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# **DRAFT REPORT**

on the future of agriculture and the post-2027 common agricultural policy  
(2025/2052(INI))

Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development

Rapporteur: Carmen Crespo Díaz

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## MOTION FOR A EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT RESOLUTION

### on the future of agriculture and the post-2027 common agricultural policy (2025/2052(INI))

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to the Commission communication of 19 February 2025 on a Vision for Agriculture and Food, Shaping together an attractive farming and agri-food sector for future generations ([COM\(2025\)0075](#)),
- having regard to Articles 38 and 39 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) establishing the common agricultural policy (CAP) and its objectives,
- having regard to Articles 40 and 42 TFEU establishing a common organisation of agricultural markets (CMO) and the extent to which rules on competition apply to production of and trade in agricultural products,
- having regard to Article 349 TFEU, which defines the statute of, and lays down the conditions of application of the Treaties to, the outermost regions,
- having regard to the 2024 Eurobarometer entitled ‘Europeans, agriculture and the CAP’<sup>1</sup>,
- having regard to Council Directive 98/58/EC of 20 July 1998 concerning the protection of animals kept for farming purposes<sup>2</sup>,
- having regard to the communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the European Council, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions of 29 January 2025 entitled ‘A Competitiveness Compass for the EU’ ([COM\(2025\)0030](#)),
- having regard to the report by Mario Draghi of 9 September 2024 on the future of European competitiveness,
- having regard to the report by Sauli Niinistö of 30 October 2024 entitled ‘Safer Together – Strengthening Europe’s Civilian and Military Preparedness and Readiness’,
- having regard to Regulation (EU) 2024/1468 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 May 2024 amending Regulations (EU) 2021/2115 and (EU) 2021/2116 as regards good agricultural and environmental condition standards, schemes for climate, environment and animal welfare, amendment of the CAP Strategic Plans, review of the CAP Strategic Plans and exemptions from controls and penalties<sup>3</sup>,

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<sup>1</sup> The European Parliament’s Spring 2024 Eurobarometer was carried out between 7 February and 3 March 2024 in the 27 EU Member States.

<sup>2</sup> OJ L 221, 8.8.1998, p. 2.

<sup>3</sup> OJ L, 2024/1468, 24.5.2024, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/1468/oj>.

- having regard to Regulation (EU) 2021/2115 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 2 December 2021 establishing rules on support for strategic plans to be drawn up by Member States under the common agricultural policy (CAP Strategic Plans) and financed by the European Agricultural Guarantee Fund (EAGF) and by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) and repealing Regulations (EU) No 1305/2013 and (EU) No 1307/2013 <sup>4</sup>,
- having regard to Regulation (EU) 2021/2117 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 2 December 2021 amending Regulations (EU) No 1308/2013 establishing a common organisation of the markets in agricultural products, (EU) No 1151/2012 on quality schemes for agricultural products and foodstuffs, (EU) No 251/2014 on the definition, description, presentation, labelling and the protection of geographical indications of aromatised wine products and (EU) No 228/2013 laying down specific measures for agriculture in the outermost regions of the Union <sup>5</sup>,
- having regard to Regulation (EU) 2021/2116 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 2 December 2021 on the financing, management and monitoring of the common agricultural policy and repealing Regulation (EU) No 1306/2013 <sup>6</sup>,
- having regard to Regulation (EU) 2024/1143 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 April 2024 on geographical indications for wine, spirit drinks and agricultural products, as well as traditional specialities guaranteed and optional quality terms for agricultural products, amending Regulations (EU) No 1308/2013, (EU) 2019/787 and (EU) 2019/1753 and repealing Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012 <sup>7</sup>,
- having regard to its resolution of 9 May 2023 on the implementation of the school scheme for fruit, vegetables, milk and dairy products under the Common Market Organisation Regulation <sup>8</sup>,
- having regard to its resolution of 19 October 2023 on generational renewal in the EU farms of the future <sup>9</sup>,
- having regard to its resolution of 13 December 2022 on a long-term vision for the EU's rural areas: Towards stronger, connected, resilient and prosperous rural areas by 2040 <sup>10</sup>,
- having regard to its resolution of 14 June 2023 on ensuring food security and the long-term resilience of EU agriculture <sup>11</sup>,
- having regard to the report on the Strategic Dialogue on the Future of EU Agriculture, entitled 'A shared prospect for farming and food in Europe', of 24 September 2024,

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<sup>4</sup> OJ L 435 6.12.2021, p. 1. Corrigendum to the final act (32021R2115R(03)), OJ L 227 of 1.9.2022, p. 136. Corrigendum to the final act (32021R2115R(02)), OJ L 181 of 7.7.2022, p. 35.

