



## Language Version

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Due to a technical issue the French and German versions of this newsletter could not be sent to you directly. We are sorry for the inconvenience.

Please find here the:

- [French version](#)
- [German version](#)

## Project of the month



## Improving Slovenia's organic production capacity

Organically bred sheep and goats can help preserve the landscape and biodiversity in areas such as Slovenia's Sava Hills, where Rural Development Programme (RDP) funds have been successfully used to support the growth of an organic meat

business through investment in a slaughtering facility.

This RDP project resulted in the beneficiary being able to provide quality organic food for local consumers and increase the size of the farm's organic herd, thereby also improving the potential for livestock grazing to contribute to habitat conservation. Other useful outcomes of the RDP investment include an increase in consumer awareness about the availability of local organic products.

Read more about this investment project supporting organic agriculture and preserving natural capital.

[Find out more](#)

## News



## Agriculture MEPs approve agreement on EU farm policy reform

**The European Parliament's Agriculture Committee (COMAGRI) has approved a provisional deal on the CAP facilitating more environmentally friendly, fairer and more transparent agricultural policy from 2023 onwards.**

MEPs voted on 9 September for features of the provisional agreement that are being advanced through the co-decision process. COMAGRI's priorities confirm the Parliament's interest in biodiversity and climate commitments becoming core CAP elements, mainly by strengthening mandatory climate and environmentally friendly practices. MEPs also endorsed the proposals that: at least 10% of national direct payments target small and medium-sized farms; young farmers should benefit from at least 3% of the national CAP budgets; labour inspectors should by 2025 connect with CAP paying agencies to control breaches of EU labour rules; and insisted on increased transparency about final beneficiaries. The provisional agreement now needs to be approved in a Plenary session of the European Parliament, possibly in this November.

See the [European Parliament press release](#) for details.

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## Agricultural Ministers discuss strengthening rural-urban dialogue

**The Long-Term Vision for Rural Areas is a policy signal for Member States that can be reflected in CAP Strategic Plan designs - particularly in the integration of agricultural policy with other funds for rural regions.**

This was a key message from Commissioner Wojciechowski following an informal meeting of the EU Agriculture Ministers in Brdo pri Kranju, Slovenia earlier this month. Commissioner emphasised rural Europe's potential for taking advantage of the synergy that is available from better complementarity of EU policies and funds saying, "we need to use all possible funds, from the cohesion funds, also from the recovery funds."

Mr Wojciechowski stated that people in rural areas have the same rights of access to the same EU funds as people in urban areas and his [speech to the Ministers' meeting provided further information about the Vision 2040, Rural Action Plan, and Rural Pact](#).

### The new common agricultural policy: 2023-27

The new common agricultural policy will be key to securing the future of agriculture and forestry, as well as achieving the objectives of the European Green Deal.



On 25 June, 2021, negotiators of the European Parliament, the Council of the EU and the European Commission, agreed on the reform of the common agricultural policy (CAP). This provisional political agreement paves the way for the formal approval of the necessary legislation by the European Parliament and the Council in the autumn of 2021.

The new CAP, which starts in 2023, aims to foster a sustainable and competitive agricultural sector that can support the livelihoods of farmers and provide healthy and sustainable food for society, as well as vibrant rural areas.

Agriculture and rural areas are central to the [European Green Deal](#), and the new CAP will be a key tool in reaching the ambitions of the [Farm to Fork](#) and [biodiversity](#) strategies.

## EU website's latest CAP content

**In case you missed it during the summer period, the European Commission has launched a [set of webpages about the new Common Agricultural Policy](#).**

This online resource collates a wide range of information about different CAP topics including among others the new delivery model, key areas of reform, AKIS and latest developments.

Bookmark the sections you like to stay informed about with regards to the ongoing roll-out of CAP during the 2023-2027 period.



