

# **Thematic Group on Effective Approaches for Simplification within the CAP**

## **Background Briefing**

25 March 2025



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## 1. Introduction and Context

The current Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) aims (i) to foster a smart, competitive, resilient and diversified agricultural sector that ensures our long-term food security, (ii) to support and strengthen environmental and climate protection, and (iii) to strengthen the socio-economic fabric of rural areas. A key change in the current programming period (2023-2027) compared to before was a shift towards a more performance-based model, aiming for more strategic and targeted planning, increased flexibility and to reduce bureaucracy for both farms and Member State administrations. Member States were given greater flexibility to design and target their interventions to best address their specific circumstances and need through drafting their national CAP Strategic Plans (CSPs), with the removal of detailed rules and eligibility criteria for each intervention set at EU level. The CSPs are a single strategic tool bringing direct payments, sectoral and rural development types of interventions encompassing the European Agricultural Guarantee Fund (EAGF) and the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) together. Despite this, beneficiaries and administrations have continued to face challenges with the implementation of their CSPs. Calls for greater simplification continue to be made to address areas where complex rules cause issues. Some of these are Member State specific whereas others are more generic

Simplification has been an ongoing exercise across the CAP over recent programming periods. It is defined as the minimisation of costs that are not strictly necessary for the achievement of the objectives of the CAP, and the adoption of measures that reduce the administrative burden for the administration and beneficiaries<sup>1</sup>. The process implies that additional administrative costs without added value for achieving CAP objectives should be avoided. Core elements of simplification may relate to different aspects of CAP design and implementation, including governance mechanisms, application processes, implementation (e.g. shifting more towards outcome focussed schemes), reporting requirements, control requirements, use of digital tools and information flows.

To ensure that simplification becomes a tangible and impactful reality, this Thematic Group (TG) aims to foster a focused and practical discussion, leading to the development of concrete proposals that address the specific needs and challenges of CAP simplification for farmers, other beneficiaries under CAP and national authorities while upholding its objectives keeping also in mind that, there are CAP flexibilities that could alleviate the burden on farmers and national administrations, but they are not fully exploited by all Member States.

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<sup>1</sup> [https://eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/publications/use-factors-success-evaluation\\_en](https://eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/publications/use-factors-success-evaluation_en).



## 2. State of Play on CAP Simplification

Actions for simplification can take place at different levels (EU, Member State, regions) and help reduce administrative burden and bureaucracy for beneficiaries (incl. farmers) and/or national authorities. The rules governing support for CAP CSPs in this programming period<sup>2</sup> require Member States to take appropriate measures to reduce the administrative burden and ensure simplification in the implementation of the CAP when pursuing the CAP objectives.

### 2.1 First simplification package 2024

During the first year of CSP implementation, the markets (and farmers' margins), as well as the overall context for the EU's agricultural policy were strongly influenced by the changed geopolitical context (e.g. Russian invasion of Ukraine). Farmers voiced their concerns about structural, economic and climatic challenges in agriculture and in rural areas (i.e. fairness of remuneration, unfair competition) and it became clear for the European Commission that adjustments were necessary to ensure the CAP objectives were met. Following widespread farmer protests in early 2024 and based on an ad-hoc consultation and input from Member States, farmers' organisations and the European Parliament, the European Commission put forward a first Simplification package of short- and medium-term measures<sup>3</sup>.

The actions taken as part of the simplification package were wide-ranging and concerned the following areas (for more details see Box 1):

1. CSPs: Management, administration and controls
2. CSPs: Green Architecture
3. Farm income and competitiveness
4. Other CAP instruments

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<sup>2</sup> <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2021/2115/oj/eng>.

<sup>3</sup> [https://agriculture.ec.europa.eu/common-agricultural-policy/cap-overview/eu-actions-address-farmers-concerns\\_en](https://agriculture.ec.europa.eu/common-agricultural-policy/cap-overview/eu-actions-address-farmers-concerns_en).



