

Ms Ursula von der Leyen
President
European Commission

Mr Piotr Serafin
Commissioner for Budget, Anti Fraud
and Public Administration

Copy:

EU Head of State and
Government

Mr Christophe Hansen
Commissioner for Agriculture
and Food

Brussels, 14 February 2025

Subject: Future EU's Multiannual Financial Framework

Dear President von der Leyen,

Dear Commissioner Serafin,

In light of the preparation of the upcoming Commission's proposals on the Union's Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) for the post 2027 period, the undersigned organisations would like to bring some particular issues to your attention.

The political Guidelines for the European Commission 2024-2029 and your address to the European Parliament in July last year, clearly recognised and underlined the importance and relevance of agriculture, rural areas and food to Europe, its economy and their citizens.

Against the backdrop of your statement "(...) I will defend an EU income policy for Europe's farmers, and will ensure that the EU budget and our common agricultural policy is targeted" and considering the upcoming publication of the Commission's Vision for the Future of EU Agriculture and Food, we see with concern ideas of possible reallocation of EU expenditure within a Single Fund that, if followed, would completely transform the structure and governance of the next MFF and the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP).

Whilst the principle of simplification is supported by our organisations, we have deep concerns that **the considered changes, if introduced, would neither bring simplicity nor less red tape** for the following reasons:

- The idea of increased simplification and flexibility that implies the reallocation of EU expenditure within a Single Fund and with National Plans for all funds **is contrary to the targeting of support necessary** in some key policy areas, particularly the Common Agriculture Policy (CAP). Established in 1962 and financed through the EU budget, the CAP functions as a partnership between society, the agricultural sector and the agri-food chain. It brings EU added value through guaranteeing a stable food supply and affordable prices for consumers, supporting farmers' incomes, achieving economic, environment and social sustainability and contributing to vibrant rural areas.
- This exercise would lead to disastrous consequences for the EU agricultural sector, to **more complexity and uncertainty** for our 9 million farmers and would put at risk the stability and performance of the EU agri-food chain, increasing differences among Member States and resulting in the **fragmentation of the Single Market**, one of the building blocks of the EU and key blueprints for the term 2024-2029.

- It would also **undermine the multiannual investment** approach so necessary for farmers to improve their competitiveness and become more sustainable, while contributing to the stability and sustainability of the agri-food chain.
- This idea would also **contradict the recent report of the Strategic Dialogue** for the Future of EU Agriculture which calls not only for a "dedicated budget for the CAP" but also for separate (and individual) funds for an agricultural transition (AJTF) and nature restoration, outside the CAP.
- Last, but certainly not least, and based on the experience of the CAP National Strategic Plans, **the preparation of streamlined "National Single Plans"** for all EU funds, followed by the subsequent scrutiny, analysis, submission of comments to Member States, receiving amended plans, re-analysis and final approval of these single plans by the Commission services **would represent a task of gigantic proportions likely to take very long and being very burdensome.**

In our view, an increased and dedicated CAP budget remains fundamental for ensuring competitiveness, food security, balanced sustainability, for guaranteeing a decent income for farmers and securing stability and economic performance of the EU agri-food sector.

Additionally, and considering the current geo-political tensions and its impacts on the economy, we call for the inclusion, in the MFF of a flexible mechanism to adjust the committed appropriations to the real observed inflation (and not the projected one).

The commonality and adequate support of the CAP, one of the EU's oldest, well established-policies, should be maintained and treasured as an enabler for a resilient, sustainable agricultural and agri-food sector, to ensure fair competitiveness in an European common market, achieve EU's food security together with vibrant rural areas.

Any proposal to dismantle this framework would undermine core values of the EU and endanger its unity and future.

We hope you will consider these concerns during the preparation of the proposal for the next MFF.

Yours sincerely,