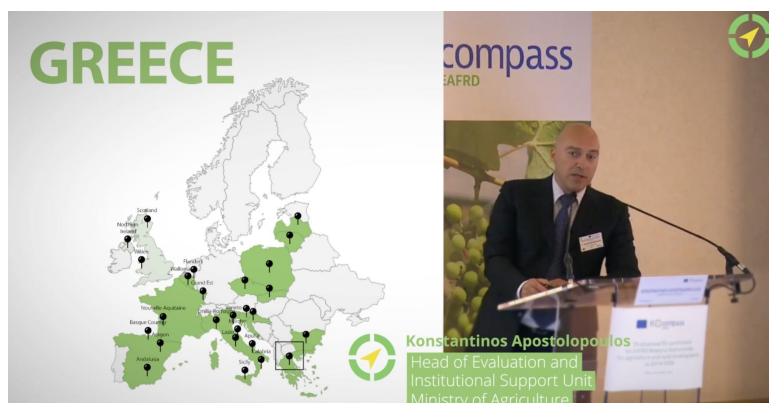
## European Parliament spotlights CAP support for young farmers

**MEPs heard from DG AGRI in September about the CAP's impact on generational renewal, local development and jobs in rural areas. Positive benefits from CAP support were confirmed alongside important challenges for CAP to tackle such as the ageing of farming populations.**

Notable lessons regarding the support for young farmers and other new entrants to the EU's agri-food sector included references to:

- CAP measures are being insufficient on their own to address main entry barriers into farming;
- a more strategic approach for generational renewal support across both Pillars is still needed; and
- developing integrated approaches to funding would help by combining CAP and non-CAP instruments.

DG AGRI's presentation to COMAGRI gives more information on the CAP [impact on generational renewal, local development, and jobs in rural areas](#).



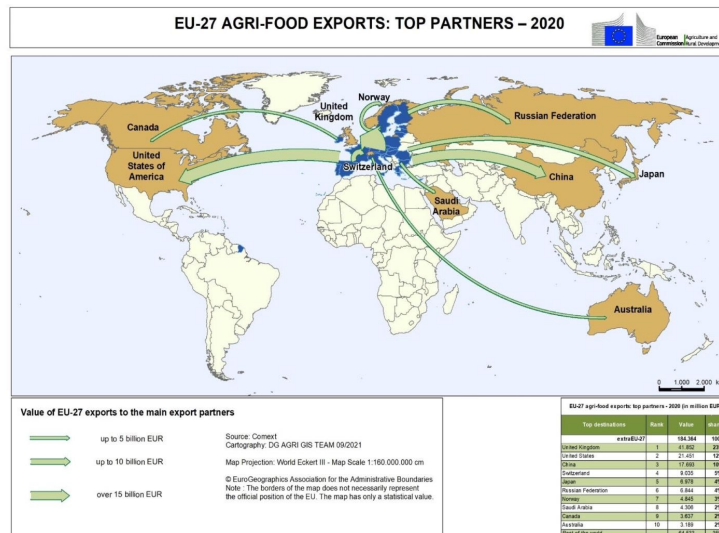
## Financial Instruments and CAP Strategic Plans

DG AGRI's Targeted Coaching service from [fi-compass](#) helps build capacity

**about financial instruments and is offered to Managing Authorities that are working on the preparation of their new CAP Strategic Plans.**

This service provides valuable and country-specific know-how about using the new simplified rules for financial instruments with fi-compass experts also sharing useful experience from Managing Authorities that have the experience of EAFRD financial instruments from the 2014-2020 period.

Here you may watch the latest [video about Targeted Coaching](#).



## EU continues to lead in global agri-food trade

**The EU has strengthened its position among the world's leading exporters of agri-food products and, despite the pandemic, the value of EU agri-food exports in 2020 reached €184 billion.**

Commenting on this EU achievement and its benefits for Member States' farmers, Janusz Wojciechowski, Commissioner for Agriculture, observed that "the success of agricultural trade is clearly linked to the Common Agricultural Policy which supports competitiveness and innovation, and also linked to the excellent reputation of our products as being safe, sustainably produced, nutritious and of high quality."

Read the newly published [Agri-food trade in 2020 report](#) for all the facts and figures on this CAP success story.



## Improving import standards for agricultural products

**The subject of fair food import standards is expected to be prominent for Agricultural Ministries during the French Presidency of the Council of the EU next year.**

Attention is being planned to focus on the application of EU health and environmental standards to imported agricultural and agri-food products. This will include animal welfare standards as well as processes and production methods. The aim is to identify concrete initiatives that ensure better conformity of EU fair food imports with World Trade Organisation rules. CAP's role will be reviewed in parallel with EU policy concerning the Environment, Health and Food Safety.

See the [common statement from the EU institutions](#) adopted with the political agreement on the CAP reform.



## Evaluation Knowledge Bank

A new Knowledge Bank containing more than 50 different practical project outputs and resources was launched by the European Evaluation Helpdesk for Rural Development to support evaluation and learning.