**Box1: Overview of actions for the CAP in the 2024 simplification package**

1. CSPs: management, administration and controls

- Improving the procedure to amend CSPs (two amendments per calendar year now possible, level of detail of information requested)
- Controls for conditionality and cross compliance (exemption of small farms of under 10 hectares from controls and penalties related to conditionality requirements)
- Reporting on the results of cross-compliance controls (waive the obligation for Member States to submit these figures for claim years 2023, 2024 and 2025)
- Rationalising controls, including the right of error (possibility to amend and correct applications)
- Revision of the EU-level methodology for IACS quality assessment
- Revision of the requirements linked to geotagged photos
- Explanatory note on the use of the force majeure and exceptional circumstances clause

2. CSPs: Green Architecture

Changes in conditionality requirements, including GAEC standards

- Revision of GAEC 1 rules on permanent grassland ratio (allowing Member States to adjust the reference ratio once during the CAP programming period)
- Revision of GAEC 6 rules on minimum soil cover (increased flexibility for Member States)
- Revision of GAEC 7 rules on crop rotation (allowing Member States to include crop diversification)
- Revision of GAEC 8 rules on non-productive arable land (replaced by voluntary eco-scheme)
- Possibility of specific exemptions from GAECs 5 (tillage), 6 (soil cover), 7 (crop rotation/diversification) and 9 (ban on ploughing and converting environmentally sensitive permanent grasslands in Natura 2000 areas)
- Possibility for Member States to introduce temporary and targeted derogations from conditionality requirements
- Limiting the requirement for Member States to review CSP in case of changes to EU environmental and climate legislation

3. Farm income and competitiveness

- Strengthening farmers position in the agri-food supply chains and setting up of EU Agri-Food Chain Observatory (AFCO)
- Forthcoming actions to further correct imbalances in the agri-food supply chain, which includes considering targeted changes to the Regulation establishing a common market organisation of agricultural products (CMO)

4. Other CAP Instruments

- Exchange of best practices
- Support for advisory services



The European Commission also put forward some action outside the CAP (see Box2).

**Box2: Overview of actions outside the CAP as part of the 2024 simplification package**

Elements outside the CAP

- Use of remote sensing services as provided for in the proposed Soil Monitoring Law and proposed Forest Monitoring Law for assessing soil health and for forest monitoring
- Exemption of plant protection products containing only biological active substances from record keeping obligations
- Elimination of the requirement that farmers must submit individual applications for aerial spraying of plant protection products once relevant conditions are met
- Elimination of the requirement for farmers to keep records of treatment of animals with medicinal products under Directive 98/58/EC.

As part of the simplification package, the European Commission commissioned two studies:

- (i) Study on simplification and the administrative burden for farmers under the CAP looking at the complexities that farmers must deal with as regards funding applications, monitoring, checks and environmental/sanitary requirements under the CAP and the associated EU legislation. For this a targeted questionnaire to farmers was launched and nearly 27,000 replies were received. This was complemented by in-depth interviews.
- (ii) Study on the administrative burden on national authorities and the impact of the 'new delivery model' (NDM) of the CAP analysing the extent to which the NDM supports a more results-oriented CAP, strategic planning, and an improvement in the governance system.

The studies are expected to be completed in Spring 2025 and by the end of 2025 respectively and their publication is forthcoming.

## 2.2 Next steps

Since the first simplification package, the momentum for simplification has continued with the European Commission emphasising the importance of ensuring existing rules are fit-for-purpose, are focused on reducing administrative burdens and simplifying legislation<sup>4</sup>. This has been re-iterated in the recently published Vision for Agriculture and Food<sup>5</sup>.

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<sup>4</sup> [https://commission.europa.eu/document/2c64e540-c07a-4376-a1da-368d289f4afe\\_en](https://commission.europa.eu/document/2c64e540-c07a-4376-a1da-368d289f4afe_en).

<sup>5</sup> [https://agriculture.ec.europa.eu/vision-agriculture-food\\_en](https://agriculture.ec.europa.eu/vision-agriculture-food_en).



The European Commission is currently preparing its second simplification package, which will focus on the key priorities identified in the Vision for Agriculture and Food and is planned to be adopted by Q2 2025 and to be implemented from 2026.

In addition to the actions at European level, certain aspects of complexity and administrative burden relate to the way in which national rules have been put in place and can therefore be addressed already within the current framework. Other simplification actions might also require coordination between the European Commission and Managing Authorities.

### **3. Issues Raised Causing Complexity and Possible Responses**

The European Commission has emphasised the importance of exchange on best practices between Member States to simplify interventions and minimise administrative burden, with a key role of the EU CAP Network to facilitate this exchange. In line with this, this TG aims at identifying and creating examples and case studies of simplification that can be shared and potentially replicated by Member States.

An overview of the main issues identified by a range of stakeholder groups, including Managing Authorities and beneficiaries, as part of the Expression of Interest (EoI) process for this TG is set out in the table below. In total 132 replies from 26 Member States plus two third countries and EU level organisations were received.

