



COMMISSION  
DES  
AFFAIRES  
EUROPÉENNES

Paris, le 18 décembre 2024

**POLITICAL OPINION**  
**on the future of the Common Agricultural Policy**

The European affairs committee of the French Senate,

Having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, in particular Articles 38, 39, 42 and 43,

Having regard to Regulation (EU) 2021/1119 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 June 2021 establishing a framework for achieving climate neutrality and amending Regulations (EC) No 401/2009 and (EU) 2018/1999, referred to as the ‘European Climate Act’ or the ‘Green Deal’,

Having regard to the ‘Farm to Fork’ strategy presented by the European Commission on 20 May 2020, the conclusions adopted on this strategy by the Agriculture and Fisheries Council on 19 October 2020, and the European Parliament resolution of 20 October 2021 on a ‘Farm to Table’ strategy for a fair, healthy and environmentally friendly food system, 2020/2260(INI),

Having regard to Regulations (EU) 2021/2115, 2021/2116 and 2021/2117 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 2 December 2021, reforming the common agricultural policy (CAP) for the period 2023/2027,

Having regard to Regulation 2024/1468 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 May 2024 amending Regulations (EU) 2021/2115 and (EU) 2021/2116 as regards standards for good agricultural and environmental condition, climate, environment and animal welfare programmes, modification of CAP strategic plans, review of CAP strategic plans and exemptions from controls and penalties,

Having regard to Senate Resolution no. 130 (2016-2017) of 8 September 2017 on the future of the common agricultural policy up to 2020,

Having regard to Senate Resolution no. 116 (2017-2018) of 6 June 2018 in favour of preserving a strong common agricultural policy, combined with maintaining its budgetary resources,

Having regard to Senate Resolution no. 96 (2018-2019) of 7 May 2019 on the reform of the common agricultural policy,

Having regard to Senate Resolution no. 104 (2019-2020) of 19 June 2020 calling for the strengthening of the exceptional measures of the CAP to deal with the consequences of the covid-19 pandemic, and the affirmation of the effective primacy of the objectives of the CAP over European competition rules,

Having regard to Senate Resolution no. 126 (2021-2022) of 6 May 2022 calling, in view of the war in Ukraine, for a reorientation of the European agricultural strategy resulting from the Green Deal to ensure the European Union's food autonomy,

Having regard to Senate Resolution no. 129 (2023-2024) of 17 May 2024 on the Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Regulations (EU) 2021/2115 and (EU) 2021/2116 as regards standards for good agricultural and environmental condition, climate, environment and animal welfare programmes, amendment of strategic plans under the CAP, review of strategic plans under the CAP and exemptions from controls and penalties,

Having regard to Enrico Letta's report on the single market, 'Much more than a market', published in April 2024,

Having regard to the final report of the Strategic Dialogue on the future of agriculture in the European Union, 'A common perspective for agriculture and food in Europe', published in September 2024,

Having regard to the report by Mario Draghi, 'The future of European competitiveness', published in September 2024,

Considering the European Union's status as an agricultural power, its essential contribution to European and global food security and its export potential in the agricultural and agri-food sector;

Considering that in recent years the accumulation of geopolitical, economic, climatic and sanitary crises has considerably tested the resilience of European agriculture, accelerated the erosion of its competitiveness and highlighted the urgent need for the European Union to guarantee its food sovereignty, reduce its dependence and better protect farmers against risks;

Considering that the latest reform of the Common Agricultural Policy, by simultaneously strengthening environmental conditionality and the margins for manoeuvre granted to the Member States, has affected the overall coherence of this policy, created greater complexity and an increased administrative burden for farmers and national administrations, and exacerbated intra-community distortions of competition;

Considering that the increase in the level of environmental ambition has coincided with a reduction in the protection of the internal market through the signing of free trade agreements and with a reduction in the European budget devoted to the CAP, the latter having been cut by 85 billion euros in value for the period 2021-2027 compared to the years 2014-2020;

Considering that, as a result, the CAP budget is not sufficient to meet the many objectives assigned to it in economic, environmental and socio-territorial terms, with the corollary of an upsurge in emergency measures financed and allocated in an uncoordinated manner by the Member States, as a result of which spending is less efficient;

