Stakeholders' view on financing the transition of EU farmers, the on-farm sustainability compass and the future of the European agri-food value chains

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COGECA: The voice of European agri-cooperatives

Mission

To ensure a viable, innovative, competitive EU agriculture and agri-food sector guaranteeing food security to half a billion people throughout Europe.

Objective

Promoting the view of European agri-cooperatives to **influence** the EU decision-making process.

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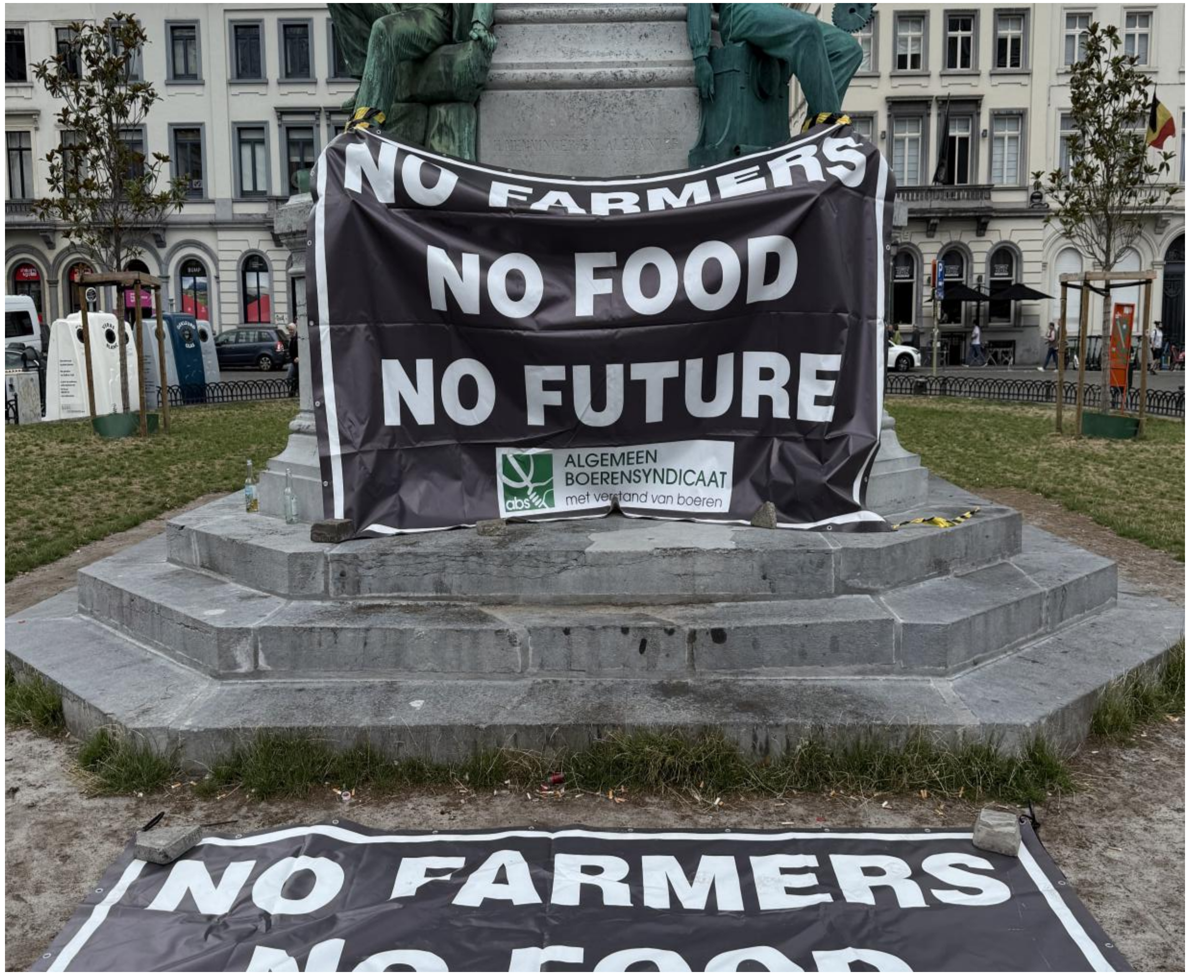
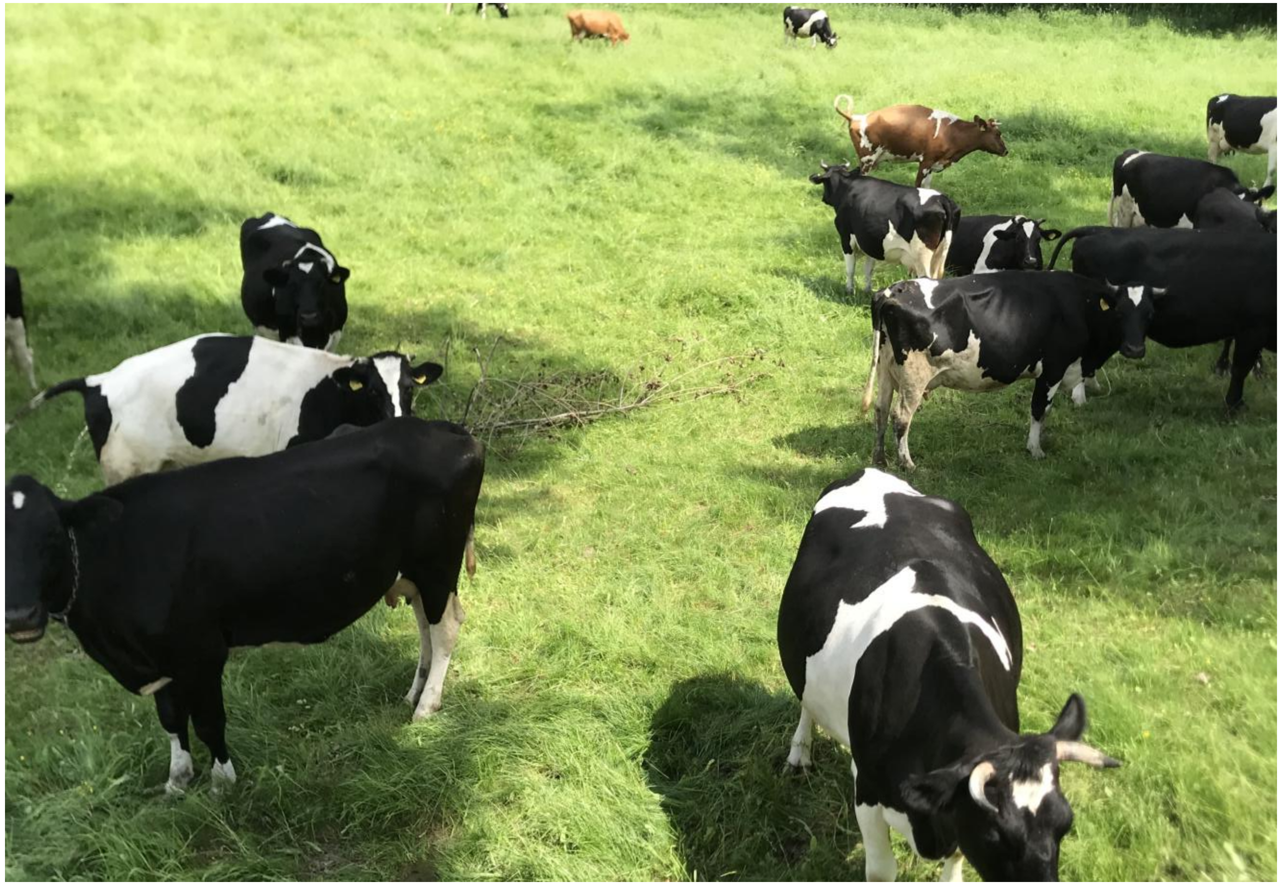
The situation today