The issues raised are set out in the table below and mainly concentrate on five key areas:

- (i) governance and rules,
- (ii) application process and implementation,
- (iii) reporting requirements,
- (iv) control requirements and monitoring; and
- (v) enabling environment, skills and tools.

The use and availability of digital tools is a thread that runs through all of these key areas. In the replies to the EoI, stakeholders also included suggestions for possible responses to address the issues raised.

During the TG, members will discuss the priority areas requiring simplification, share working solutions that can be scaled up and develop concrete proposals on the way forward.



Nr	What causes issues/complexity	Suggestions to address issues
<b>Governance / Rules / Planning</b>		
1	Constantly changing regulatory framework (B&A <sup>6</sup> )	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Avoid changes to the CAP framework mid-programming period</li> <li>• Keep CAP framework stable over programming periods (EC/MS<sup>7</sup>)</li> </ul>
2	2 funds (EAGF/EAFRD) are confusing (B&A)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consolidate into 1 agricultural fund (EC/MS)</li> </ul>
3	Rules around revisions & modifications to the CAP – notification vs amendment (A)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Greater flexibility on what changes can be notified without requiring a new version of the CSP</li> <li>• Abolish performance clearance for non-IACS interventions</li> <li>• Remove the requirement to justify differences between unit amounts as long as the amounts executed are within the min/max thresholds in the approved CSPs</li> <li>• Reduce detail required in justifications</li> <li>• Shorten the amendment approval process / timeline</li> <li>• Allow retroactive changes to targets for result indicators</li> <li>• Find ways to enable responses to emergency situations under EAGF (EC/MS)</li> </ul>
4	New delivery model – flexibility leads to huge variety of different measures and rules within and between MSs (and across regions in regionalised countries) (A)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clearer EU guidelines on rules</li> <li>• Strengthen interregional coordination mechanisms</li> <li>• Rethink the balance between EU level requirements and national flexibilities</li> <li>• More uniform interpretations of EU regulations across Member States</li> <li>• Conduct impact assessment to measure impact of interventions (MS/EC)</li> </ul>
5	Conditionality – SMRs: sanctions should already be covered under primary legislation (e.g. social conditionality) (A&B)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Requirements existing in national regulations should be removed from conditionality (or sanctions reduced)</li> </ul>

<sup>6</sup> The letters in parentheses indicate for whom the element is an issue. B = Beneficiaries, A = Administrations.

<sup>7</sup> Information in parenthesis show at which level the simplification action should be put forward. EC = European Commission, MS = Member States.



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sanctions should be proportionate to the level of basic payments received</li> </ul> <p>(EC/MS)</p>
6	<p>Conditionality – GAECs (A&amp;B)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unfairness where impacts of a standard affect MSs disproportionately</li> <li>GAEC not adapted to real life conditions</li> <li>Rigid, one-size-fits-all requirements that do not account for regional differences or farm-specific conditions</li> <li>Lacking flexibility (incl. to react to extreme conditions)</li> <li>Set dates for management activities</li> <li>Complexity of GAECs, reporting thereof and link to eco-schemes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Relevant national legislation and standards must be taken into account when setting/approving standards</li> <li>Clearer guidelines</li> <li>Streamlined criteria taking practical conditions into account</li> <li>Greater flexibility in scheme design and implementation allowing for more tailored, locally adapted measures</li> </ul> <p>(EC/MS)</p>
7	<p>Green architecture (B&amp;A)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Difficult interaction between funds</li> <li>Overlap between measure (e.g. eco-schemes and AECM)</li> <li>Medium term planning of interventions is difficult</li> <li>Intended flexibility for farmers has not been achieved</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Simpler funding structure and better coordination between EC and MA</li> <li>Merge or better align measures</li> <li>Simplify conditionality - GAEC and SMR obligations</li> <li>Avoid cannibalisation between measures</li> <li>Merging all direct payments into a single multiannual system with common conditionality focused on soil health and key indicators ensuring that direct payments and eco-schemes focus on environmental benefits while reducing complexity</li> <li>Flexible contract length, staggered entry points or incentive gradation to balance annual commitments vs impact</li> </ul> <p>(EC/MS)</p>
8	<p>Eco-schemes (A&amp;B)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Managing annual eco-schemes (no N+2 carry over mechanism)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Additional flexibility</li> <li>Further adjustments to existing eco-schemes to ensure they are more balanced, practical, and profitable for farmers</li> <li>Streamlined eco-scheme criteria with more practical implementation guidelines</li> </ul> <p>(EC/MS)</p>
9	<p>Ring-fencing rules are too rigid (A)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>More flexibility for MS to meet the ring-fencing rules between the two funds</li> </ul> <p>(EC)</p>
10	<p>Requirements for establishing the unit amounts of IACS interventions (A)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Allow payment for ecosystem services beyond the income foregone or costs incurred to incentivise their uptake</li> </ul> <p>(EC)</p>