Whereas the attrition of the CAP budget thus feeds the risk of an insidious renationalisation of this policy and a disintegration of its common architecture;

Whereas CAP direct aids represent on average 53% of the income of European farms, and therefore any change in the distribution of these aids would have major consequences for farmers' incomes and the competitiveness of farms;

Considering that the Draghi report, highlighting Europe's falling competitiveness, points to the urgent need to boost growth and productivity and recommends, to this end, an annual investment surplus of 750 billion euros in the European Union's economy;

Stresses the essential role played by the CAP in strengthening the resilience and sustainability of our agriculture, and thus preserving the European Union's agricultural and food sovereignty, as well as its strategic autonomy and export vocation;

Calls for agriculture to be repositioned at the heart of Europe's strategic priorities and for the the community-oriented nature of this policy to be defended;

Calls, to this end, for the CAP post-2027 to benefit from a separate, secure budget that is commensurate with the challenges facing European agriculture;

Calls, with this in mind, for a definitive end to the erosion of appropriations allocated to the CAP, by providing this policy, on a like-for-like basis, with a budget that is at least stable in constant euros over the 2028-2034 programming period, compared with the 2021-2027 period, which implies an increase of around 32 billion euros in value terms;

Considers that the crisis experienced throughout the European Union by the agricultural world, which bears witness in particular to the contradictory injunctions and unfair competition with which farmers are confronted, makes it more necessary than ever to return to the foundations of the CAP and therefore calls for this policy to be refocused on the objectives assigned to it by the European Treaties, namely to increase agricultural productivity, ensure a satisfactory standard of living for the agricultural community, stabilise markets, guarantee security of supply and ensure reasonable prices for consumers;

Calls therefore for the CAP to give priority to revitalising European agricultural production, stresses in this respect the need to combine the objectives of economic and environmental sustainability and calls, with this in mind, for all available levers to be mobilised, particularly research, innovation and the development of new technologies, including digital technologies;

Points out that strengthening the competitiveness and resilience of farms, an essential prerequisite if they are to successfully complete the necessary environmental and energy transition, requires substantial investment;

Stresses, in this respect, the need to make greater use of the positive externalities of agriculture and to opt for virtuous and profitable incentives to support the implementation of agro-ecological practices;

Considers that environmental standards must not be allowed to undermine the competitiveness of the European agricultural sector, at the risk of automatically leading to an increase in agricultural and food imports whose compliance with these same standards is not guaranteed;

Reiterates its commitment to the principle of reciprocity in international trade, calls on the World Trade Organisation to ensure that this principle is respected, and asks the European Commission to do more to ensure that the sanitary, environmental and production rules applicable to imports of agricultural products from third countries are identical to those applied to European Union products;

Deplores the European Commission's announcement of the conclusion of trade negotiations with the Mercosur countries, even though the guarantees put forward by the Commission do not include the creation of 'mirror clauses' and several recent audits have highlighted shortcomings in the quality control and traceability of Brazilian meat exports to the EU;

Calls, in order to put the needs and expectations of farmers back at the heart of the CAP, for a break with a fussy and technocratic approach that turns producers into mere executors, by continuing efforts to simplify and reduce the administrative burden and by devising rules that are less complex, more readable and more coherent;

Affirms that the CAP must ensure an adequate, stable and sustainable income for producers, which implies in particular strengthening the position of farmers in the supply chain and combating unfair commercial practices in order to guarantee satisfactory remuneration for agricultural production, while providing consumers with accessible, high-quality products;

Calls for the considerable repercussions for agriculture of continuing the process of tariff liberalisation with Ukraine to be anticipated as soon as possible, as well as the enlargement of the European Union to include this candidate country, which, in view of its agricultural area, could claim aid representing almost 20% of the CAP budget and which also benefits from major comparative advantages in terms of inputs and labour;

Calls for the development of more common European tools for managing climate and health risks, including in particular mutual funds and insurance instruments, to strengthen the resilience of the Union's agricultural models in all their diversity.