



EUROPEAN
COMMISSION

Strasbourg, 21.10.2025
SWD(2025) 872 final

COMMISSION STAFF WORKING DOCUMENT
STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION - SYNOPSIS REPORT

Accompanying the document

**COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN
PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL
COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS**

Strategy for generational renewal in agriculture

{COM(2025) 872 final}

1. INTRODUCTION: OBJECTIVES AND STAKEHOLDERS

This report summarises the outcomes of the various consultation strands conducted in support of the generational renewal strategy. The strategy was developed in response to European Commission President von der Leyen's call to support young farmers ⁽¹⁾, alongside the positions of the European Parliament ⁽²⁾, the Council ⁽³⁾, and the Strategic Dialogue ⁽⁴⁾.

The consultation process was designed to put young farmers and young people living in rural areas at the centre while also considering a broad range of relevant stakeholders. It kicked off on 11 December 2024, with the launch of the first Youth Policy Dialogue, and closed at the beginning of August 2025. The consultation included the following key milestones:

- 11 December 2024 – First Youth Policy Dialogue of Commissioner Hansen;
- January 2025 – EU common agricultural policy (CAP) network publication: *generational renewal in the agricultural sector and young farmers: CAP evaluation insights*;
- 24 March 2025 – Civil Dialogue Group on CAP strategic plans and horizontal matters;
- 11 April and 20 June 2025 – Group of Experts on the implementation on the CAP Strategic Plans Regulation (GREX);
- 7 May 2025 – Second Youth Policy Dialogue of Commissioner Hansen;
- 8 May 2025 – Conference on the vision for agriculture and food;
- 16 June 2025 – Launch of the call for evidence;
- 14 July 2025 – Closure of the call for evidence.

The consultation targeted stakeholders identified through a mapping exercise carried out as part of the consultation strategy.

- Farmers and their organisations, focusing on young farmers and young people living in rural areas (at EU, national, and local levels).
- Member State authorities (governments, parliaments, public administrations).
- Regional and local authorities.
- Other associations, NGOs, and civil society organisations.
- Rural networks (EU, national, and regional levels).
- Academic experts.

2. METHODOLOGY AND TOOLS

The Commission gathered input for the generational renewal strategy using a combination of qualitative and structured methods.

A key contribution came from the **Youth Policy Dialogues** held on 11 December 2024 (22 participants) and 7 May 2025 (22 participants). These dialogues generated qualitative

⁽¹⁾ [Political guidelines for the next European Commission 2024-2029](#), Ursula von der Leyen.

⁽²⁾ European Parliament resolution of 19 October 2023 on generational renewal in the EU farms of the future ([2022/2182\(INI\)](#)).

⁽³⁾ Council Conclusions on a Long-Term Vision for the EU's Rural Areas (LTVRA) [15631/23](#).

⁽⁴⁾ [Strategic dialogue on the future of EU agriculture - European Commission](#)

insights into the experiences of young farmers across Europe and produced detailed recommendations for action at both EU and Member State levels.

The strategy was informed by the **EU CAP network report on ‘generational renewal in the agricultural sector and young farmers’**, published in January 2025. The EU CAP network report forms part of the new CAP network evaluation insights series of publications. This document focuses on the findings and insights gathered from the methods and data used by the Member States’ CAP evaluations into generational renewal in the agricultural sector and young farmers.

Further targeted consultations were conducted via the **Civil Dialogue Group** on the CAP strategic plans and horizontal matters that brought together agriculture and rural development stakeholders and experts to provide deeper technical and policy insights. The **Expert Group on the implementation of the CAP Strategic Plans Regulation** met in April and June 2025 to share views on different initiatives undertaken to support generational renewal in agriculture at national level.

Bilateral meetings were also held throughout the drafting process with key organisations representing young people. These organisations included the **European Council of young farmers (CEJA)**, **Rural Youth Europe**, the Youth Articulation of the European Coordination **Via Campesina** and the **Organics Europe Youth Network**, which shared their expertise, policy positions, and suggestions to inform the strategy.

In addition, a **panel on generational renewal** was organised during the **Vision for Agriculture and Food Conference** on 8 May 2025. It brought together institutional representatives and young leaders to discuss current challenges and opportunities for generational renewal in agriculture.

A Commission **call for evidence**, launched on 16 June and closed on 14 July 2025, gathered 101 responses. These were instrumental in validating the findings of the other consultation strands and in shaping the strategy.

3. CONSULTATION ACTIVITIES

a. Youth Policy Dialogues

Two Youth Policy Dialogues were held as part of the consultation process on the generational renewal strategy. These events brought together young people from agricultural, rural, and environmental youth organisations to share their perspectives with Commissioner for Agriculture and Food, Christophe Hansen. Participants were selected through youth-led networks, ensuring gender balance and geographic diversity. In line with the CAP definition of young farmers, participants were under 40 years of age.