<sup>5</sup> [OJ L 435 of 6.12.2021, p. 262. Corrigendum to the final act \(32021R2117R\(04\)\), OJ L 192 of 31.7.2023, p. 34.](#)

<sup>6</sup> [OJ L 435, 6.12.2021, p. 187.](#)

<sup>7</sup> OJ L, 2024/1143, 23.4.2024, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/1143/oj>.

<sup>8</sup> Texts adopted, P9\_TA(2023)0135.

<sup>9</sup> Texts adopted, P9\_TA(2023)0376.

<sup>10</sup> Texts adopted, P9\_TA(2022)0436.

<sup>11</sup> Texts adopted, P9\_TA(2023)0238.

- having regard to the opinion of the European Committee of the Regions, entitled ‘The future of the Common Agricultural Policy’, of 20 June 2024,
  - having regard to the opinion of the European Economic and Social Committee, entitled ‘Strategies for the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) post-2027’, of 17 January 2024,
  - having regard to the opinion of the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety,
  - having regard to Rule 52 of its Rules of Procedure,
  - having regard to Rule 55 of its Rules of Procedure,
  - having regard to the opinion of the Committee on the Environment, Climate and Food Safety,
  - having regard to the report of the Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development (A10-0000/2025),
- A. whereas the common agricultural policy (CAP) is one of the EU’s most well-established policies and is of global strategic importance in the geopolitical context, as part of the EU’s defence and food sovereignty, playing a key role in the security of food supply and ensuring the stability of the agricultural and forestry sector and the resilience of food production in the EU;
  - B. whereas the CAP must be simplified and modernised to enable the EU’s agricultural and forestry sector to respond more efficiently to the needs of farmers and the expectations of society in terms of food safety and quality, climate change, rural development, public health and employment, reducing bureaucratic burdens and making it easier to adapt to new challenges;
  - C. whereas we must necessarily take note of the need to improve the CAP so that it responds more satisfactorily both to the needs of its main beneficiaries, namely farmers and livestock breeders, and to the needs of all European citizens;
  - D. whereas the CAP, the result of a European consensus, is now more valuable than ever, given the current challenges, and is of vital importance across Europe for approximately 9.1 million farms in the European Union, which represents a decrease of 37 % compared to the 14.4 million recorded in 2005;
  - E. whereas there is a need to maintain the two-pillar structure of the CAP, which ensures a balance between the market and production policy in Pillar I and the social and structural features of rural development in Pillar II; whereas the specific tools for Mediterranean sectors should be further integrated into Pillar I;
  - F. whereas direct payments provide the first substantial level of stability and a safety net for farmers’ incomes – especially for new and young farmers – as they represent a tangible part of annual farm incomes; whereas, in particular, direct investment aid should be targeted specifically at improving profitability, strengthening competitiveness and protecting the environment, while taking into account the specific needs of individual farms;

- G. whereas agricultural land accounts for 40 % of European territory, and the EU agri-food sector accounts for approximately 7 % of the EU's gross domestic product and employs 8.7 million people;
- H. whereas, according to the 2024 Eurobarometer on 'Europeans, Agriculture and the CAP', 92 % of European citizens surveyed say that agriculture and rural areas are important for our future; whereas 77% agree that the EU, through the CAP, is fulfilling its role in ensuring a stable supply of safe, healthy and sustainable high-quality food in the EU at all times;
- I. whereas the objectives of the CAP must continue to ensure security of food supply and food sovereignty, as well as the profitability and sustainability of the Union's agricultural systems and territories; whereas this applies especially in crisis and conflict scenarios where food production is a crucial line of defence;
- J. whereas the new challenges in terms of food security and food self-sufficiency that European agriculture must overcome within the EU's policy priorities require that the next multiannual financial framework (MFF) should increase the budget for the common agricultural policy in constant euro in order to meet both current and future challenges;
- K. whereas it is important to ensure that CAP aid payments are targeted at those directly involved in agricultural activity, promoting the optimisation of farms through efficient management, with the aim of ensuring the profitability and competitiveness of the sector;
- L. whereas agricultural income remains below the average for the rest of the economy in almost all Member States, standing at 47 % of average gross wages and salaries in the EU economy; whereas farms run by managers aged 40 and under have the lowest incomes on average within the EU;
- M. whereas unbalanced cross-compliance could impose disproportionate burdens on farmers, while absorbing resources from Pillar I, undermining its main function of supporting farm incomes and stability in the sector;
- N. whereas, through the CAP, European farmers have made huge efforts to integrate environmental objectives compatible with the requirements laid down in Union legislation, but a proper balance needs to be struck, through incentives enabling farmers to adopt sustainable farming practices, ensuring their competitiveness and profitability;
- O. whereas a competitive agriculture, food and forestry sector can continue to play a strong role in achieving objectives for security of food supply, public health and environmental protection consistent with the policies of the Union, with farmers being incentivised and remunerated for their contribution and assisted by a reduction in unnecessary regulatory and administrative burdens in the measures they undertake;
- P. whereas it is essential to strengthen the position of farmers in the food chain and to ensure fair competition in the single market through fair and transparent rules that respect the specific needs of the sector, promoting incentives that prevent risks and crises; whereas aspects outside the scope of the CAP affecting the competitiveness and a level playing field for farmers must also be properly considered and monitored;

