply to larger vessels. However, in the absence of rules that can link a specific segment of the fishing fleet to a given coastal community, it cannot be argued that a special regime designed to sustain the revenues of small-scale fishers has been developed (see also Symes and Phillipson 2009). After three decades of the CFP, the EU fleet is composed of fewer, but larger and more powerful vessels, which employ less crew on board. What is more, fish workers are less and less connected to coastal communities partly due to the increasing numbers of non-EU nationals working on board EU fishing vessels. It can be argued that this trend owes more to uneven levels of economic development across Europe and beyond than to the direct effects of the CFP.

In summary, save for a few exceptions, the EU harvesting sector remains economically fragile and requires further restructuring. Studies carried out on the ex-post evaluation of the socio-economic measures, for the period 1994–2011, show that the amounts earmarked in the EU budget have generally been underutilised. At this stage a more detailed analysis is not possible as data collection is ongoing and for several initiatives only aggregate data are available. Only the compensation for temporary cessation of fishing activity appears to have been a qualified success with relatively large numbers of workers from a relatively small number of Member States benefitting from the financial provisions. Support for scrapping vessels could also qualify as a socio-economic measure to the extent that the vast majority of vessel owners in the small-scale fleet work on board their vessels; significantly, however, a number of national decommissioning schemes have specifically excluded vessels under 10 or 12 m.

When compared to other fishing nations, the EU's harvesting sector is today generally worse off than at the outset of the CFP, despite extensive modernisation. Competition for the use of the same marine areas from other growing European

economic sectors (DG MARE 2012), and the constraints, imposed by the goal of good environmental status in the marine environment²⁵, make the future of Europe's fishing industry uncertain. The fishing industry will have a prosperous future only if it becomes part of an otherwise flourishing coastal community. Genuine fisheries-dependent communities are the exception. Dependency is more and more 'virtual' rather than 'real'. Today the image of being a fishing community has a value exceeding that of the landed catches (Brookfield et al. 2005). The future of coastal fishing communities depends more on economic development of the marine and maritime economy, than on the size of the harvesting sectors.

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²⁵ Dir.2008/56.

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