- The first dialogue on 11 December 2024, titled ***‘Building together the future of farming, food and rural areas’***, was held during the 2024 Agri-food Days. It focused on three main themes, one of which was generational renewal, focusing on access to land and capital, education, rural-urban linkages, and working conditions.
- The second dialogue, held on 7 May 2025 titled ***‘Towards a strategy on generational renewal’***. It built on the outcomes of the first dialogue and adopted a more **interactive** and **participant-driven** format, focusing exclusively on the topic

of generational renewal. There were two thematic sessions dedicated to access to land and access to finance.

b. EU CAP network report

This [publication](#) is based on the work carried out by the EU CAP network, with the support of the European Evaluation Helpdesk for the CAP (Evaluation Helpdesk). The Evaluation Helpdesk identifies evaluations carried out by Member States in relation to the CAP. This publication reviews the evaluation findings in the CAP evaluation database related to generational renewal in the agricultural sector, start-ups and other support to young farmers. It gathers the relevant empirical research, group findings with a similar focus and draws conclusions based on the trends observed.

c. Civil Dialogue Group on the CAP strategic plans and horizontal matters

The Civil Dialogue Group was held on 24 March 2025. It brought together 14 key stakeholders, including the Committee of Professional Agricultural Organisations (COPA), the European Coordination Via Campesina (ECVC, which also provided a written submission), the European Federation of Food, Agriculture and Tourism Trade Unions (EFFAT), the European Rural Community Alliance (ERCA), the International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements EU Regional Group, (IFOAM), the [European Council](#) of Young Farmers (CEJA), RED (Rurality, Environment, Development), the General Confederation of European Agricultural Cooperatives (COGECA), Euromontana, the International Labour Organisation (ILO), the European Confederation of Agricultural, Rural and Forestry Contractors (CEETAR), the Employers' Group of Professional Agricultural Organisations in the European Union (GEOPA, which also submitted written input), the European LEADER Association for Rural Development (ELARD), and the European Forum for Agricultural and Rural Advisory Services (EUFRAS).

d. Expert Group on the CAP Strategic Plans Regulation (GREX)

Two GREX meetings took place on 11 April and 25 June 2025. The meetings focused on how Member States are addressing the challenge of generational renewal in agriculture. The first meeting saw presentations from Hungary, Ireland, Germany and Austria while the second meeting saw presentations from Spain, Poland and Denmark.

e. Bilateral discussions with organisations representing young people

Throughout the drafting process, bilateral meetings were held with key youth stakeholders, including CEJA, Via Campesina, Rural Youth Europe and Organics Europe Youth Network. These organisations shared their policy priorities and informed the strategy.

f. Conference on the vision for agriculture and food

A dedicated panel on generational renewal took place during the vision conference on 8 May 2025, which followed the publication of the vision for agriculture and food in February ⁽⁵⁾. The session, titled '*Building an attractive farming sector for the future: fostering investments and entrepreneurship for generational renewal*', featured a range of

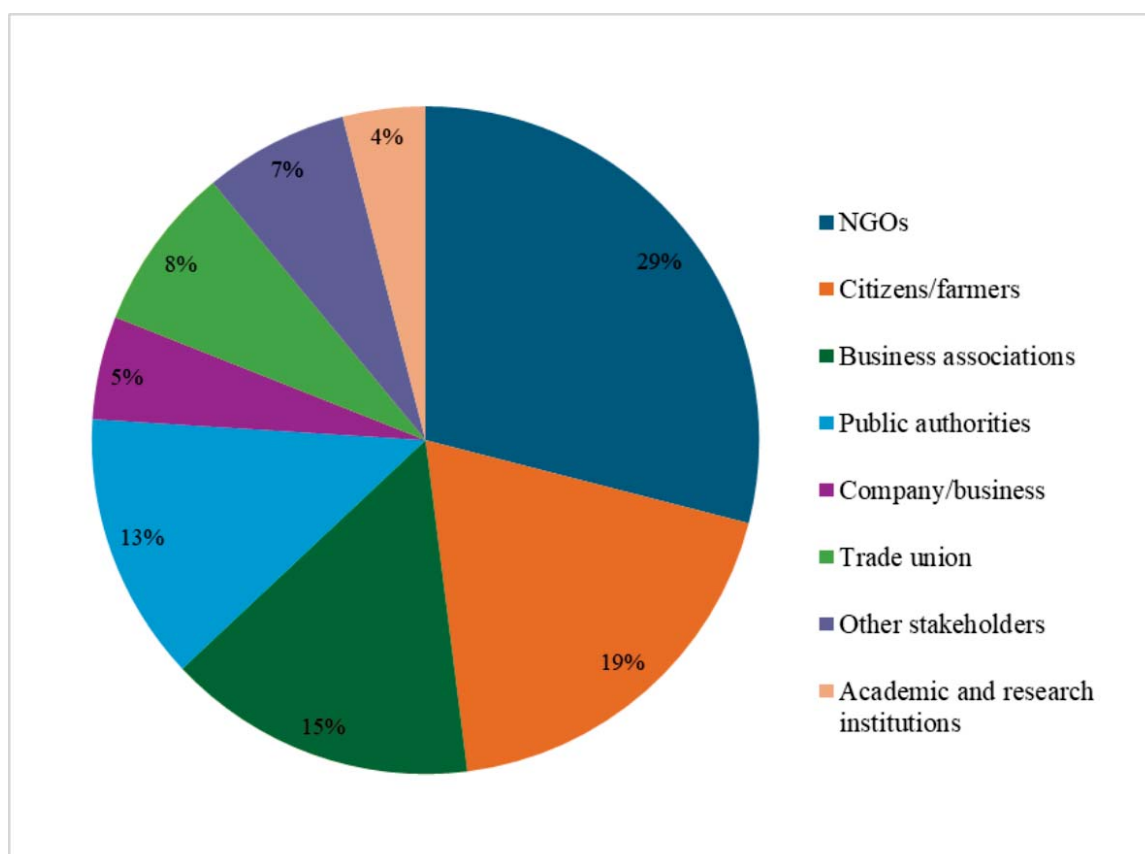
⁽⁵⁾ [A Vision for Agriculture and Food- Shaping together an attractive farming and agri-food sector for future generations](#). 2025.