- Q. whereas the price and limited availability of land, the generally low profitability of agricultural activity, the administrative requirements and the image of the agricultural sector were identified as the main barriers to becoming a farmer; whereas attention should be drawn to the fact that other factors, such as a lack of own capital, difficult access to credit, to technical services and to support measures, and the effects of climate change can also constitute important barriers to the involvement of young and new farmers in the agricultural sector;
- R. whereas young and new farmers are more likely to introduce innovative business ideas, apply new technologies and production methods and implement sustainable farming practices;
- S. whereas new rural value chains in the bioeconomy can offer good growth and job potential and new market niches for rural areas;
- T. whereas farmers face increasing price volatility due to fluctuations in global markets, macroeconomic uncertainty, external policies, health crises, surpluses in certain European sectors, climate change and increasingly frequent extreme weather events in the EU;
- U. whereas it is essential to provide flexible and responsive tools to help sensitive and strategic sectors cope with structural changes, such as the potential impacts of EU enlargement or the adoption of bilateral trade agreements;
- V. whereas, according to the European Environment Agency, drought has caused annual economic losses of up to EUR 9 billion in the EU;
- W. whereas the Joint Research Centre points to the Farm to Fork and Biodiversity 2030 strategies as the cause of a loss of agricultural production of up to 15 %;
- X. whereas sectoral strategies for fruits and vegetables, and wine and apiculture should remain compulsory for the producing countries, and the specificities of the related tools and rules should be retained;
- Y. whereas it is essential to ensure a level playing field, fair prices and a fair standard of living for all farmers across regions and all EU Member States, thereby ensuring affordable prices for consumers and that there is agricultural activity in all parts of the Union including in areas with natural constraints;
- Z. whereas the importing of agricultural products of lower quality than those produced in the EU is also an obstacle to the ability to obtain fair prices and profitability on the market, as well as being inconsistent with the Union's own objectives and a risk to public health;
- AA. whereas any changes to the current CAP and new legislation should be introduced in a way that ensures stability in the sector and legal certainty and security for farmers and forest owners, through measures that do not entail unnecessary administrative burdens and through transitional periods and adequate budgets;
- AB. whereas the World Health Organization recommends moderate consumption of meat and other animal products as part of a varied and balanced diet, as they are a valuable

source of high-biological-value protein and essential micronutrients such as iron and vitamin B12, in addition to the benefits of livestock farming, such as protecting biodiversity, preventing fires and providing nutrients for the soil and food security;

- AC. whereas approximately 70 % of the protein-rich feed needed in the Union is imported from third countries and whereas the European Parliament and the Member States are calling for an increase in the production of protein crops in the EU;
- AD. whereas agriculture and water are intrinsically linked and sustainable water management in the agricultural sector is vital to ensure sufficient and good quality food production;
- AE. whereas in 2020 the majority (57.6 %) of farm managers (of both sexes) were over 55 years of age and those under 35 years of age represent approximately 6 % of all farmers in the EU in 2021; whereas in many Member States, a very high proportion of farmers are aged 65 and over;
- AF. whereas the increase in world trade presents opportunities and challenges, which requires adaptation of international trade rules, in particular within the framework of the World Trade Organization (WTO), to ensure fair and sustainable conditions of competition, based on reciprocity and effective trade defence and control mechanisms, in line with social, economic and environmental standards;
- AG. whereas, while the focus on research for innovation in resource-saving processes and products is appreciated, progress needs to be made in developing the research capacity and infrastructure to apply these results in sustainable practices in the agricultural and forestry sectors, which requires independent, transparent and well-funded services in all Member States, as well as promoting knowledge sharing and capacity building;
- AH. whereas the European Union has developed a series of space programmes (EGNOS and Galileo) and earth observation programmes (Copernicus), whose potential for monitoring the implementation of the CAP and the transition of European agriculture towards precision farming and towards the dual environmental and economic performance of holdings should be exploited to its maximum;
- AI. whereas most bio-technology research is now located outside the European Union, where it typically focuses on agro-economic issues not relevant to the EU sector, resulting in potential losses in investment and focus;
- AJ. whereas, on the basis of current experience, innovation and the implementation of efficient processes and systems can improve the yields and resilience of the agricultural sector, while contributing to a reduction in production costs, ensuring the sustainability and competitiveness of farms;
- AK. whereas the impact and frequency of adverse climatic events across Europe, as a consequence of climate change, require risk prevention mechanisms and infrastructures;
- AL. whereas closed production circles – production, processing and packing being carried out in the same region – keep the added value in the region in question and thus secure more jobs in the local area, and therefore demonstrate the potential to revive rural areas;