- War at our borders, escalating geopolitical tensions, and economic uncertainty set the scene for an unstable and harsh context for everyone, including for farmers and their cooperatives.
- Agriculture is not just another sector. It is about sovereignty, security, and societal stability. EU's security depends on our food security. The strategic role of agriculture must be fully recognised by EU and national authorities.



Why agriculture matters

- Europe must invest in its own strength—starting with agriculture.
- As enshrined in the Treaties, agriculture delivers more than food: it sustains rural communities, it maintains natural landscapes, it provides affordable food for consumers ensuring long-term food security for the Union.
- But in order to deliver on its objectives and guarantee food security and food production in a sustainable manner, we need a competitive and resilient sector, strong enough to face today's crises, and innovative enough to seize tomorrow's opportunities.



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The role of investment and the EIB

- The European Investment Bank's decision to identify agriculture and the bioeconomy as key priorities under its 2024-2027 Strategic Roadmap is welcome. Now work must be done together with the farming community and, specifically, agri-cooperatives to see this opportunity lead to results on the ground. We welcome the commitment of EIB to bridge the financing gap of the sector, already starting with the €3 billion financing package for agriculture, forestry and fisheries across Europe announced last December.
- Agriculture should be able to benefit from support out of other funds and investments should be allocated to climate adaptation measures with targeted financing earmarked for the sector.