high-level speakers ⁽⁶⁾, offering diverse insights on how to make the sector more attractive to younger generations. Following the presentations, an anonymous Q&A session allowed participants to share their thoughts openly, providing perspectives from the wider audience.

g. Call for evidence

The call for evidence, open from **16 June to 14 July 2025**, received **101 responses**. It was published on the Commission's [Have Your Say](#) website. All qualitative responses and supporting documents (translated by using a Commission AI-powered tool into English) were processed by Commission staff.

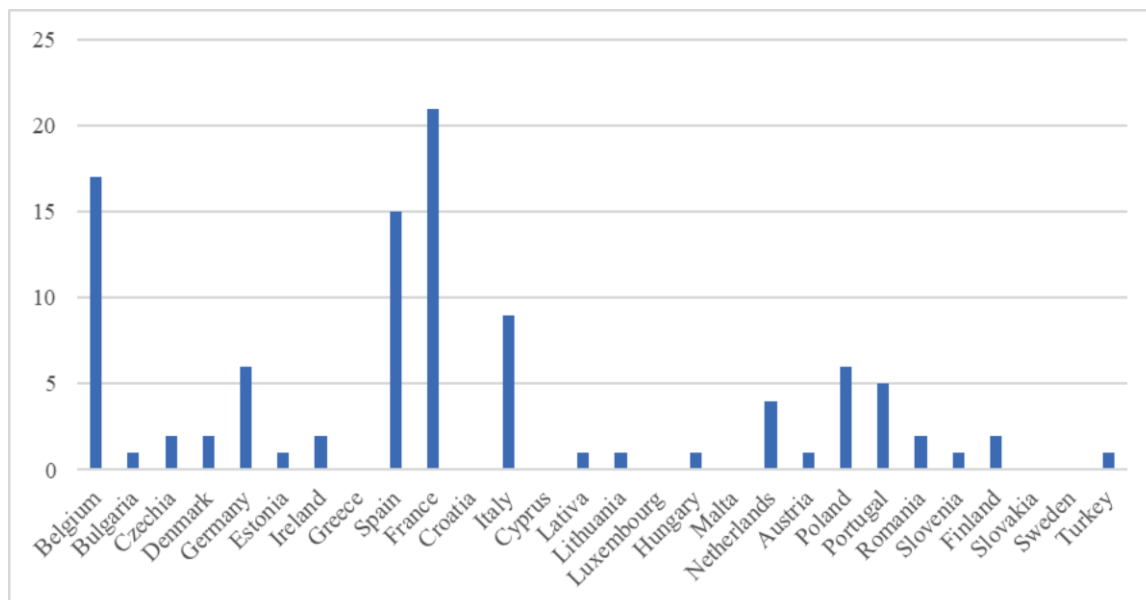
The pie chart below shows the breakdown of **respondents by category**.



Some concerns were shared by all respondents while others were specific to the different groups. See Annex 1 for more information on this point.

In terms of **country distribution**, most responses came from France (21%), followed by Belgium (17%), probably due to its role as the host country for many EU-level associations, followed by Spain (15%) and Italy (9%). Contributions also came from 16 other Member States, as well as one response from outside the EU (Türkiye).

⁽⁶⁾ [Shaping the future of farming and the agri-food sector - European Commission](#)



The call for evidence complemented previous consultation activities and helped to validate and refine the policy directions for the strategy. The results of the call for evidence can be found on the Commission's [Better Regulation Portal](#).

4. INTERDEPENDENCIES AND CONSISTENCIES IN THE CONTRIBUTIONS FROM STAKEHOLDERS

There is a high degree of consistency between the stakeholder contributions across the different groups and the findings emerging from each of the consultation strands.

The main concerns are listed below.

i. Needs and challenges

- **Limited access to land** due to high prices, land concentration, and lack of effective land mobility instruments.
- **Lack of economic viability**, with unstable incomes, unfair market dynamics, and insufficient support for fair prices.
- **Barriers to accessing loans and capital**, especially for small-scale, organic, and new entrants who are perceived as high-risk.
- **Difficult living and working conditions**, including long hours, lack of social protection, poor work-life balance, and limited access to services.
- **Lack of adequate pension schemes delays retirement**, hindering generational renewal.
- **Heavy administrative burdens and regulatory complexity**, with procedures that are often unclear or change too often.
- **Negative perceptions of farming**, with some young people seeing it as an unattractive profession.
- **Growing environmental and climate risks**, such as extreme weather, water scarcity, and inadequate risk management tools, bringing challenges for the economic viability of farms.

ii. Opportunities

- **Growing interest among young people in agro-ecological, organic, and sustainable** forms of farming.
- **Engaging young people in innovation**, including in new farming models.
- **Encouraging intergenerational collaboration and peer-to-peer learning**, supporting smoother farm transitions and knowledge sharing.
- **Adopting more territorial and integrated approaches** to rural development.
- **Embracing digital tools and innovative AI-driven solutions** to streamline administration, reduce workload and increase transparency.
- **Driving policy momentum and broad recognition of the importance of** generational renewal.