- AM. whereas the long-term vision for rural areas in the EU states that many rural areas face challenges such as an ageing population and demographic decline, poor access to services and connectivity, chronic water scarcity and lack of opportunities; whereas this vision also highlights the importance of efforts to strengthen rural economies to make them more resilient and prosperous, to stimulate knowledge and innovation, to strengthen the governance of rural territories, and to simplify rural development policy and its implementation;
- AN. whereas the future and prosperity of rural areas are of paramount importance for Europe's food security, autonomy and resilience, as well as for a secure and sustainable energy supply which contributes to the EU's energy independence; whereas agri-food systems allowed continued access to safe and high-quality food during the recent crises;
- AO. whereas less-favoured areas such as mountainous, arid and outermost regions should continue to be compensated by the CAP for the extra costs associated with their specific constraints in order to maintain farming activity in such areas;
- AP. whereas the CAP must take into account regions where there is strong competition between urban development and agriculture when imposing additional restrictions on access to land, in order to maintain agriculture in these areas;
- AQ. whereas the CAP must give due recognition to the important environmental benefits provided by certain sectors, such as protein crops, beekeeping, Mediterranean forests and extensive livestock farming;
- AR. whereas farming is more than a job, it is a way of life rooted in nature, historical heritage and the rural community, and has a positive impact on society that is not yet fully recognised; whereas agriculture offers a wide range of opportunities for employment and business diversification in rural areas, for example through agri-tourism services, the bioeconomy industry, renewable energy production, school trips and direct sales;
- AS. whereas equality between women and men is a fundamental principle of the EU; whereas the role of women in rural areas is essential for the sustainability of farms and the development of rural communities; whereas curbing rural depopulation depends to a large extent on the opportunities available to women and young people;
- AT. whereas the use of innovative technologies such as precision farming, big data and artificial intelligence plays a key role in the progressive reduction and efficient use of plant protection products, which contributes to protecting biodiversity, including pollinating insects;
- AU. whereas the POSEI programme is the equivalent of Pillar I of the CAP in the outermost regions; whereas its implementation is important and has been a success, as demonstrated by the European Commission's implementation reports between 2006 and 2014 and between 2015 and 2019; whereas, however, POSEI budget allocations have not been revised since 2007, which has resulted in a cumulative depreciation of at least 36 % due to inflation;

AV. whereas agricultural cooperatives, created and managed by the farmers themselves, strengthen their position in the production chain by combining efforts, coordinating investments and mitigating the fragmentation of the sector;

### **The path to competitive and sustainable agriculture**

1. Welcomes the Commission's report entitled 'A Vision for Agriculture and Food' as a promising roadmap for the post-2027 CAP, with important contributions based on competitiveness, simplification and greater reciprocity, with the emphasis on innovation to achieve economic, social and environmental sustainability and on prioritising incentives over restrictions;
2. Calls for an increased budget for the CAP to ensure security of food supply; stresses that an adequately resourced CAP is a key driver for ensuring the sustainability of European agriculture economically, environmentally and socially, while guaranteeing a fair income for farmers and a fully functioning single market;
3. Stresses that food and agricultural production plays a strategic role in the new geopolitical context as an essential part of European security and sovereignty;
4. Points out that cooperation and dialogue in the agri-food value chain are key to improving the position of farmers, promoting a more equitable distribution of margins and increasing the efficiency of all actors; notes, in this respect, that the reform of the CMO and the Unfair Commercial Practices Directive will be key to strengthening the position of farmers in the agri-food supply chain, reinforcing crisis management mechanisms and improving cross-border enforcement against unfair commercial practices;
5. Stresses the importance of safeguarding direct aid for all professional farmers under the CAP, regardless of their size and type of production – including multi-activity farmers and livestock breeders, who also contribute significantly to the social and economic fabric of rural areas; points to an area-based model, to give stability to farmers' incomes and to maintain economic viability and competitiveness in food production in all regions of the EU;
6. Calls for a CAP – especially Pillar II – separate from but closely coordinated with cohesion policies, to ensure that rural development policies and investments are neither affected nor sidelined, thus ensuring effective support for the agricultural sector without compromising other key objectives for rural regions;
7. Recognises that voluntary agri-environmental and climate measures under Pillar II, using an incentive-based and simplified approach, are a key instrument for safeguarding the environment and the promotion of sustainable practices;
8. Calls on the Commission to carry out a systematic impact assessment of the agricultural sector provisions in each of its trade agreements and to provide specific strategies to ensure reciprocity, maintaining consistency between its trade and sustainability policies, as well as a reinforcement of controls at origin and border, through a European control agency;

