The Farmland Bird Index (FBI) summarises population trends of common and widespread birds of farmland and extensive scientific literature suggests it is a very good proxy of the “health” of farmland across the EU\(^1\).

1. Just over 40% of the current species included in the FBI are strongly migratory, mostly wintering in Africa. The trends of migratory and non-migratory species are very similar\(^2\). There is extensive scientific evidence\(^3\) suggesting that the influence of farming and land management is one of the main drivers of the status of farmland bird populations and population/density declines.

2. Bird counts in each country that contribute to the FBI are carried out by highly skilled and well-trained volunteers submitting their observations and data to centralised data centres who carry out extensive data checking and quality control. Birds are counted in the breeding season using well-established, standardised transects or by mapping bird territories with multiple counts each year within a formal structured programme and a sampling design. At EU level, national bird count data are further subject to extensive automated data checking and quality control before the computation of national species indices and the development of composite multinational FBIs using specially designed statistical methods\(^4\).

3. The Commission is not currently planning to develop its own indices. It will continue supporting Non-Governmental Organisations/Universities/research institutions/other stakeholders, through various financial instruments, such as Horizon Europe\(^5\), the EU programme for the environment and climate action\(^6\) and the Common Agricultural Policy\(^7\), to develop common bird indices in close cooperation with Member States.

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\(^1\) List of scientific papers which have widely used the results of the indicator [https://pecbms.info/use-of-the-results/publications/](https://pecbms.info/use-of-the-results/publications/)

\(^2\) Gregory et al., 2019.


\(^4\) Gregory et al. 2005, 2019 [https://pecbms.info/](https://pecbms.info/)


\(^6\) [https://cinea.ec.europa.eu/life_en](https://cinea.ec.europa.eu/life_en)

\(^7\) [https://ec.europa.eu/info/food-farming-fisheries/key-policies/common-agricultural-policy_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/food-farming-fisheries/key-policies/common-agricultural-policy_en)