5. MAIN MESSAGES FROM THE CONSULTATION PROCESS

After analysing the results of the consultation process listed above, it is possible to categorise the input into (i) Needs and challenges, (ii) Opportunities, (iii) Solutions and recommendations proposed.

i. **Needs and challenges**

Stakeholders from across civil society, youth networks, trade unions, NGOs, business associations, public authorities, and academia have raised urgent concerns about the multiple and interconnected challenges hindering generational renewal in agriculture and rural areas.

Access to land is recognised as one of the most significant barriers to entry for young and new farmers. Land prices remain high in many regions. Prices are exacerbated by land concentration, speculative investments, competition from other sectors such as renewable energy and the absence of coordinated land mobility instruments across the EU. As mentioned in the Youth Policy Dialogue of 7 May 2025, the average price of arable land in Luxembourg in 2023 exceeded €40,000 per hectare, compared to an EU average of around €11,791 per hectare⁷. In addition, intergenerational dynamics often complicate **farm succession**, as older farmers may face emotional or practical obstacles to transferring their land and knowledge, including fears over housing and loss of purpose post-retirement. **Inadequate pension schemes** further reinforce this issue, as many farmers continue working and receiving CAP support well past retirement age, effectively turning it into a social safety net, limiting opportunities for younger generations to access land.

Stakeholders expressed concern that national definitions of ‘**active farmer**’ remain too vague, allowing large-scale operations managing thousands of hectares, and even absentee landowners, to claim substantial subsidies. These structural imbalances can discourage new entrants. Moreover, past opposition of some Member States to cap direct payments at €100,000 or €200,000 further entrenches these inequalities.

Economic viability emerged as a major concern during the consultation process. Poor infrastructure and income-related challenges significantly affect farmers, hindering their efficiency and productivity. Young farmers who took part in the consultations pointed out that they struggle to secure a **stable living wage** due to volatile agricultural markets, weak bargaining power within the food supply chain, and the perceived negative impacts of international trade agreements that disadvantage EU producers. Strong consensus

⁷ [Agricultural land prices and rents - statistics - Statistics Explained - Eurostat](#)

emerged, especially during the Youth Policy Dialogues that ensuring fair prices for agricultural products would be one of the most impactful measures to improve income security and support generational renewal.

Access to loans and capital is a major bottleneck for young farmers, particularly for organic and small-scale farmers, as banks often view them as high-risk clients. The high initial investment needed to start a farm, combined with insufficient or untargeted financial instruments, dissuades potential new entrants.

Stakeholders highlighted the urgent need for **better support systems during the ‘emergence period’**, which refers to the critical phase between a young person’s initial interest in farming and the actual establishment of their farm, which often lasts around three years. Associations, agricultural chambers, and peer networks were seen as playing an essential role in helping young farmers navigate this volatile period, especially given the high dropout rates.

Living and working conditions were also raised as major barriers to entering or remaining in agriculture. Many farmers, particularly those in remote or climate-affected areas, report working seven days a week for long hours, often without basic social protection, healthcare, or access to replacement services. Farming is widely perceived as unattractive by some young people in part due to poor work-life balance. A lack of holidays, long shifts, and minimal mental health support contribute to burnout and even higher dropout rates. The **decline or limited availability of rural public services**, such as transportation, healthcare, education, and digital connectivity, further accelerates rural depopulation, making life in these areas increasingly difficult.

At the same time, **excessive administrative burdens, rapidly changing rules and regulations, and complex procedures for accessing support** discourage younger generations from entering the farming profession. Stakeholders also referred to deeper structural barriers, including the persistence of **outdated and rigid inheritance-based models of succession**.

Environmental and climate risks also weigh heavily on the future of farming. The sector faces increasing exposure to extreme weather events and water scarcity while the tools available to de-risk farming, such as insurance schemes, are underused or underdeveloped. Stakeholders underlined the need for increased public investment in water infrastructure to help the sector adapt to the impacts of climate change. Moreover, while digitalisation and technological innovation are seen as vital for the future of farming, they often raise operating costs, posing additional barriers for new and small-scale entrants

ii. Opportunities

Despite these challenges, stakeholders highlighted a wide range of opportunities to revitalise European agriculture and rural territories.

One is the **growing interest among young people in agro-ecological, organic, and sustainable forms of farming**. In some countries, such as Austria, there is a clear trend toward farming models that align with public values like biodiversity protection⁸

Engaging young people and innovation were also identified as powerful levers for change. Many young people, including those from urban backgrounds, are increasingly

⁸ [Area under organic farming | Indicators \(all countries\) | Europe's environment 2025 \(EEA\)](#)

drawn to agriculture for lifestyle and ecological reasons. Stakeholders pointed to a growing ecosystem of initiatives, such as innovation hubs, urban-to-rural mobility schemes, and co-living or cooperative farming models, that can make farming more accessible and attractive. Good examples⁹ include Germany, where a pilot incubator programme supports young agricultural entrepreneurs; and Italy, where a Tuscan project applies cooperative principles to test innovative actions.

Intergenerational collaboration and peer-to-peer learning are seen as particularly promising. For example, the Czech Agricultural University offers agricultural advisory and training support through workshops and mentoring programs led by experienced farmers. In Germany, networks of young farmers are particularly valued by farmers who might otherwise struggle to engage with their peers.

