



# 1st meeting of the Thematic Group on Effective Approaches for Simplification within the CAP

Simplification at the core of initiatives of the European Commission

*2 April 2025*

# Disclaimer

*The avenues outlined in this presentation are intended to structure the exchange of views on simplification and the reduction of administrative burden for CAP beneficiaries.*

*It was prepared by Commission services and does not commit the European Commission regarding future possible legal proposals.*

# Background (1)

**President's Political Guidelines for 2024-2029 Commission mandate**

**M. Draghi Report 'The future of European competitiveness'**

**'Competitiveness Compass' Communication**

**'A Simpler and Faster Europe' Communication on implementation and simplification**

- Challenging economic and geopolitical context
- Need to enhance competitiveness, foster innovation, support growth
- Coordinated efforts needed, whether through smaller, cumulative steps, bold EU-level actions, or increased subsidiarity, where appropriate, to reduce regulatory barriers (M. Draghi report)
- Simplification and reduction of administrative burden one of the enabling factors, to tackle:
- Costly regulatory burdens, complexities of legislation and its implementation, excessive reporting obligations.

# Background (2)

## ‘A Vision for Agriculture and Food’ Communication

- To drive innovation and sustainability in agricultural practices, *‘farmers should be entrepreneurs and providers, not carrying unnecessary bureaucratic or regulatory burdens’*
- Tailored approaches reflecting the diversity of the sectors and the different needs
- Better balance between conditions and incentives
- Special needs of smaller farms
- Reality checks of legislation, simplification, digital technologies
- Four thematic areas for simplification of the current CAP framework (Q2 2025, CWP 2025)
- Simplification of non-CAP legislation affecting farmers (Q4 2025, CWP 2025)
- Simpler and streamlined CAP post-2027

# Simplification Q2 2025

- **Focus on farmers**
- **Themes delineated in the Vision for Agriculture and Food**
- **Objective and scope:**
  - To address complexities, bottlenecks, and other inefficiencies of the current CAP framework.
  - To help Member States make the most of existing CAP flexibilities.

Basic acts: CSP & Horizontal Regulations

Secondary legislation & guidance / clarifications
- **Evidence and feedback** collected so far, including:
  - Experience of 2 years of implementation, feedback from e.g. GREX, CDG, CAP Network
  - Material collected in the 2024 simplification exercise (MS, farmers' organisations, COMAGRI)
  - MS proposals collected by the PL Presidency (Feb 2025)
  - Insights from the survey of farmers (27 000 replies) and the ensuing study on simplification and administrative burden for farmers and other CAP beneficiaries (not yet published).

# Theme 1: On-farm simplification and streamlining of requirements that better recognise various situations and farming practices

- Legal framework not always responsive enough to tackle different situations and needs of specific groups of farmers;
  - Overlap of requirements for some.
  - Some support options for farmers are not available due to the way the instruments are designed.
  - Some conditions of support are unclear, burdensome or create uncertainty.
  - Need to find a better way to help farmers prepare and deal with the impact of natural disasters to increase resilience.

## Theme 2: Streamlining support for small and medium-sized farms

- Small farms (<10ha) receive relatively small share of direct payments (11%) but represent 65% of total beneficiaries and farm 10% of land.
- Disproportionate administrative burden in managing applications, both for farmers and national administrations.
- Yet, the relevant CAP instrument - simplified support scheme for small farmers is underutilized.

## Theme 3: Measures boosting competitiveness through streamlining and simplifying

- Challenges in ensuring farm's long-term viability, enhancing their competitiveness and income opportunities.
- Difficulties in accessing finance, particularly for smaller and young farmers due to financial constraints and limited administrative capacity.
- Instruments in the CAP exist but are underutilized.
- Investment-related CAP application are perceived as the most complex by farmers.
- Disproportionately high costs of applications for support and implementation of operations, especially for small-scale operations. Difficult and time-consuming collection of evidence.
- Inefficiencies of multiple reporting of the same data for CAP / non-CAP purposes. Yet, digital opportunities exist to improve data collection for on-farm and policy-related purposes (under farmers' control), eliminate redundancies and streamline processes.
- The burden of on-farm inspections remains significant (whether due to EU/national legislation): multiple inspections, perceived long duration, unclear expectations, or inappropriate timing that overlaps with crucial farming activities, and placing undue stress on compliant farmers.



## Theme 4: Greater flexibility for Member States in managing CAP Strategic Plans

- Complex and time-consuming annual performance clearance process, where, based on the experience of implementation, alternative solutions exist to verify sound financial management of EU CAP funds.
- Certain ambiguities and time constraints related to the Annual Performance Report and Biennial Performance Review.
- Complexity and rigidity resulting from different rules for CAP Plan amendments for instruments across the two funds (EAGF and EAFRD), preventing Member States from responding swiftly to changing circumstances, reducing opportunities for achieving synergies between instruments, and uncertainties for beneficiaries.

# Thank you