11	Timeframe for commitments (B&A)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>When a remedial action is planned as a result of the APR a shorter period should be possible. It should be possible to add hectares to an already existing commitment, without strong requirements for the justification</li> <li>Also longer periods should be possible.</li> </ul> (EC/MS)
12	Misalignment between programme length (5 yrs) and allowable period for supporting newly introduced requirements (2 years) (B&A)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support should be allowed for whichever is greater, 24 months or the length of the current programme period, to allow for situations where changes happen early in a programme period to avoid unintended consequences for already-established AECMs</li> </ul> (MS/EC)
13	Definitions (B) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“permanent grassland” - Art. 4 of 2021/2115 – requirement to plough arable land used for fodder production every five years to prevent it from becoming “permanent grassland”.</li> <li>Issues with small and part-time farmers fulfilling definition of “active farmer” and “affiliated entity”</li> <li>Landscape features</li> <li>Water course – relation to GAEC 4</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clearer definitions agreed</li> <li>Review definition of “permanent grassland” to avoid unnecessary ploughing.</li> <li>Review definitions so they are less burdensome for small and part-time farmers</li> <li>clarification that landscape features are eligible for area-based-payments</li> </ul> (MS/EC)
<b>Application process / Implementation</b>		
14	Eligibility criteria (B) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>complex and not fit for certain types of farmers (small farms, family farms, farmers managing common land)</li> <li>Complexity creates uncertainty regarding eligibility for payments</li> <li>Limited access to eco-schemes for organic farmers or conditionality requirements causing practical issues</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review / Increase the flexibility of eligibility criteria</li> <li>Exempt small farmers (under 10ha) from conditionality requirements</li> <li>Provide clear, visually-supported guidance and personalized advice to farmers.</li> <li>Invest in farmer-friendly digital tools that can assess eligibility based on farm data.</li> <li>Introduction of practical tolerance and de minimis rules</li> <li>Allow “double funding” for organic farmers to combine AECM and eco-schemes</li> </ul> (MS/EC)
15	Rules not adapted to real life conditions (B) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rigid, one-size-fits-all requirements that do not account for regional differences, farm-specific conditions, changing/extreme conditions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Greater flexibility in scheme design, allowing for more tailored, locally adapted measures</li> <li>Integrating real-time weather data and satellite imagery would allow temporary adjustments during extreme conditions. Farmers could submit weather-based</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Time bound rules make it difficult to react conditions on the ground (set dates for management activities)</li> </ul>	<p>exemptions through a digital platform, reducing unnecessary penalties while ensuring that environmental goals remain achievable under varying circumstances.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>EC to listen to farmers (e.g. GAEC 6 and sensitive periods for soil erosion)</li> <li>Focus more on results rather than imposing strict rules</li> <li>Clear guidance and digital decision-support tools</li> </ul> <p>(EC/MS)</p>
16	Complexity and time needed for application processes ((B&A))	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Digital tools/online platforms for submission and management (including standardised and pre-filled forms), with built-in guidance and support (e.g. online assistants)</li> <li>Training, communication &amp; guidance – including access to free advice</li> <li>Streamline and simplify application forms, e.g. introduce a two-stage application process with a lighter initial phase; broaden the use of simplified cost options</li> <li>Reduce documentation required to what is essential</li> <li>Explain why information is needed to increase acceptance among beneficiaries</li> <li>More staff to process applications in MAS</li> </ul> <p>(MS)</p>
17	<p>Payment rules (B&amp;A)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Payments only permitted after costs incurred</li> <li>Lump sums for cooperation projects</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Allow advance payments for collectives</li> </ul> <p>(MS)</p>
18	<p>Rules for investments (B)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Documentation requirement – including different quotes</li> <li>issues with calculating costs (e.g. when materials are re-used)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Requirements should be proportionate to the amount of investment aid</li> <li>Provide catalogues specifying amounts for certain goods/services (lump sums?)</li> </ul> <p>(MS/EC)</p>
<b>Reporting Requirements</b>		
19	<p>Overly complex/detailed reporting requirements including (B&amp;A) Particularly burdensome for small farmers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Financial information</li> <li>Periodic progress reports</li> <li>Proof of compliance</li> <li>Variations between regions / MSs / interpretation what is required by EC</li> <li>Digital and paper records in parallel</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leverage digital tools to increase the automation of processes – both for real-time data collection and standardised digital reporting</li> <li>Tools/templates, allowing pre-filled forms based on previous submissions</li> <li>Create linkages, e.g. with FSDN</li> <li>Avoid requiring paper-based proofs for digital payment systems</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Timing of reporting (before process in finished)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide technical support, training and guidance on compliance requirements</li> <li>Shift the focus from detailed input reporting to outcome-based reporting</li> <li>Reduce the proof and documentation requirements for farmers (especially for non-area-based interventions) and consider whether qualitative reporting is sufficient</li> <li>Adapt reporting schedule, allow delays</li> </ul> <p>(MS/EC)</p>
20	Duplication of effort – the same information needs to be reported to different entities in different forms (B)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Data should only need to be provided once – ways to improve data sharing by administrative bodies should be improved</li> <li>Establish unified systems and ensure interoperability</li> </ul> <p>(MS/EC)</p>
21	<p>Indicator reporting issues (A)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inconsistencies between the design of interventions and the calculations of the result indicators (e.g. ability to report as LU/area)</li> <li>Double counting makes individual results not visible – RI linked to more than 1 intervention, and different RI contribute to one intervention</li> <li>Specific issue on technical nature of some indicators for farmers (e.g. soil health)</li> <li>For environmental measures, it takes time for results to become evident</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review the units for Result Indicators where issues have been identified (e.g. R13, R25)</li> <li>One intervention should be linked to one primary R-indicator and a couple of secondary R-indicators. Only the primary R-indicators should be accounted for in the APR</li> <li>Integrate existing soil monitoring initiatives, such as the Soil Monitoring and Resilience Directive (SMRD), into CAP reporting frameworks</li> <li>Limited set of measurable indicators reflecting real farm conditions would improve efficiency (e.g. soil health, nitrogen levels, and organic matter)</li> <li>More result-based payment schemes with clear, science-based indicators that reduce the need for excessive paperwork compared to prescriptive measures</li> </ul> <p>(EC/MS)</p>
<b>Inspections &amp; Controls / Monitoring</b>		
22	Overly complex control requirements (incl. long processing time) (B&A)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Greater use of digital tools</li> <li>Introduce risk-based approach for controls - farms with strong compliance records undergo less frequent, remote-based verification using satellite and sensor data</li> <li>More clearly stated expectations of what needs to be controlled</li> </ul> <p>(MS/EC)</p>
23	Timing of and multiple, overlapping inspections (stemming from both national and EU legislation) (B)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Where possible use Remote Sensing and Satellite Monitoring for Compliance Checks</li> </ul>