There is also a growing appreciation for the diversity of engaging young people in farming. Some young entrants prefer managerial or entrepreneurial roles in agri-business while others value working with the land. Recognising and supporting this variety is also key to creating a more inclusive rural economy.

Another opportunity expressed by stakeholders lies in adopting **more territorial and integrated approaches to rural development**. The alignment of the CAP instruments with other EU policies such as Erasmus+ or the cohesion policy can help support rural strategies focused on young people. Initiatives like LEADER/CLLD and Smart Villages are proving effective at tailoring interventions to local contexts and needs. Stakeholders suggested using these tools to build stronger connections between young farmers and local cooperatives, SMEs, and civil society organisations to ensure strong local ties and social cohesion.

Digital tools and AI-driven solutions also offer innovative pathways to reduce the administrative burden faced by farmers, freeing up time and resources for innovation and sustainability. Some Member States are already experimenting with such tools, and pilot cases. For example, stakeholders highlighted the Estonian model, where pilot projects demonstrated a 90% reduction in administrative burden by 90%¹⁰. This suggests real potential for transformative change driven by digital tools and AI.

The current **policy momentum and broad recognition of the importance of generational renewal** provides a unique window of opportunity to boost cross-sectoral cooperation and deliver integrated, forward-looking strategies for generational renewal.

iii. **Proposed solutions and recommendations**

Stakeholders offered a wide array of proposals to address these challenges and seize existing opportunities.

Foremost among them is the call to **improve access to land**. Tools such as public land banks, land-matching platforms, and targeted financial support during generational transition periods were widely endorsed. The example of Ireland's Land Mobility Service, which connects retiring and aspiring farmers, was frequently cited as a good practice¹¹.

⁹ EUROPEAN COMMISSION – Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development – Unit A.3 (2025): Assessment of generational renewal strategies across EU Member States – Report

¹⁰ [Prime Minister Michal: Estonia has effective solutions for reducing Europe's administrative burden | Eesti Vabariigi Valitsus](#)

¹¹ [About Us The Land Mobility Service](#)

Ongoing work on the EU Observatory on Farmland was seen as a step forward in monitoring and regulating access and ownership patterns. Some groups would go further and support the establishment of an EU-level Agricultural Land Directive to complement national legislation, curb land speculation, and make land markets more transparent and accessible. However, there is no consensus among stakeholders on this initiative. In addition, the EU treaties reserve the power to govern land ownership and land-use planning exclusively to the Member States.

Improving economic viability for young farmers is a key priority. Many stakeholders called to strengthen CAP mechanisms that ensure fair prices and income stability. Proposals include revisiting trade agreements that could disadvantage EU farmers, increasing CAP budget allocations for young and small-scale farmers, and developing public instruments such as price regulation mechanisms and public procurement prioritising local and organic food.

Emphasis was placed on targeting funds more effectively towards young, female, family-run, and small-scale farms, as well as those located in regions facing natural constraints, in order to maintain agricultural production across all territories. The need for a fair and transparent agri-food value chain was also emphasised, including through stronger producer organisations and mandatory supply contracts. Fiscal incentives were also recommended, including differentiated VAT rates to encourage healthy and sustainable consumption patterns. For instance, reducing VAT on local products or taxing ultra-processed foods at higher rates.

Enhancing the quality of life in rural areas was recognised as important as farm profitability. Investment in rural transport, healthcare, housing, and digital infrastructure is seen as essential to making rural territories viable and attractive.

In parallel, stakeholders recommended stronger **enforcement of social rights and labour protections**, including properly implementing CAP's social conditionality and the adoption of binding EU-wide rules to safeguard workers against exploitation. Connected to this, stakeholders also pointed out the need for national authorities to enforce labour rights on farms.

Supporting part-time farming was highlighted as a viable model that could improve work-life balance, particularly for new entrants. Tackling social isolation, especially among farmers who inherit land but live and work alone, was also raised. To address these challenges, stakeholders called for improved access to **relief services** that allow farmers to take breaks or attend to personal needs without jeopardising their operations. **Mental health support** was also emphasised as a growing necessity, with calls for dedicated services and outreach in rural areas to support well-being across the farming community.

Education and training emerged as another cornerstone of generational renewal. Stakeholders urged the EU and Member States to expand inclusive advisory systems and lifelong learning opportunities, especially in agro-ecology, entrepreneurship, and farm management. Mentorship schemes and emotional support for both generations during the handover process were recommended to facilitate smoother transitions, along with targeted support to help young farmers navigate finance, administrative processes, and legal bureaucracy before and during their farming careers.

Stakeholders advocated for **policies that actively support women and young people** from non-farming and urban backgrounds. Better alignment between agricultural, labour, education, and territorial development policies would help ensure a more coherent strategy,

and participatory governance tools such as LEADER were identified as ways to simplify access to support and boost ownership among young people.

There was strong consensus that generational renewal must not be pursued in isolation. Rather, it should form part of a broader rural development strategy that recognises farming as an anchor of vibrant, inclusive, and resilient rural communities. This includes supporting diversified economic models, such as multi-functional farming, rural tourism, renewable energy integration that avoids land-use conflicts, and short food supply chains that reconnect producers and consumers.

6. HOW FEEDBACK WAS TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT

Stakeholder views on the challenges, opportunities and the actions needed for generational renewal in the EU were taken into account as far as possible. The generational renewal strategy includes an action plan with specific actions addressing challenges and opportunities highlighted in the public consultation and presented above.