[The Evaluation Knowledge Bank](#) contents give insights into various outputs developed in initiatives and projects at the EU and Member States levels about data infrastructures and data use. It also provides a quick guide on potential use, showing how these outputs could be used for monitoring and evaluation of the CAP.

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## Networking Update

**Member States, National Rural Networks, and stakeholders will continue to receive EU rural networking support from the ENRD over the coming months, during the transition towards the launch of the EU CAP Network in 2022.**

This summer, the European Commission signed new contracts with external service providers to help deliver EU-level networking activities. This ongoing networking assistance will provide support to the extended Rural Development Programmes which now cover 2014-2022 and support Member States with the development of CAP Strategic Plans covering both Pillars.

Networking support is also being arranged to help progress preparations for the new national CAP networks.

## Publications

### **EU Rural Review 32: Long-Term Vision for Rural Areas**

**This [recent edition of the EU Rural Review](#) contains an interesting mix of articles and perspectives looking at the future resilience of rural areas in digital, environmental and social terms.**



<https://enrd.ec.europa.eu>



The content builds on the outcomes of the ENRD work on the [Long Term Rural Vision](#) and of [Rural Vision Week](#). Authors highlight that, to deal with all the issues relevant to our rural areas, the Vision has to go beyond agriculture, or demography or any individual policy. Content summarises the process towards the EU Long-Term Vision for Rural Areas, highlighting the role of digitalisation and green approaches to improving the main elements of a long-term vision for **stronger, connected, resilient and prosperous** rural futures.



## EU Rural Review 30 and Rural Connections now available in 6 languages

Download the latest [EU Rural Review](#) which looks at the future of rural areas in digital, environmental and social terms, as well as in terms of resilience.

This edition of [Rural Connections](#) highlights the [Rural Vision Week](#), a five-day interactive online conference focused on involving stakeholders with preparations for a long-term vision for the future of EU rural areas.

## 4th Meeting of the ENRD Thematic Group on European Green Deal and rural areas

The Highlights report of the [4th Meeting of the ENRD Thematic Group on European Green Deal and rural areas](#)



ENRD webinar

## Fourth meeting of the Thematic Group

### Highlights report

This fourth and concluding Thematic Group meeting focused on local and territorial environment and climate initiatives in promoting the green transition. These play an important role in generating collective action and local ownership, and provide an effective way to promote the uptake of environmental schemes among rural actors. Cooperation and exchanges between different stakeholders, the availability of expertise and advice, and sufficient economic incentives for farmers were recurring success factors in the cases presented. A number of complementary EAFRD/CAP interventions can be made available to facilitate cooperative and territorial environmental initiatives. Public support measures need to be flexible and simple enough to ensure uptake. Local authorities' recognition and support is also key to enable territorial schemes.

#### Event Information

**Date:** 20 May 2021  
**Location:** Webinar  
**Organisers:** ENRD Contact Point  
**Participants:** RDIP Managing Authorities, NMA and representatives of national ministries, EU institutions, representatives of farmer associations, environmental organisations, advisory organisations, local and territorial organisations.  
**Outcomes:** Exchanges on CAP interventions that can support local and territorial approaches contributing to CAP and EGD environmental and climate objectives.  
**Web page:** [4th meeting of the ENRD Thematic Group on the European Green Deal and Rural Areas](#)

### Examples of territorial approaches to the green transition

**Ita's Zaira Ambu** (Institut für angewandtes Stoffstrommanagement - Ifa, DE) presented **MUNITEE**, an EIP Agri Operational Group that helped municipalities in Germany's Rhineland Palatinate prevent soil erosion and flooding. The participating municipalities, research institute, farmers, water managers and nature conservation bodies tailored landscape management and agroforestry on the farmers' plots to address the issues. A financial model was developed whereby the municipality pays the farmers for energy crops produced by the new land management systems. Participating farmers benefited from CAP support for short rotation coppice, but the shift to agroforestry would require more significant long-term investment support.

**Ravariu Popa** (Fundatia Adept, RO) presented a pilot initiative that tested a Results-Based Payment Scheme (RBPS) for high-nature-value grassland management with farmers in two Romanian regions. The payment rates applied **ADEPT** were higher than those received by farmers under national AECM contracts for the same types of grassland. Participating farmers appreciated the flexibility of the scheme which, instead of imposing field management interventions, focused on the evolution of biodiversity indicators such as occurrence of certain flower species on the meadows. As a result, farmers also became more aware of biodiversity on their land. Similar schemes within the CAP, for example in Natura2000 areas and also in other MS, could be effective and help in achieving CAP environmental performance targets. Managing Authorities need to identify and apply specific expertise to design RBPS.