9. Calls on the Commission to improve synergies and coordination among EU funding instruments, such as the Cohesion Fund, the NextGenerationEU recovery instrument and the Just Transition Fund, and with national instruments;
10. Notes that Member States face increasing and diverse risks; stresses, in this regard, that an appropriate increase in the agricultural reserve is necessary to cope with unpredictable market and climate change distortions such as drought and floods;
11. Calls for better coordination between the Solidarity Fund and the CAP so that farmers affected by natural disasters can access faster and more targeted aid; calls for the creation of an automatic trigger mechanism to speed up the arrival of funds in the event of climatic disasters and the reduction of bureaucracy for easier access to exceptional aid from the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD);
12. Stresses that, while agriculture contributes through the CAP to other policies and strategies, such as environment, energy, climate, biodiversity and regional development, it is relevant that other policies also contribute to agriculture, especially in terms of instruments to support the green transition;
13. Reaffirms that the EU has the highest standards in the world for food safety, animal welfare and environmental and social protection, but that any proposed legislation should be science-based and should pursue the economic competitiveness of farms;
14. Also calls on the Commission to ensure that its legislative proposals for the next CAP include appropriate measures and instruments to integrate protein-crop production and promote the competitiveness of livestock farming, given the protein-crop deficit and the progressive loss of livestock in the EU, and the consequent threats to biodiversity, fire risk, soil fertility and rural economies, as well as increased dependence on imports from third countries; on this point, looks forward to the recommendations of the working group on livestock announced by the European Commission;
15. Calls on the Member States to promote and improve systems for the replacement of farmers or any agricultural employee in the event of illness, rest or accident, or in order to ensure a better work-life balance for farmers;
16. Calls on the Commission to update the financial allocations for POSEI to reflect cumulative inflation in the next MFF and regrets that the 2 % deflator applied to direct payments has not also been considered for POSEI in the current MFF;
17. Points out that Pillar II financing for beekeeping should be better targeted and made more effective and that the new legislative framework should provide for a new Pillar I support scheme for beekeepers;
18. Highlights the importance of reliable internet access for farmers' quality of life in rural areas, in particular to overcome social isolation and access education and training opportunities, as well as for service provision, with the objective of tying populations to their areas;
19. Calls for greater awareness of the importance of farmers' mental health and the high risk of suicide among this demographic, which is an alarming phenomenon caused by high levels of stress, uncertainty and isolation; calls, therefore, for the development of

psychological support programmes that promote administrative simplification and work-life balance in order to improve the quality of life of professionals in the field;

20. Calls for the consolidation of harmonised European labelling to ensure a fair and equitable system, strengthening transparency about the origin and quality assurance of EU agri-food products, ensuring their competitiveness in the single market and globally, with clear rules to avoid distortions, enhance their promotion and reinforce consumer confidence;
21. Calls for the promotion of nutrition education in schools and school canteens, with the aim of helping children understand the importance of a complete and balanced diet from an early age, developing eating habits and school menus that include a variety of healthy and nutrient-rich foods to contribute to strengthening the physical and mental well-being of students, respecting and promoting regional gastronomy as a cultural heritage;
22. Calls for widespread recognition of the essential work performed by farmers on food safety and health and their commitment to sustainable practices, through campaigns that strengthen the relationship of consumers with European farmers and agri-food products, as it is essential to counteract erroneous and unjustified messages, while improving the vilified and prejudiced image that part of society has of farmers;

#### Simplification of the post-2027 CAP: **Strategies for more efficient management**

23. Supports, with a view to the future, the Commission's objective for the 2024-2029 period to focus on reducing administrative burdens and simplifying legislation; stresses that this must be the driving force behind all actions;
24. Calls for incentives rather than obligations for farmers to implement environmental and social activities in the course of their work, going beyond the costs incurred or profits foregone;
25. Stresses the need to reassess the cross-compliance requirements of the CAP in order to ease the administrative burden, reduce costs and avoid excessive implementation requirements, while respecting farmers' need for flexibility in their implementation;
26. Believes that the CMO Regulation should incorporate the simplification and acceleration of procedures for granting exceptional aid to farmers, including the key role of producer organisations (POs) and fruit and vegetable producer organisations (FVPOs) in stabilising the market, and that crisis management mechanisms need to be updated and strengthened;
27. Calls for a guarantee that any legislative proposal affecting agriculture will be accompanied by a detailed economic, scientific, social and legal cumulative impact report, with updates published following any changes in the decision-making process;
28. Points out that the collection of information should be based in particular on satellite imagery and integrated management and control system databases in order to reduce face-to-face inspections;

