Transition to a new EU farm policy: food security and protecting farmers’ income

Delays in negotiating EU farm policy reforms will not affect farmers’ incomes. Parliament approved a proposal during the December plenary to ensure a smooth transition.

On 30 June 2020, the European Parliament, the European Commission and the Council agreed on a proposal that ensures key provisions for farmers are maintained until 2022.

Existing Common Agriculture Policy (CAP) legislation will be replaced with a new framework but delays in the new CAP negotiations mean a transitional period is needed to ensure farmers do not lose their income and that agricultural production in the EU is secured.
Common Agricultural Policy

Launched in 1962, EU farm policy aims to improve agricultural productivity, promote rural development and address environmental and climate challenges, as well as ensuring that farmers have a fair income.

These goals are achieved through:

- Income support through direct payments to ensure income stability for farmers
- Rewards for environmentally friendly farming and taking care of the countryside
- Market measures to help deal with market crises and boost supply
- Rural development measures to address specific challenges in rural areas

These regularly updated provisions need funding from the EU’s long-term budget. CAP spending accounts for around 34.5% of the EU’s 2020 budget.

Parliament’s position

Parliament wants this legislation to give farmers predictability, stability and financial continuity, especially in light of the Covid-19 pandemic, which significantly affected the agricultural sector. MEPs recently agreed on their negotiating position for the CAP reform negotiations for 2023-2027, which includes supporting small scale and young farmers, supporting farmers in crises and promoting climate-friendly practices. Parliament wants to distribute the €8 billion in EU recovery aid for farmers, food producers and rural areas to finance their resilient, sustainable and digital recovery in the next two years.

Find out more

- Briefing: transitional provisions for the CAP post-2020 period
- European Commission: the Common Agricultural Policy
- European Commission: Common Agricultural Policy Post-2020
- Creating a sustainable food system: the EU’s strategy
- Press release: agriculture MEPs back deal on key 2021-2022 provisions (1 December 2020)
- Briefing: coronavirus crisis support for EU farmers