The strategy is structured around core strands reflecting the main contributions from stakeholders. The strands are **access to land, access to credit and finance, knowledge and skills, fair living conditions** (including access to services and overall quality of life) and **succession and retirement**.

Stakeholders identified key barriers to **access to land**, including high prices, land concentration, and difficulties in farm succession, which directly informed the proposed actions under the CAP and other EU policies. For instance, the call for better land mobility and transparency is reflected in initiatives such as producer organisation-led support for farm succession, support for land mobility schemes, development of the EU Observatory on Farmland, and several studies on financialisation and land prices to improve market transparency. Stakeholder proposals for alternative ownership models and targeted financial support are also addressed through support for cooperative land management, the involvement of state-owned financial institutions, and research on land governance and taxation.

Access to capital and credit was also flagged as a major bottleneck, particularly for small-scale and organic producers, due to high start-up costs and income instability. In response, the action plan includes the promotion of tailored loan and guarantee funds with reduced interest rates and collateral requirements. Member States are encouraged to address this in their generational renewal strategies through higher grant rates and bonus points for underrepresented groups, such as young women. Further actions include dedicated European Investment Bank (EIB) lending envelopes and InvestEU+ support to help young farmers acquire or expand their farms.

Stakeholders emphasised the need for better **education and training** opportunities to support generational renewal, particularly in entrepreneurship, agro-ecology, and navigating legal and financial processes. The action plan responds with a strengthening of Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation Systems (AKIS) and advisory services, including mentoring schemes for young farmers and succession planning training for older generations. Under other EU policies, programmes such as Erasmus+ and ALMA (Aim, Learn, Master, Achieve)¹² will be adapted to support young farmer's mobility and skill development, matching the stakeholder call for more opportunities in this area. At the Member State level, measures include modernising agricultural education, promoting

¹² [ALMA: an active inclusion initiative for young people - Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion](#)

flexible and part-time learning formats, and encouraging peer networks and operational groups to boost innovation and intergenerational collaboration.

Most stakeholders highlighted the importance of **fair living conditions** as essential for generational renewal. In response, the strategy proposes actions under the CAP such as support for diversification beyond farming, continued support for LEADER/CLLD, relief services, relief services, and improved mental health support for farmers. These actions aim to improve work-life balance and reduce social isolation, which were key concerns raised during the consultation.

Moreover, further measures related to rural housing, transport, digital infrastructure, and access to services respond directly to the stakeholder view that attractive, well-connected rural areas are a prerequisite for young people to remain in or return to rural areas.

Stakeholders highlighted that **inadequate pension schemes** often delay retirement, limiting opportunities for younger farmers. They emphasised the need for secure income to allow retiring farmers to exit and called for **succession planning** beyond family transfers, supporting both generations. In response, the strategy proposes actions at EU (CAP and other policies), national, and stakeholder levels to ensure the CAP does not replace pension schemes, encouraging Member States to strengthen farmer pension systems and supporting advisory services for succession planning.

Several actions proposed by stakeholders fall within Member State's powers and/or require coordination with Member States. The implementation of these actions will depend on Member States' readiness to engage. The Commission stands ready to support and complement national efforts in this area.

ANNEX 1. FACTUAL REPORT OF THE PUBLIC CONSULTATION – CALL FOR EVIDENCE

1. Introduction

In her political guidelines ⁽¹³⁾, Commission President von der Leyen highlighted the importance of supporting generational renewal in agriculture. This priority was reflected both in the mandate given to Commissioner Hansen ⁽¹⁴⁾ and in the vision for agriculture and food ⁽¹⁵⁾, where the Commission undertook to present a strategy on this topic in 2025. The initiative aims to address the demographic challenges facing the EU's agricultural sector by attracting and supporting young and entrepreneurial farmers. It intends to ensure a sustainable, competitive, innovative, and diversified sector by tackling barriers such as limited access to land, credit, and rural services, and addressing societal perceptions of farming.

The feedback period of the call for evidence spanned **four weeks**, from 16 June 2025 to 14 July 2025. It was carried out through the Commission's '[Have Your Say](#)' website.

The consultation was publicised on the Commission's website and social media accounts. Furthermore, youth organisations active in rural and agriculture sector were informed via a targeted email. The initiative was also publicised in the agri-press network, weekly newsletter and news items.

2. Contributions received

2.1. Overview

All qualitative responses and supporting documents (translated by using a Commission internal AI-powered tool into English) were processed by Commission staff.

Summaries were generated using the help of Commission internal AI-powered tools.

A total of 101 valid responses were received. One of the companies that responded to the call for evidence provided four different pieces of feedback, which have been grouped into a single contribution, as they come from the same source. Therefore, the feedback totals 101.

2.2. Respondents

27.88% (29) were NGOs, 18.27% (19) were EU citizens, 14.42% (15) were business associations and 12.50% (13) were public authorities. The remaining feedback was obtained from trade unions (8), companies (5), academic/research institutions (4) and one non-EU citizen.