## Water and the circular economy as a foundation for the post-2027 CAP

29. Urges the Commission to incorporate a water perspective into the post-2027 CAP in order to allocate more investment to boosting infrastructure so as to make agriculture more efficient and resilient, including water as an essential element in the protection of food sovereignty; points out the need to provide regulating reservoirs, water storage systems, interconnections and transfers and to promote greater use of reclaimed and desalinated water in order to provide water security and balance; on this point, looks forward to the presentation of the water resilience strategy in 2025;
30. Calls on the Commission to include among its priorities the modernisation and digitalisation of sustainable irrigation, as well as the use of artificial intelligence and new water technologies to reduce the water footprint;
31. Calls for strong support for EU farmers and foresters to boost the circular economy, prioritising an efficient use of all resources, rather than focusing exclusively on reducing carbon emissions; stresses the importance of better integrating the circular economy into the emerging bioeconomy, optimising the use of raw materials and secondary products to generate by-products and new energy sources such as biogas and strengthening the EU's energy autonomy; on this point, looks forward to the presentation of the bioeconomy strategy in 2025;
32. Calls on the Commission to strengthen risk management instruments in the post-2027 CAP by increasing support for agricultural insurance to cope with extreme weather events;
33. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to promote a model based on the bioeconomy as a virtuous system that can boost farmers' incomes and provide new jobs; calls also for encouraging the eco-system services role of livestock farming, which can contribute to a virtuous carbon cycle;
34. Emphasises that Mediterranean EU regions are more vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, such as drought, fires and desertification, and that farmers therefore need to make greater efforts in these areas to adapt their activities to the changed environment;
35. Encourages the minimising of food waste in the agri-food chain – including in agriculture – by ensuring efficient and sustainable use of resources and materials and by reinforcing animal and plant health measures to avoid food loss in the field due to diseases or pests, or by transforming them into by-products that boost the circular economy;

### **An attractive sector for new generations**

36. Recalls that ensuring generational renewal is a challenge for agriculture in the Member States and will involve mobilising all the financial resources of the CAP, including the additional payment for young professional farmers under Pillar I and measures to help young farmers to establish themselves under Pillar II, all of which are compulsory for Member States, as well as support from new financial instruments outside the CAP;

37. Calls on Member States to develop coherent and long-term strategies to promote generational renewal and increase the attractiveness of working in agriculture, combining different measures in a complementary way, such as financial support, including installation aid, increased tax exemptions and incentives, in particular for the transfer of land; calls, furthermore, for the Member States to improve links between EU policies and national and regional policies and strategies, including their national strategic plans;
38. Calls on the Commission and Member States to address the problem of agricultural land loss adequately; stresses that land leasing is a viable short-term alternative for accessing land, as it requires fewer resources to set up and encourages generational renewal; calls on Member States to adopt policies to promote land leasing, such as tax exemptions, thus providing security of tenure and time to invest, especially for young and new farmers, which could also improve soil health;
39. Welcomes the cooperation agreement with the EIB Group as a promising model that can foster the creation of financial instruments for young farmers and water policies in all Member States;
40. Recognises the efforts of CAP measures to bring young people into farming, particularly those in more peripheral rural areas; points out, however, that the administrative burden is excessive and that the current CAP model can be improved to speed up access for young and new farmers, stressing that the CAP cannot be the only tool to encourage generational renewal, but must be backed up by national strategies;
41. Calls on Member States to make business start-up and investment support available to young farmers throughout the CAP budget period and to make full use of all available options to support them; Stresses the need to provide access to training opportunities, particularly in soft skills, digital skills, business diversification, management and sustainable farming methods, including skills in communication, leadership, mental health and well-being;
42. Calls on the Commission to promote the exchange of best practices and innovative ideas between Member States in collaboration with universities, research centres and farms, focusing on increasing efficiency, simplification and accessibility, and reducing bureaucracy; calls on Member States to set up a one-stop shop system to facilitate administrative procedures in the most appropriate territorial area;
43. Encourages Member States to design mechanisms to facilitate the transition to a dignified retirement, in particular early retirement schemes for farmers, financed by Pillar II, and to support the mutually beneficial transfer of farms to young and new farmers;
44. Encourages the promotion of support and visibility programmes that reflect the enriching and fulfilling lifestyle that the agricultural sector can offer, highlighting the value and commitment of farmers to nature, food security and the specific qualities and values inherent in the work of farm professionals;