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Invest into specific image recognition software, which automatically analyses input</li> <li>Use of other available data sources (e.g. GPS data from tractors to define field limits)</li> <li>Coordinate inspections and limit to max. 20h/year</li> <li>Integrate controls for voluntary schemes in CAP control system (e.g. organic)</li> <li>Improve communication between administration and farmers</li> </ul> (MS)
24	Overly stringent control requirements and disproportionate sanctions (B&A) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Deviations from eligible areas</li> <li>Increased complexity to satisfy auditors</li> <li>Control samples (e.g. hemp)</li> <li>Black/white sanctioning rules (especially for eco-schemes)</li> <li>Monitoring system in relation to unit amounts and RI</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Allow buffer for deviations, expanding tolerance rules and thresholds</li> <li>Clarify rules and only control what really necessary</li> <li>Lower control sample rates (prove to word during Covid)</li> <li>More proportionate penalty system, combined with a warning and correction period before fines</li> <li>Workable solution to prevent disproportionate and retroactive withdrawal of eco-scheme payments due to minor, unintentional deviations or errors</li> <li>Allow retroactive changes to targets</li> </ul> (MS/EC)
25	Unclear definition of roles (e.g. LAG and PA), e.g. checking of costs done by different actors (B&A)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clarify roles and tasks</li> </ul> (MS)
26	AMS requirements (A)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Summarise the results of the AMS/GSA-QA at the level of system components rather than at the level of interventions or unit amounts.</li> <li>Waiver of the verification of the area declared for the GSA-QA as the correct delimitation of the application area has nothing to do with the GSA system, but is part of the IACS and is fulfilled by the LPIS reference update.</li> </ul> (MS)
27	Complexity of performance clearance and annual performance report (APR) (A) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Different tasks not defined very well (performance clearance, conformity checks, clearance of accounts, performance review)</li> <li>APR: different areas are reported in various sections (Section 2.1: Area determined before applying limits;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In all sections of the APR, the areas reported for area-based indicators should be harmonized</li> <li>Robust justification should be part of the reporting, but the penalty system implemented to date is not proportionate with the risk of deviations from the planned amounts</li> </ul>



