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DRAFT REPORT

on strengthening competitiveness, resilience and fairness in EU agriculture
(2026/2011(INI))

Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development

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MOTION FOR A EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT RESOLUTION

on strengthening competitiveness, resilience and fairness in EU agriculture

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The European Parliament,

- having regard to Articles 13, 38, 39, 40, 42 and 349 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union,
- having regard to the Commission communication of 19 February 2025 entitled ‘A Vision for Agriculture and Food – Shaping together an attractive farming and agri-food sector for future generations’ ([COM\(2025\)0075](#)),
- having regard to the Commission proposal of 16 July 2025 for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the European Fund for economic, social and territorial cohesion, agriculture and rural, fisheries and maritime, prosperity and security for the period 2028-2034 and amending Regulation (EU) 2023/955 and Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509 ([COM\(2025\)0565](#)),
- having regard to the Commission proposal of 16 July 2025 for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on establishing the European Competitiveness Fund (‘ECF’), including the specific programme for defence research and innovation activities, repealing Regulations (EU) 2021/522, (EU) 2021/694, (EU) 2021/697, (EU) 2021/783, repealing provisions of Regulations (EU) 2021/696, (EU) 2023/588, and amending Regulation (EU) [EDIP] ([COM\(2025\)0555](#)),
- having regard to the Commission proposal of 16 July 2025 for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the conditions for the implementation of the Union support to the Common Agriculture Policy for the period from 2028 to 2034 ([COM\(2025\)0560](#)),
- having regard to the Commission proposal of 16 July 2025 for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Regulation (EU) No 1308/2013 as regards the school fruit, vegetables and milk scheme (‘EU school scheme’), sectoral interventions, the creation of a protein sector, requirements for hemp, the possibility for marketing standards for cheese, protein crops and meat, application of additional import duties, rules on the availability of supplies in time of emergencies and severe crisis and securities ([COM\(2025\)0553](#)),
- 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 1151/2012¹,

¹ OJ L, 2024/1143, 23.4.2024, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/1143/oj>.

- having regard to its resolution of 19 October 2023 on generational renewal in the EU farms of the future²,
- having regard to its resolution of 17 June 2025 on strengthening rural areas in the EU through cohesion policy³,
- 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 2040⁴,
- having regard to its resolution of 30 April 2026 on women's entrepreneurship in rural and island areas and outermost regions (2024/2124(INI)),
- having regard to its resolution of 14 June 2023 on ensuring food security and long-term resilience of the EU agriculture⁵,
- having regard to its resolution of 10 September 2025 on the future of agriculture and the post-2027 common agricultural policy⁶,
- having regard to the Commission communication of 29 January 2025 entitled 'A Competitiveness Compass for the EU' ([COM\(2025\)0030](#)),
- having regard to the Commission communication of 21 October 2025 entitled 'Strategy for generational renewal in agriculture' ([COM\(2025\)0872](#)),
- having regard to the Commission communication of 19 May 2026 entitled 'Fertiliser Action Plan: Partnership for ensuring the availability, affordability and strategic autonomy in home-grown EU fertilisers' ([COM\(2026\)0310](#)),
- having regard to the Commission communication of 23 March 2022 entitled 'Safeguarding food security and reinforcing the resilience of food systems' ([COM\(2022\)0133](#)),
- having regard to the Commission final report of 2025 entitled 'Study on working conditions of farm employees in the EU agricultural sector',
- having regard to the report by Mario Draghi of 9 September 2024 entitled '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 the report by Enrico Letta of April 2024 entitled 'Much more than a market – Speed, Security, Solidarity',
- having regard to the Commission report of 1 December 2025 entitled 'Evaluation of the

² OJ C, C/2024/2658, 29.4.2024, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/C/2024/2658/oj>.

³ OJ C, C/2025/6257, 19.12.2025, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/C/2025/6257/oj>.

⁴ OJ C 177, 17.5.2023, p. 35.

⁵ OJ C, C/2024/483, 23.1.2024, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/C/2024/483/oj>.

⁶ OJ C, C/2026/1476, 9.4.2026, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/C/2026/1476/oj>.

