

European Coordination Via Campesina Youth Articulation Position Document on the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) Reform

July 2021

We are young people, passionate and dedicated to agriculture. Some of us are farmers already, but most of us are trying to become such. We strive for food sovereignty, the safeguard of biodiversity, and the respect of the rights of peasants and agricultural workers. For us, agriculture is not only about producing food, it is about taking a political stance.

Why this position document

In the final phase of the CAP reform, we - the Youth articulation of the European Coordination Via Campesina - feel the urge to express our position. We fear that the reformed CAP will continue to neglect the real needs of young farmers, and in particular small, agroecological farmers. Moreover, we expect that the CAP will continue to miss one of its main objectives: facilitating the entrance of new farmers. This is the short version of a longer position document that we have produced.

Our demands

We demand Member States to allocate a **sufficient, mandatory budget to young farmers** and to increase the maximum level of funding beyond 3% of the overall CAP budget, which seems to us insufficient and unambitious. Given the difficulty of young farmers and new entrants to start an agricultural activity, we believe that all new entrants should receive **direct timely financial aid to start operating** (e.g. 25.000 euro).

We ask for a **more radical change in the way subsidies and other financial aid are allocated**: not based on the amount of owned land, capital, or capacity for investments but on the **delivery of socio-ecological practices and services** to local communities and for the common good.

We ask for the **inclusion of social conditionality** in the CAP. Farms that violate human and youth rights must stop receiving support from the EU and Member States. We particularly want to see the **role of young women and young migrants** in agriculture clearly recognized and supported.

We ask for the establishment of an **EU Civil Dialogue Group dedicated to young farmers** to enhance and diversify their participation in decision-making spaces and processes, based on the principle of food sovereignty.

We ask the EU to **stop supporting Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) and mining projects** because of their enormous social and environmental costs in both the Global North and the Global South and because they undermine food sovereignty in both Member States and import countries.

We reject the **over-reliance on digitalisation and new technologies including new Genetically Modified Organisms, or New Breeding Techniques (NBT)**. We instead **support peasant technologies and innovation**, based on agroecology and accessible to everybody. For us, this is the only way for agriculture to contribute to the objectives of the European Green Deal, the Farm to Fork Strategy and the Biodiversity Strategy.