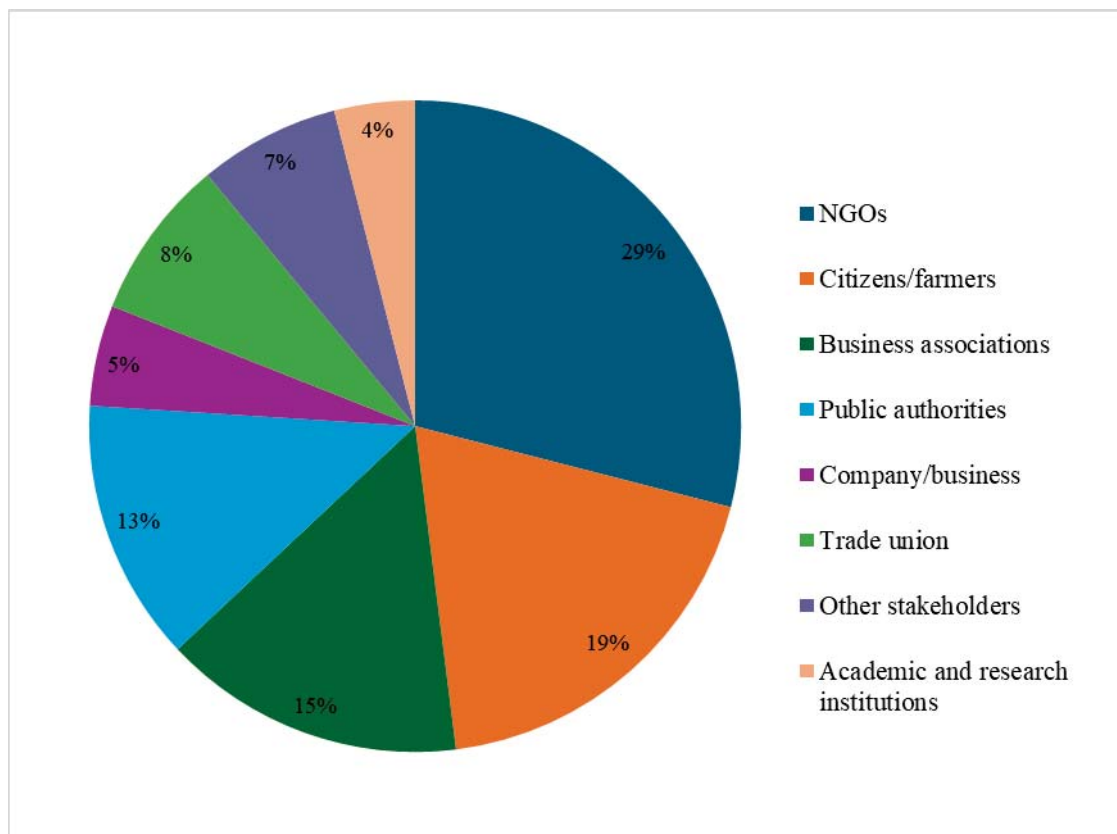
	%	n.
NGOs	29%	29
Citizens/farmers	19%	19

¹³ [Political guidelines for the next European Commission 2024-2029](#), Ursula von der Leyen.

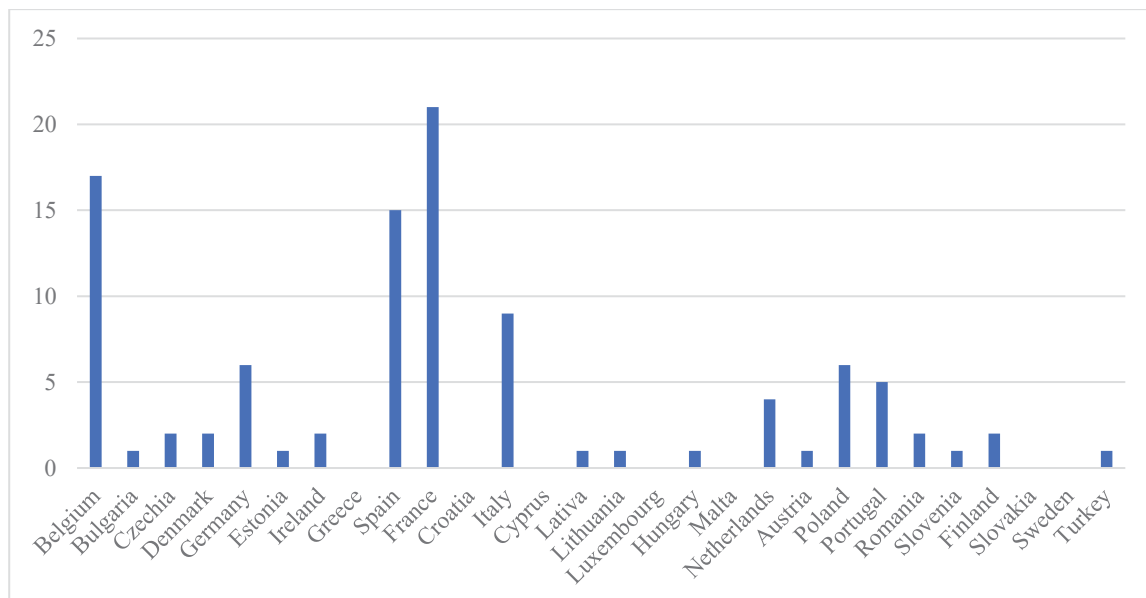
¹⁴ [Mission letter to Commissioner Hansen](#). Ursula von der Leyen.

¹⁵ [Vision for Agriculture and Food - European Commission](#)

Business associations	15%	15
Public authorities	13%	13
Company/business	5%	5
Trade union	8%	8
Other stakeholders	7%	7
Academic and research institutions	4%	4
TOTAL EU	99%	100
non-EU citizen		1
TOTAL	100%	101



In terms of countries, most respondents (21%) were from France, followed by those who declared Belgium as their country of origin (17%), (Belgium is often where EU associations are registered), Spain (15%) and Italy (9%). Other contributions (38%) came from remaining 16 Member States. One contribution came from outside the EU (Türkiye).