Unfair Trading Practices Directive’ ([COM\(2025\)0728](#)),

- having regard to the Food and Agriculture Organization report of 2021 entitled ‘Evaluation of FAO’s contributions to Sustainable Development Goal 2 – Support to fair and informed commodity markets and international trade in agriculture’,
 - having regard to the report of 4 September 2024 of the Strategic Dialogue on the Future of EU Agriculture entitled ‘A shared prospect for farming and food in Europe’,
 - having regard to the Declaration of the Rural Pact Coordination Group of 12 December 2024 on the future of rural areas and rural development policy in the European Union,
 - having regard to Rule 55 of its Rules of Procedure,
 - having regard to the letter from the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs,
 - having regard to the report of the Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development (A10-0000/2026),
- A. whereas agriculture remains essential for the EU’s economy, rural development and territorial cohesion, and for its strategic autonomy;
- B. whereas the common agricultural policy (CAP) is a partnership between agriculture and society, and is instrumental for the EU’s food security and economic and social development, as well as for the sustainable management of natural resources;
- C. whereas ensuring competitiveness, alongside sustainability and resilience, in agriculture is a priority for the EU;
- D. whereas farmers are faced with a multitude of challenges, including uncertainties arising from volatile global markets and the cumulative impact of trade agreements;
- E. whereas some of the main issues that EU farmers are confronted with result from the complex guidance on implementing agricultural policies, which places a disproportionate burden on small and medium-sized farms;
- F. whereas EU and national support measures do not always adequately reflect the needs of farmers, real production costs, inflation, labour intensity, exposure to risk or the added value generated by different farming systems;
- G. whereas slow, irregular or unpredictable payments can create acute cash-flow problems for farms, with farmers’ unmet demands for financing from banks reaching EUR 62 billion in 2022;
- H. whereas in the last quarter of 2025, fertiliser costs for farmers in the EU remained significantly higher, at 62 % above their 2020 levels;
- I. whereas inadequate processing, storage and logistics infrastructure prevents many farmers from retaining added value, reaching markets efficiently and shortening supply chains;
- J. whereas the long-term resilience of EU agricultural producers is key for safeguarding

EU food production;

- K. whereas access to land remains a barrier to attracting new entrants into farming due to high land prices, limited land availability, competition from non-agricultural buyers, ownership fragmentation, unresolved ownership issues, inheritance-related obstacles and unreliable records;
- L. whereas insufficient investment in rural infrastructure, including transport, digital access, education and healthcare, limits opportunities for young people, undermines quality of life and weakens the effective exercise of the ‘Right to Stay’ in rural areas;
- M. whereas agriculture is increasingly exposed to climate-related risks and natural disasters, which between 1980 and 2022 caused cumulative economic losses in the EU estimated at EUR 650 billion;
- N. whereas water scarcity and insufficient irrigation capacity threaten the long-term viability of agricultural production;
- O. whereas agriculture depends on healthy soils, functioning ecosystems, biodiversity, pollinators and the sustainable use of natural resources;
- P. whereas fairness in EU agriculture means equitably redistributing income support, curbing supply chain power imbalances, and securing the rights and safety of agricultural workers;
- Q. whereas the position of small farmers is especially vulnerable due to structural imbalances that leave them dependent on a limited number of buyers and undermine their bargaining power within the food supply chain;
- R. whereas producer organisations and associations of producer organisations are key to reducing transaction costs for farmers and are a valuable resource for collaboration;
- S. whereas labour challenges, characterised by lower incomes, high occupational safety and health risks and precarious employment conditions, persist in agriculture;
- T. whereas informal online and physical sales channels, fraudulent practices, counterfeit products and misleading labelling compromises the integrity and fairness of the EU’s food supply chain;
- U. whereas in 2020, the average age of farmers in the EU was 57, with only 12 % under the age of 40, and of this younger group only 2.5 % were women⁷;

Securing strategic autonomy, fair competition and long-term viability

- 1. Stresses that the future of EU agriculture depends on the EU’s ability to simultaneously pursue competitiveness, sustainability, resilience and fairness;

⁷ European Commission, ‘Generational renewal in agriculture’, European Commission website, https://agriculture.ec.europa.eu/overview-vision-agriculture-food/generational-renewal_en.

2. Regrets both the proposed CAP budget reduction within the 2028-2034 MFF and the single fund approach;
3. Underlines that a competitive agricultural sector must enable farmers to earn a fair and stable income;
4. Underlines that farm viability is the foundation of resilience and calls for CAP support to better reflect inflationary pressures and sectoral specificities;
5. Calls for measures to address rising production costs, including short-term financial support and long-term strategies to enhance domestic production capacity;
6. Calls on the Commission to ensure that its trade policy delivers a truly level playing field for EU farmers by fully aligning all trade agreements with the EU's sanitary and phytosanitary, social and environmental and animal welfare standards, thereby preventing unfair competition;
7. Urges the Commission to strengthen the EU's food security and sovereignty and strategic autonomy, including through sector-specific support, a European preference and reduced dependency on external suppliers for key raw materials such as fertilisers;

Overcoming structural barriers, sustaining rural communities and enhancing sustainability

8. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to address barriers to land access and use, including high land prices, land fragmentation and succession challenges;
9. Emphasises that modernisation and digitalisation in agricultural production must be adequately financed and remain inclusive, and calls for strengthened advisory services, training and knowledge-sharing systems;
10. Calls for stronger investment in local and regional processing and storage capacity and infrastructure;
11. Calls for increased support for rural areas and LEADER, stronger involvement of local and regional authorities and the application of 'rural proofing';
12. Stresses the importance of strengthening crisis management instruments, including a reinforced crisis reserve and expanded risk management tools;
13. Calls for investments in irrigation, water storage, improved water efficiency, and climate adaptation measures;
14. Stresses that environmental sustainability and biodiversity are preconditions for resilience and calls for increased support for incentives for sustainable and agroecological practices;

Improving the position of farmers and farm workers and driving generational renewal

15. Calls on the Commission to strengthen the position of farmers in food supply chains;

16. Calls for strengthened market monitoring, improved traceability in sensitive sectors and enhanced transparency in price formation, while avoiding disproportionate burdens on smaller producers;
17. Calls for stronger support for producer organisations, cooperatives and other forms of collective action;
18. Emphasises the importance of fair and inclusive agricultural transition, including decent working conditions, strengthened social conditionality, fair wages, labour rights and access to social protection and farm relief services;
19. Stresses that CAP support must prioritise small and medium-sized farms, young and new farmers and those in rural areas;
20. Urges the Commission to mainstream generational renewal and gender equality across agricultural policies;

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21. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council and the Commission.