	Section 2.2.1, 2.2.2 & 2.2.3: Area after applying limits), limiting understanding of the overall report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Change the frequency of performance reporting to biannual, while maintaining annual reporting (financial execution), allowing administrations to develop the necessary tools and adapt to the new performance and evaluation model</li> <li>• Remove performance clearance</li> <li>• Establish the possibility for the MS to explain deviations and other implementation issues for EC at the Annual Review Meetings (ARM) (EC/MS)</li> </ul>
<b>Enabling environment</b>		
28	Use of digital tools and needed skills (B&A) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of integration / interoperability</li> <li>• Unclear ownership of data</li> <li>• Lacking digital literacy</li> <li>• Lack of user friendliness</li> <li>• Not fully reliable tools / limited access to tools</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Simplifying digital interfaces and ensuring that digital tools are tailored to the needs and technological capabilities of farmers</li> <li>• Use of AI</li> <li>• Creating integrated systems that allow for seamless information flow between farmers, authorities, and stakeholders would improve efficiency, accuracy, and transparency</li> <li>• Develop a unified, interoperable CAP digital platform that integrates all application, reporting, and monitoring functions</li> <li>• Improve digital infrastructure in rural areas, offer offline-friendly alternatives,</li> <li>• Provide training and technical support for farmers and beneficiaries to facilitate smooth adoption</li> <li>• Establishing local advisory centres or helplines would further support farmers in navigating CAP's digital requirements (MS)</li> </ul>
29	Lack of advisory support (incl. for community funds) (B)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved access to digital advisory tools, and targeted technical assistance</li> <li>• Improve training and advice, qualification</li> <li>• Creating a voucher system for funded advice and training</li> <li>• Farm advisor network</li> <li>• Improve public procurement processes in implementation of advisory service (particularly in regionalised MS) (MS)</li> </ul>
30	Different communication / information channels (B&A) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of simplified guides / accessible training for new rules</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Centralised online system (see use of digital tools)</li> <li>• Promote exchange among MS and EC</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of processes that enable feedback and support adaptation where problems emerge</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For regionalised countries: single, nationwide online-portal that provides a structure for all regions to provide the relevant information on their programmes in a well-accessible and well-structured way</li> <li>Information should be structured according to farmers' needs, not according to funding streams</li> <li>Advisory boards bringing together farmers, consultancy, nature conservation, relevant administration</li> </ul> <p>(MS/EC)</p>
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**Table 1: Overview of elements causing complexity or administrative burden and possible responses (EoI replies for this TG)**

## 4. Further Reading and Useful Links

- European Commission: [Simplification and Implementation](#) – Making Europe simpler and faster (2025)
- European Commission: [EU actions to address farmers' concerns](#) (2024)
- [Regulation \(EU\) 2024/1468](#) 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
- European Commission [Staff Working Document 'Simplification measures for farmers'](#) (2024)
- EU CAP Network [Good Practice Workshop on Assessing simplification of the CAP for beneficiaries and administrations](#) (8-9 November 2024, Budapest)
- EU CAP Network [Tool 4.1 - Examples of guiding questions for the appraisal of the measures planned to reduce the administrative burden on farmers and other beneficiaries of the CAP Strategic Plan](#) (2021)
- [ENRD LEADER Thematic Lab](#): LEADER funding made simpler – using SCOs in the transition period and under the CAP Strategic Plans (2021)
- European Commission, Ecorys: [Analysis of administrative burden arising from the CAP](#) (2019)
- European Commission: EU level study on simplification and administrative burden for farmers and other beneficiaries under the CAP (upcoming 2025)
- European Commission: Study on CAP governance and the New Delivery Model for CAP 2023-2027 (upcoming 2025)



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