### **Innovation to continue moving agriculture forward**

45. Highlights the important need for the CAP, Horizon Europe and other supportive funding schemes to encourage farmers to invest in new technologies adapted to their farm size, such as precision and digital farming tools which improve the resilience and environmental impact of agriculture;
46. Calls for a large investment package for research and innovation, which will be the only pathway towards a more sustainable and adapted agricultural sector, for example by developing the enormous potential of using new genomic techniques (NGTs) to develop more resilient crops that require fewer plant protection products, less fertiliser and less water; calls for a new legislative framework to ensure that this innovative technology can be used in the EU and to stimulate research, investment and employment;
47. Stresses, in this regard, the need to support farmers in adapting to digital technologies and developing digital skills, which can help them to better implement their installation projects, support sustainable agriculture, reduce the administrative workload for both farmers and administrations, and anticipate future production conditions and expectations of consumers and society;
48. Points to the need to design a specific measure within the rural development framework – based on the principles of integrated sustainable agriculture – to promote the combination of pest control practices and technologies, including monitoring, biocontrol and the optimised use of plant protection products where necessary, always respecting the established legal and safety limits;
49. Recognises that the voluntary EU-wide framework for the certification of carbon removals can provide a positive incentive to ensure better remuneration for farmers, in particular younger farmers, through measures to capture and reduce emissions on farms;
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  -
50. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council and the Commission.

## EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

### **The future of agriculture and the post-2027 common agricultural policy**

The rapporteur believes that the common agricultural policy (CAP) is one of the defining policies of the European Union and plays a strategic role in food security, the competitiveness of the agricultural sector and rural development. However, the uncertain geopolitical context and emerging challenges call for a revision of its objectives to bring its focus back once more to our farmers.

The rapporteur points out that the post-2027 CAP should be geared towards a more competitive and resilient model, and should have a clear water perspective, to ensure the economic, social and environmental sustainability of the agricultural sector, as an essential part of the EU's broader defence strategy. The rapporteur believes in a contemporary CAP that is open to innovation, research and generational renewal, which recognises the agricultural diversity that exists in the EU, without leaving any farmer behind. The rapporteur stresses that to achieve this, it is essential for the post-2027 CAP to have a larger budget to protect farmers from rising production costs, risks associated with extreme weather events and market volatilities, while meeting the demands of consumers. The rapporteur also believes it essential that Pillar II of the CAP remain independent in its objectives and functioning, but closely coordinated with other EU policies and funds, especially cohesion policies, in order to optimise resources and maximise its impact on rural development.

The security of food supply and the stability of the agricultural market are essential for the European Union and an appropriate financial framework should be ensured to maintain its efficiency and global competitiveness. The rapporteur expresses a clear commitment to the agri-food sector, which has demonstrated its professionalism, resilience and competitiveness despite the relentless crises and increasing bureaucratic burdens it has faced. The rapporteur recognises in particular the role of our agriculture professionals in ensuring food security and preventing climate change, as well as the contributions that multi-activity farmers, SMEs and cooperatives make to the rural world.

The rapporteur points out that it is necessary to consolidate a model based on incentives rather than obligations, promoting the adoption of sustainable practices without affecting farmers' profitability. Existing regulations need to be reviewed so that they do not impose disproportionate burdens, and administrative simplification needs to be encouraged, reducing bureaucracy and ensuring that support reaches those who need it in a timely manner. To this end, the following should be noted:

- Direct payments under Pillar I of the CAP should be made available to all professional farmers, irrespective of their size and type of production;
- The possibility of supporting sectors in difficulty or subject to specific constraints, such as arid, mountainous or outermost areas and sectors such as fruit and vegetables, wine, beekeeping, Mediterranean forests and livestock, should be maintained;
- CAP cross-compliance requirements should be reassessed to reduce excessive implementation requirements, administrative burdens and unnecessary costs;



- The focus should be placed on voluntary actions and real incentives, rather than simply providing compensation for additional costs and revenue losses;
- Member States should strengthen their commitment to the agricultural sector, ensuring competitiveness through policies that encourage investment, appropriate taxation and resilience to current challenges.

The rapporteur believes that generational renewal is another of the great challenges facing the sector. The lack of young farmers jeopardises the future of farming and food security in Europe, and the post-2027 CAP should therefore ensure fairer access to land and finance by promoting tax incentives and farm transfer mechanisms. In addition, it is essential to extend start-up aid to new farmers and facilitate their access to training and innovative technologies to make the sector more attractive. It is also necessary to promote mechanisms that allow older farmers to retire with dignity, facilitating the transfer of farms using a structured process and with guarantees of viability for the new managers.