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

European agriculture is facing an unprecedented convergence of pressures, highlighted by the disappearance of approximately 5.6 million farms between 2005 and 2023 and climate-driven economic losses estimated at EUR 650 billion between 1980 and 2022. To reverse these trends and safeguard the Union's food security, economic stability, territorial cohesion, and strategic autonomy in an increasingly volatile global context, a series of comprehensive interventions are necessary. Central to this strategy is a robust and fair Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). A strengthened, self-standing, inflation-indexed CAP budget within the next Multiannual Financial Framework is critical to reverse current declines. To ensure fairness and restore public trust, the distribution of funds must prioritise support towards small, and medium-sized farmers. Furthermore, the rapporteur emphasises enhanced transparency regarding final beneficiaries, interoperability between national systems, and reinforced roles for anti-fraud bodies are key steps to eliminate the misallocation of agricultural funds. This policy shift must be accompanied by administrative simplification, utilising user-friendly digital systems and the "once-only" data submission principle, while ensuring that social conditionality is strictly enforced to protect agricultural workers' rights. To counter severe income volatility, declining profit margins, and high dependency on a limited number of processors, retailers and intermediaries, the structural rebalancing of the food supply chain is paramount to restore long-term competitiveness. The core path forward is to reinforce producer organisations and cooperatives, directly boosting farmers' collective bargaining power and lowering transaction costs. Stricter legal enforcement against unfair trading practices, increased market transparency, and enforceable measures to ban below-cost selling and misleading packaging labelling are necessary. On the global stage, the rapporteur advocates for balanced trade relations in which the EU prioritises a strong and long-term sustainable domestic agricultural production and the reinforcement of effective safeguard mechanisms within all trade agreements. This includes pushing for the enforcement of reciprocity mechanisms such as "mirror clauses" to ensure imports meet equivalent EU environmental, animal welfare, phytosanitary, and labour standards, thereby eliminating asymmetrical competition, while prohibiting the export to third countries of hazardous pesticides banned in the EU. To lower the barriers for an ageing sector, targeted solutions must bridge the agricultural financing gap by creating dedicated financial instruments tailored to young farmers, women entrepreneurs, and smallholders, aiming to significantly lower loan rejection rates and improve access to land. To reduce the sector's vulnerability to external price shocks, it is necessary to decrease dependencies on inputs such as energy and fertilisers. Furthermore, bolstering productivity requires major investments in research, innovation, and digitalisation. Technologies like precision farming and climate-smart agriculture must be made accessible to all holdings via funding from the European Competitiveness Fund, which will provide the necessary resources for capacity building, targeted advisory services, lifelong training, and workforce upskilling. Finally, a comprehensive framework must build resilience against climate-driven risks and water scarcity through substantial, targeted investments in modern irrigation, storage, and resource-efficiency technologies. Crucially, the transition to sustainable agricultural systems must be economically viable and socially fair, whereby producers are actively supported. To this end, the implementation of incentives, risk-sharing mechanisms, and recognition for the public goods and environmental stewardship that farmers provide are key. By addressing these structural weaknesses and inefficiencies, tightening governance, and ensuring a fair internal market, the rapporteur stresses that Union can secure a resilient agricultural sector capable of safeguarding its strategic autonomy.

ANNEX: DECLARATION OF INPUT

Pursuant to Article 8 of Annex I to the Rules of Procedure, the rapporteur declares that he included in his report input on matters pertaining to the subject of the file that he received, in the preparation of the draft report, from the following interest representatives falling within the scope of the Interinstitutional Agreement on a mandatory transparency register¹, or from the following representatives of public authorities of third countries, including their diplomatic missions and embassies:

1. Interest representatives falling within the scope of the Interinstitutional Agreement on a mandatory transparency register
N/A
2. Representatives of public authorities of third countries, including their diplomatic missions and embassies
N/A

The list above is drawn up under the exclusive responsibility of the rapporteur.

Where natural persons are identified in the list by their name, by their function or by both, the rapporteur declares that he has submitted to the natural persons concerned the European Parliament's Data Protection Notice No 484 (<https://www.europarl.europa.eu/data-protect/index.do>), which sets out the conditions applicable to the processing of their personal data and the rights linked to that processing.

¹ Interinstitutional Agreement of May 2021 between the European Parliament, the Council of the European Union and the European Commission on a mandatory transparency register (OJ L 207, 11.6.2021, p. 1, ELI:http://data.europa.eu/eli/agree_interinstit/2021/611/oj).