

Recommendations for Generational Renewal in Agriculture

This document presents recommendations based on stakeholder inputs collected through the EU CAP Network's Thematic Group (TG) on [Gen Z: Leading Generational Renewal in Farming](#).

The TG aimed to:

- > Discuss the key characteristics and roles of future farmers, including challenges and opportunities for young and aspiring farmers over the next ten years and review the current CAP measures.
- > Explore the role of networks and communities in rural areas and their importance for young aspiring farmers.
- > Examine potential future scenarios and suggest policy recommendations to support generational renewal in agriculture and empower future farmers to be sustainable and resilient in the long term.

The process towards the recommendations

Inputs for these recommendations were collected through formal and informal discussions held in the frame of the Thematic Group (in person and online).

To ensure a forward-looking approach, the TG chose to explore generational renewal through the lens of five "future farmer profiles", acknowledging the need for change in the profession and the challenges ahead related to global trends. TG members considered the motivations, strategies and competencies required for these roles to evolve over the next decade and the impact of global trends on the farmers' decisions and paths. Participants also identified the necessary **enabling conditions and key policies** to support the transition to these new realities.



The five farmer profiles analysed were:

- > the **Sustainability Pioneer**
- > the **Tech-Driven Innovator**
- > the **Community Farmer**
- > the **Urban Innovator**
- > the **Multifunctional Female Farmer Leader**

Each profile was examined in relation to challenges and opportunities posed by **key global trends**:

- > climate change
- > consumer demands
- > technological innovation



The TG discussions led to key recommendations to help equip future young farmers with the tools and resources needed to succeed.

The recommendations provide a comprehensive framework to help farmers navigate the evolving agricultural landscape while ensuring the sustainability, resilience and renewal of the sector, see page 2.

Recommendations by the TG members

The recommendations concern 7 areas:





EDUCATION AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

- **Enhanced educational programmes:** Increase funding for agricultural education, focusing on sustainability, digital tools, and transitions between farming types. Partner with universities and agricultural colleges to build capacity.
- **Practical training opportunities:** Develop national internship programmes, farm incubators and civil service initiatives to provide hands-on experience, mentoring, and community-building for aspiring farmers.
- **European exchange programmes:** Strengthen collaborations between the CAP, Erasmus+ and Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs to expand support for agriculture-specific mobility, foster knowledge sharing and encourage skill transfer across Europe.



ACCESS TO LAND AND FINANCIAL SUPPORT

- **Land access initiatives:** Establish a European Land Observatory to monitor land availability, promote fair access and create frameworks for urban agriculture.
- **Tailored financial support:** Provide lower-interest loans, grants and co-financed EU-national programs, including prefinancing for small-scale projects, to reduce barriers for young farmers.
- **Supportive credit systems:** Enhance awareness and accessibility of [European Investment Bank \(EIB\)](#) initiatives and design credit guarantees to assist young farmers.



SUPPORTING SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES

- **Incentives for sustainability:** Offer financial rewards, such as carbon credits, for adopting eco-services like carbon sequestration, agroecology and forestry protection.
- **Technology integration:** Promote the adoption of digital tools and modern technologies to increase efficiency, reduce environmental impacts and improve farm management.
- **Transition programmes:** Establish comprehensive programmes to facilitate shifts toward organic farming, agroecology and energy-efficient methods, tailored to the needs of Member States.



SUPPORTING THE SOCIAL DIMENSIONS OF FARMING

- **Work-Life balance:** Introduce farm helper programmes that provide replacements during leave and mental health support to reduce burnout.
- **Gender inclusion:** Address barriers faced by women in agriculture by creating networks, offering childcare support, and ensuring equitable access to funding and resources.
- **Public perception:** Launch campaigns to improve the image of farming and attract younger generations to the sector.



REFORMING CAP DIRECT PAYMENTS

- > **Conditionality for sustainability:** Raise the conditionality of direct payments to ensure farm operations are sustainable across all dimensions (economic, social, and environmental).
- > **Redefine the eligibility criteria for CAP direct payments:** Include individuals without land ownership and remove restrictive requirements, such as the need to be a head of holding, to broaden access to farming subsidies.
- > **Reform the direct payment system:** Reconsider per-hectare payments to ensure a fairer distribution of funds. Incorporate revenue-based assessments, account for innovative agricultural practices, and prioritise sustainability across economic, environmental, and social dimensions in policy design.
- > **Simplified processes:** Streamline application procedures and improve access to information on CAP support measures for new farmers.



STRENGTHENING MARKET ACCESS AND LOCAL FOOD SYSTEMS

- > **Fair trade and market access:** Support direct sales models and ensure equitable trade agreements for European farmers. Promote fair prices for sustainably produced goods.
- > **Collaborative market frameworks:** Foster cooperatives and producer organisations to enhance collaboration and trust and improve collective bargaining power.
- > **Urban and local food systems:** Promote urban farming through land leasing programmes and urban agriculture planning, and support community-driven agriculture such as Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) programmes to strengthen local supply chains.