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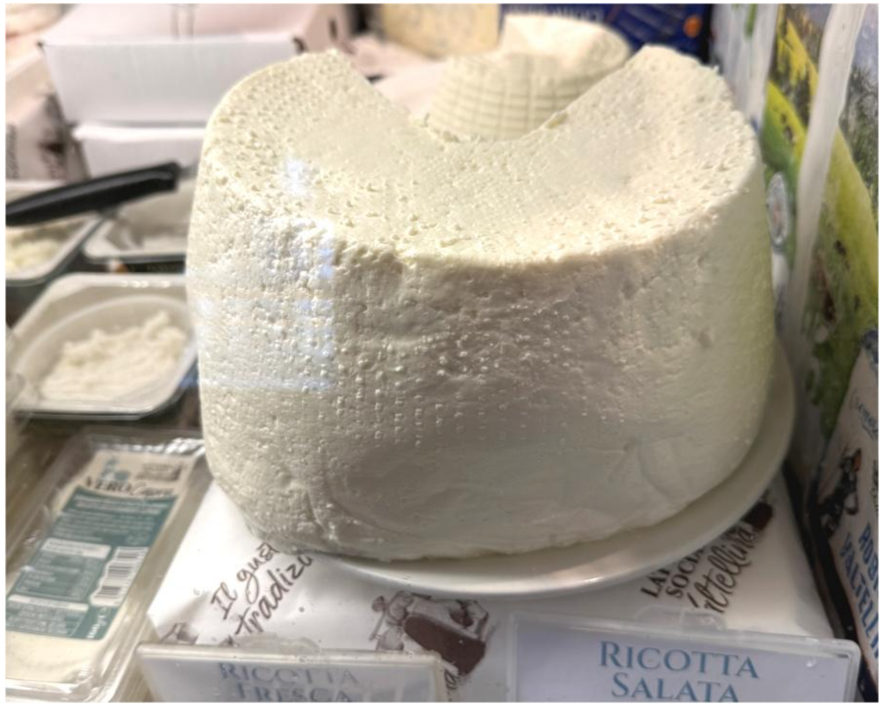
Cooperatives – working together

- Agricultural cooperatives play a pivotal role in promoting the sustainability of the sector. These enterprises, created to respond to primary production's needs, owned and democratically managed by farmers, offer a collective approach to addressing various challenges and seizing opportunities. By pooling resources and sharing risks, cooperatives help farmers address economic, environmental, and social challenges, European agri-cooperatives enable farmers to compete fairly, innovate, and build a more resilient, equitable and sustainable food systems.
- By working together through cooperatives, farmers can strengthen their bargaining power, secure better access to markets, and accelerate the green and digital transitions.
- Farmers and agricultural cooperatives in the EU are committed to more sustainable production systems and practices and are ready to continue in this path, but several enablers are needed such as improved income, generation renewal, access to innovation, to risk mitigation strategies, to basic services and improved quality of life in rural areas.



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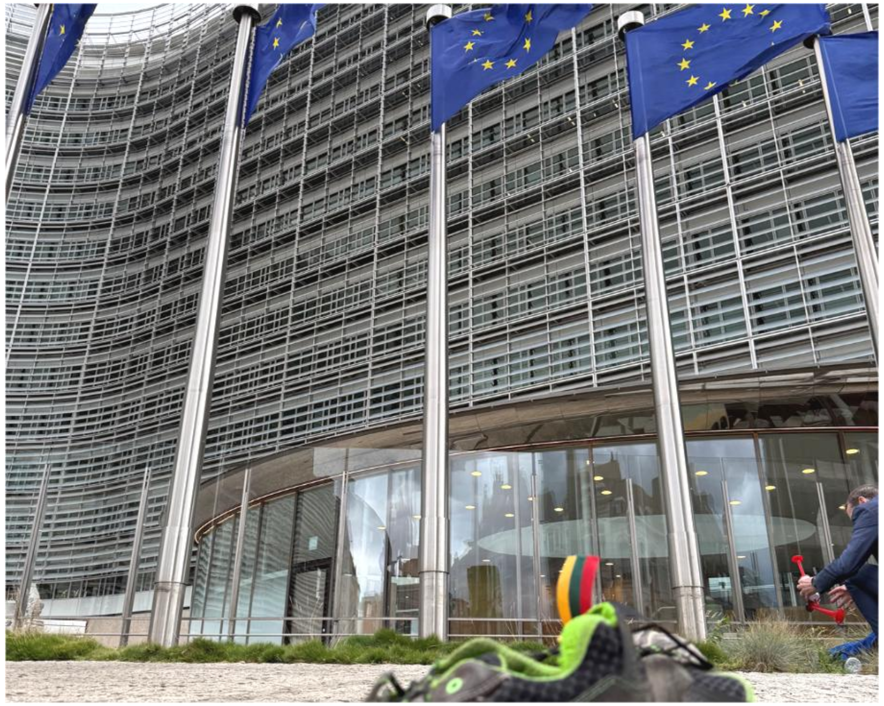
Policy and stability

- We are strongly disappointed by the new MFF framework which does not allow for a separate and strong CAP policy which maintains its two-pillar structure and the important synergies between these pillars. Furthermore, it undermines investment capacity and overall competitiveness and sustainability.
- As an example, investment support lacks predictability in terms of budgetary allocation by being part of the National and Regional Partnership Plans' budgetary flexibility and reforms. Also, knowledge sharing and innovation and cooperation which are so important for both farmers and agricultural cooperatives face a severe disruption being excluded of the CAP financing and being left at the discretion of the MS. This is for us unacceptable given the sustainability and competitiveness objectives that are still part of the CAP.



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In conclusion

Despite the many challenges, we look to the future with hope.

European farmers and cooperatives are ready to work with EU institutions to ensure that agriculture remains a core pillar of the European Union, and that food security and sustainability stay at the heart of our common policies.

Thank you!

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