The average farm size of young farmers in EU-27 is 15.9 ha, somewhat larger than that of farmers over 35 years of age (11.6 ha).

The share of total holdings held by young farmers is currently 7% of the total and is still in decline in most EU-27 Member States.
The share of young farmers in total farm employment is currently 8% of the total and is still in decline in most EU-27 Member States.
• **Setting up of young farmers**
  A setting up support (combination of premium and interest rate subsidy up to max. of 55,000 euros) can be provided

  **3 conditions apply:**
  - The person applying must be < 40yrs old and setting up for the 1st time
  - They must be skilled and competent to farm
  - They must submit a business plan for the development of their farming activities

• **Modernisation of farms**
  A support can be provided to improve the overall performance of the agricultural holding with a possibility to offer a higher support rate for young farmers (+ 10 %)

• **Other RD measures not specifically designed for young farmers but also relevant for them such as vocational training, use of advisory services, etc**

• **RD measures in 2000-2006** – Almost all Member States included young farmers in their RD programmes (around 1.7 billion euros from the EC budget over the period)

• **RD measures for 2007-2013** – Member States have still to submit programmes but of those received most again include measures for young farmers
Almost 9 out of 10 (88 %) Europeans say that they think **agriculture and the rural areas are important** for Europe’s future.

**The main priorities of the CAP** should be:
- ensuring the safety and health of agricultural products (41 %),
- providing farmers with a decent standard of living (37 %) and
- ensuring fair prices for consumers (35 %).

**The CAP is performing quite well** in ensuring availability of supplies (positive evaluations outnumbering negative by 33 %), encouraging quality production (16 %) and - in one of the most important EU policy areas - ensuring the health and safety of agricultural products (with positive evaluations outnumbering negative by 14 %).

Europeans give a **whole-hearted endorsement of the ‘cross-compliance’ principle**, with very high proportions saying that they think a reduction of direct payments is justified in the cases of failing to reach food safety (86 %), animal welfare (84 %) and environmental (83 %) standards.

**They welcome the phasing out of production-based subsidies to be replaced by direct payments to farmers and more money for Rural Development policy.**

Many Europeans believe that **farmers have a particular responsibility**:
- in providing healthy and safe food (55 %)
- in protecting the environment (29 %)
- both in supplying the population with a diversity of quality products and ensuring the welfare of farm animals (20 %).

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1 Main findings of the special Eurobarometer survey (n.276) on “Europeans, agriculture and the CAP - 2006” (run Nov. - Dec. 2006, published 29 April 2007).