BUILDING NETWORKS AND COMMUNITIES

- > **Rural networks:** Create rural youth networks and Europoints to facilitate collaboration, knowledge sharing, and connections with local governments and organisations.
- > **Community engagement:** Organise public events, training sessions, and conferences to promote sustainable practices and foster community-driven initiatives.
- > **Digital tools:** Leverage social media and digital platforms to connect farmers, share knowledge, and run awareness campaigns on generational renewal.



Examples of support programmes & tools for generational renewal

The following examples highlight diverse initiatives addressing challenges like farm succession, land access, generational transitions, and sustainable farming practices. These practices demonstrate the importance of tailored approaches to specific national and regional contexts.

> PERSPEKTIVE LANDWIRTSCHAFT - AUSTRIA

Challenge: Lack of succession opportunities for farms without heirs.

Description: This online platform connects farm owners without successors to individuals, couples, or families interested in taking over a farm. By facilitating matches, it ensures farms remain operational and supports generational renewal while welcoming diverse new entrants. [Read more](#)



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> LAND MOBILITY SERVICE - IRELAND

Challenge: Land access and intergenerational collaboration.

Description: This confidential service connects retiring farmers with young entrants, offering long leases, partnerships, and share farming opportunities. It ensures smooth transitions while introducing fresh ideas into the agricultural sector. [Read more](#)

> FLEMISH FARM LEASE DECREE - BELGIUM

Challenge: Ensuring legal access to land for young farmers.

Description: The decree introduces measures such as terminating leases with retired tenants and extending lease durations to provide young farmers with greater stability and land access. These reforms address barriers that often hinder younger generations. [Read more](#)

> FARM TRANSFER ACT - HUNGARY

Challenge: Supporting gradual and secure farm transfers.

Description: This initiative facilitates the transfer of land, assets, and knowledge between retiring farmers and their successors, offering financial incentives and a young farmer start-up scheme to ensure continuity in agriculture.



> TERRE DE LIENS - FRANCE

Challenge: Addressing land scarcity for new farmers.

Description: Terre de Liens acquires farmland and leases it under environmental agreements to aspiring farmers. By ensuring sustainable use of the land, it creates opportunities for newcomers while preserving biodiversity. [Read more](#)



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> TERRACTIVA OPERATIONAL GROUP - SPAIN

Challenge: Overcoming barriers for inexperienced new entrants.

Description: This initiative trains local entities and advisors to support new farmers through tailored guidelines, peer-to-peer networks, and sustainable practices, addressing succession and access challenges. [Read more](#)

> FERME EN VIE - FRANCE

Challenge: Empowering young farmers with limited resources.

Description: Using public savings, Ferme en Vie purchases farms and rents them to agroecological farmers. This approach supports young farmers in establishing viable businesses while ensuring environmental sustainability. [Read more](#)

> MŁODY ROLNIK - POLAND

Challenge: Supporting young farmers at the start of their careers.

Description: This program provides financial aid, training, and advisory services to young farmers under 40, enabling them to modernise farms and improve their competitiveness in agriculture. [Read more](#)

> GREPPAGENERATIONSSKIFTET - SWEDEN

Challenge: Managing farm ownership transitions.

Description: This initiative provides comprehensive support for farm succession, addressing emotional, financial, and operational challenges. It emphasises fair transitions that ensure the sustainability of farms. [Read more](#)

> PASSEURS DE TERRES - FRANCE

Challenge: Safeguarding land for sustainable farming.

Description: By acquiring and leasing farmland under favourable conditions, this initiative supports young farmers while preserving land for environmentally friendly practices. [Read more](#)

> **RETA - NETWORK OF FARM INCUBATORS - SPAIN**

Challenge: Providing resources for farmers without experience.

Description: RETA establishes pilot incubators and develops tools to help young farmers start sustainable businesses. It fosters collaboration among stakeholders and promotes knowledge sharing. [Read more](#)



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> **CIAP - COOPÉRATIVE D'INSTALLATION EN AGRICULTURE PAYSANNE - FRANCE**

Challenge: Supporting new entrants with innovative approaches.

Description: CIAP offers a mix of training, administrative support, and testing facilities for new farmers, particularly those without traditional agricultural backgrounds, to develop sustainable projects. [Read more](#)

> **SLASHEURS CUEILLEURS - FRANCE**

Challenge: Combining farming with other professions for a resilient rural economy.

Description: This initiative promotes flexible livelihoods by helping individuals blend farming with other careers, rejuvenating rural areas with diverse and sustainable economic activities. [Read more](#)



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