The rapporteur believes that climate change has accentuated the need for effective risk prevention and management tools. The CAP must strengthen agricultural insurance and establish rapid compensation programmes to address natural disasters or persistent phenomena such as drought. In this sense, efficient water management is a key factor for the resilience of the sector, which is why storage, interconnection and reuse infrastructures should be promoted, ensuring a secure and balanced supply. Investment in technologies for optimising water use, such as sustainable irrigation systems, digitalisation and the use of reclaimed water, should be a priority in the next CAP.

The rapporteur stresses the need to reduce Europe's dependence on imports from third countries, especially of vegetable proteins. The EU currently imports approximately 70 % of the protein-rich feedingstuffs it consumes, which represents a strategic risk. To reverse this situation, protein-crop production in Europe should be encouraged by supporting seed innovation and the use of new technologies. In parallel, the CAP should consolidate the bioeconomy, promoting circularity in agricultural production and the recovery of agri-food waste. The bioeconomy can be a key source of growth for rural areas, generating employment and new market niches and boosting the sustainability of the sector. The rapporteur points out that strengthening the position of farmers in the agri-food chain is a key issue for the competitiveness of the sector and generational renewal. The post-2027 CAP should ensure that producers receive a fair price for their products by strengthening regulation against unfair trade practices and promoting clear labelling that favours transparency and traceability of European products. In this sense, the rapporteur trusts in the reforms of the CMO and the Unfair Commercial Practices Directive announced by the European Commission, which should also strengthen crisis management mechanisms and the role of producer organisations and fruit and vegetable producer organisations, as generators of employment and entrepreneurship in the rural world.

The rapporteur believes that the relationship between farmers and consumers should be based on trust and recognition of the value of agricultural work and its associated risks. Reciprocity in trade agreements should therefore be strengthened to ensure fair competition between European products and those imported from third countries. It is also crucial to strengthen the agricultural reserve in order to respond more quickly and flexibly to crisis situations, preventing critical events, such as prolonged droughts or trade conflicts, from jeopardising food production in Europe. The rapporteur points to the need to speed up the authorisation of

effective tools and active substances for the protection of plant health, while ensuring the least impact on the environment. The rapporteur also considers it essential that plant protection substances should not be banned without viable alternatives, thereby ensuring that agricultural production can be maintained in a safe, sustainable manner. The limited capacity of farmers to cope with the increasing and more persistent plant pests in the EU could seriously affect the European food supply, while reducing the competitiveness of our agricultural sector. The rapporteur stresses the importance of animal health in ensuring food safety and animal welfare in the EU, and considers it essential to strengthen research in this area in order to prevent the loss of livestock due to animal health outbreaks. Investment in new vaccines, treatments and early detection, along with the responsible use of antibiotics and traceability in production, strengthens the competitiveness of the sector and guarantees safe and high-quality products, which reinforce our food sovereignty. The rapporteur believes that innovation and digitalisation will be decisive factors for the agriculture of the future. New technologies, such as artificial intelligence and integrated farming, can improve the efficiency and sustainability of the sector, optimising the use of resources and reducing the administrative burden. The CAP should incentivise the adoption of these tools by facilitating access to them for farmers through training programmes and targeted funding. The development of new genomic techniques will also contribute to more resilient and competitive production, while ensuring food security.

The rapporteur also supports the promotion of the potential of innovation and the circular economy to provide opportunities for farmers to diversify their income, for example through the market for carbon removal in agricultural soils or biogas. The rapporteur highlights the role of agri-food cooperatives as an important instrument for strengthening the role of producers in the food chain, increasing the added value of their products, reducing their production costs, making joint investments and facilitating access to digitalisation and innovation, facilitating the incorporation of young people into the agricultural sector to develop a more sustainable and competitive agriculture.

The rapporteur stresses that less-favoured areas, such as mountainous, arid and outermost regions, should continue to be compensated by the CAP for the extra costs associated with their specific constraints in order to maintain farming activity and territorial cohesion in such areas. Furthermore, with regard to gender equality, the rapporteur recognises the innovative contribution of women in rural areas as an essential part of the sustainability of farms and the development of rural communities, but points out the need to provide more opportunities for women and young people in order to curb rural abandonment. The rapporteur believes it essential to strengthen mental health and ensure access to psychological support and welfare policies geared towards farmers and rural communities, who are particularly vulnerable due to a range of factors including the uncertainty and legislative pressure they have faced in recent years.

The rapporteur believes that with a solid budget, simplified regulation and a strong commitment to innovation, Europe will be able to ensure a more resilient and prosperous agri-food system that will attract new generations to a profession that is closely tied to European culture. It is essential to reaffirm Europe's commitment to its farmers, ensuring a policy framework that allows them to develop, prosper, innovate and guarantee the EU's present and future food security and sovereignty.