3. Results

EU citizens / farmers

Overall, the feedback highlights that the EU's agricultural sector is advocating for generational renewal by making farming more appealing and sustainable for young people. Key tools include ensuring financial stability, providing access to resources like land and technology, and simplifying bureaucratic processes. Challenges such as profitability, taxation, financing, and environmental mandates need addressing, with solutions like agro-ecology and tailored agricultural policies. Education, skill-building initiatives, and innovative practices are crucial for young farmers. Emphasising partnerships, harmonising rules and regulations, and promoting rural development are essential. Proposed solutions encompass land-sharing, fiscal incentives, mentorship networks, and alternative farming models, supported by multilevel governance and strong territorial cohesion policies.

Company/business

The contributions mention significant challenges faced by young farmers and small to medium-sized farms within the EU. Key issues include bureaucratic hurdles, cross-border trade difficulties, and fragmented authorisation systems for agricultural products (e.g. pesticides) which hinder business operations and access to innovation. There is a call to harmonise EU systems, particularly in recognising qualifications and licences to make cross-border work and economic integration easier. In addition, the responses highlight the need for more direct and flexible financial support, particularly for younger farmers and small-scale operations. They propose strategies to integrate diverse rural activities and suggest creating European funds to support multi-functional rural projects. Overall, the responses emphasise the importance of simplifying and harmonising procedures to boost sustainable growth and generational renewal in the EU.

NGOs

NGOs strongly argue that for farming to remain a viable career, it must be both sustainable and profitable for young people. This means tackling key challenges (access to resources,

income and risk, rural attractiveness). To address these issues, NGOs advocate for a multi-faceted approach. The CAP and other EU policies need major reform, including a dedicated focus and increased budget for young farmers. Support should also be tailored for new entrants and women, with provisions for retiring farmers to ensure smooth transitions and knowledge transfer.

NGOs call for investment in education, tailored advisory services, knowledge sharing, and the inclusion of young farmers into innovation programmes. Holistic, continuous support, recognising the role of rural youth organisations, is key.

Future farming practices, NGOs underline, should align with public values like animal welfare, biodiversity, and climate action. Younger generations are drawn to ethical, sustainable, and resilient models, and funding should be tied to these outcomes.

Business associations

The feedback from business associations highlights the challenges in achieving generational renewal in European agriculture. High land prices and limited availability hinder young people's entry into the profession, suggesting the need for land transfer schemes and tailored financial support. EU agricultural policies require reforms to better support young farmers, streamline bureaucratic processes, and improve direct support. Investment in vocational training focused on sustainability, digitalisation, and innovation is crucial, as are improvements in rural infrastructure and services. Specific sectors, like viticulture, face unique challenges that need targeted support. Emphasising modern technologies and cooperative models could attract young farmers. Coordinated actions in financial support, policy reform, and infrastructure investment are vital for Europe's sustainable agricultural future.

Public authority

European regions face significant challenges in generational renewal in agriculture, marked by a wave of retirements and high entry barriers for young farmers, such as access to land and capital. There is a strong push to leverage the CAP to provide financial and advisory support, simplify administrative processes, and promote sustainable business models. Emphasis is placed on boosting the sector's economic viability and social appeal to attract new entrants, ensure smooth succession, and support rural development through flexible, region-specific strategies.

Academy and research institutions

The responses from academia highlights that generational renewal in European agriculture is essential for maintaining the sector's productivity and resilience. Farmers and wage-earners play a pivotal role, not only in producing food and energy but also in safeguarding rural landscapes and biodiversity. Coherent strategies are needed to tackle the challenges posed by an ageing farming population and attract young people into the profession, particularly those without a background in farming. These strategies should involve support policies and encourage intergenerational cooperation, allowing older farmers to share their resources and expertise with younger farmers who bring fresh perspectives and innovations. By encouraging such collaborations, supported by a network of agencies, the future of European agriculture can be secured while sustaining vibrant rural communities.

Trade unions

Trade unions emphasise the urgent need for profound structural changes to ensure generational renewal in European agriculture. They advocate for pivoting current policies in support of young farmers by guaranteeing long-term access to land, fair prices, and dignified incomes. Increasing the CAP budget allocation for young farmers is crucial, along with creating tailored financial and support mechanisms. Emphasis is placed on promoting agro-ecological practices and organising smooth farm transfer processes. In addition, policies should adapt to climate risks and provide targeted support to less attractive intermediate areas to maintain their vitality and contribute to regional ecosystems.

Other stakeholders

Feedback from other groups advocate for a comprehensive approach to generational renewal in agriculture. They emphasise the need for sustainable practices, financial support, easier access to land, and improved rural infrastructure. They also call to reduce administrative burdens and encourage flexible business models. The importance of integrating intergenerational mentorship programmes, preventing land speculation, and supporting local community-led development initiatives is also considered as important factors to attract and retain young people in the agricultural sector.

Disclaimer: This document should be regarded solely as a summary of the contributions made by stakeholders. It cannot in any circumstances be regarded as the official position of the Commission or its services. Contributions to public consultations cannot be considered as a representative sample of the views of the EU population.