**Alexandra de Haan** (LEADER Állandó, FI) explained how the MA and the Local Action Group (LAG) addressed low uptake of non-productive investments for environment in the Áland islands through applying an environmental emphasis under their Local Development Strategy. This led to specific environmental themes being reflected in more than half of local LEADER-funded projects, including wetland rehabilitation, clearing wood pastures with hiking trails, creating sedimentation ponds at the end of ditches to reduce nutrient leakages, and beekeeping activities. The continued and close support the LAG provided to project owners – farmers and local enterprises – was a key success factor, implying that for further upscaling, more human resources are necessary.

focuses on local and territorial environment and climate approaches to promoting the green transition.

This report explains the benefits of generating collective action and local ownership in terms of providing an effective way to promote the uptake of environmental schemes among rural actors. Cooperation and exchanges between different stakeholders, the availability of expertise and advice, and sufficient economic incentives for farmers were recurring success factors in the cases presented.

ENRD webinar

## 20th NRN Meeting

### Highlights report

The 20th NRN Meeting took the form of a webinar on 15 June 2021.

The aim of this meeting was to cover recent actions in the consultation process on the Long-Term Vision for Rural Areas (LTVRA), reflecting on NRN activities during Rural Vision Week (RVW), and the role of NRNs in supporting communication and stakeholder involvement around the Rural Vision. Participants were updated on the Conference on the Future of Europe and their own potential involvement.

Recent rural networking activities and the ongoing development of national CAP networks were discussed. The event also provided the opportunity to reflect on specific activities from preceding NRN meetings and workshops that can add value to future networking.

#### Event Information

**Date:** 15 June 2021  
**Location:** Webinar  
**Organisers:** ENRD Contact Point  
**Participants:** 65 NRN representatives from 24 Member States (MS)  
**Outcomes:** Recommendations for future activity, reflecting on successful networking actions, updates on the Conference on the Future of Europe and the Long-Term Vision for Rural Areas  
**Web page:** [https://enrd.ec.europa.eu/news-events/events/20th-nrn-meeting\\_en](https://enrd.ec.europa.eu/news-events/events/20th-nrn-meeting_en)

### Setting the Scene

**Helén Williams**, DG AGR, introduced the topics of the meeting and provided an update on preparations for the European Commission's Communication on the Rural Vision foreseen to be adopted on 30 June. She also touched upon the state of play of the legislative processes related to the future CAP, including for the EU and national CAP Networks. John Gieve, ENRD Contact Point noted that the meeting would help particularly by taking stock of useful previous actions and outcomes from earlier NRN meetings and in looking to reflect success through future activity.

### Feedback on Rural Vision Week and the LTVRA

**Paul Soto** from the ENRD Contact Point presented the summary of the stakeholder input gathered during Rural Vision Week as well as the outcomes of the stakeholder workshops supported by NRNs informing the Vision which were summarised in the ENRD Rural Vision report. Key highlights from the report were introduced, including common strands and a framework for action.

NRNs have played a crucial role in involving stakeholders in the Long-Term Vision. Michael Fischer from the Austrian NSU, **Domènica Sillagoiti** from the Polish NSU and **Juha-Matti Markkila** from the Finnish NSU contributed with their views on the process. NRNs reflected on lessons learned and actions raised from the Vision process through stakeholder workshops at Member State (MS) level and through the RVW components (including the Marketplace, Fringe workshops, Rural Inspiration Awards, Youth testimonials etc.) highlighting practical aspects and helping to understand MS level specificities.

#### What are the most important actions that your NRN can take in supporting communication and ongoing stakeholder involvement around the Vision?



## 20th National Rural Network (NRN) Meeting: Highlights report

The aim of this meeting held in June 2021 was to cover recent actions in the consultation process on the Long-Term Vision for Rural Areas, reflecting on NRN activities during Rural Vision Week, and the role of NRNs in supporting communication and stakeholder involvement around the Rural Vision.

Participants were updated about the [Conference on the Future of Europe](#) and their own potential involvement. Recent rural networking activities and the ongoing development of national CAP networks were discussed. The event also provided the opportunity to reflect on specific activities from preceding NRN meetings and workshops that can add value to future networking.

[See the Highlights meeting report here.](#)

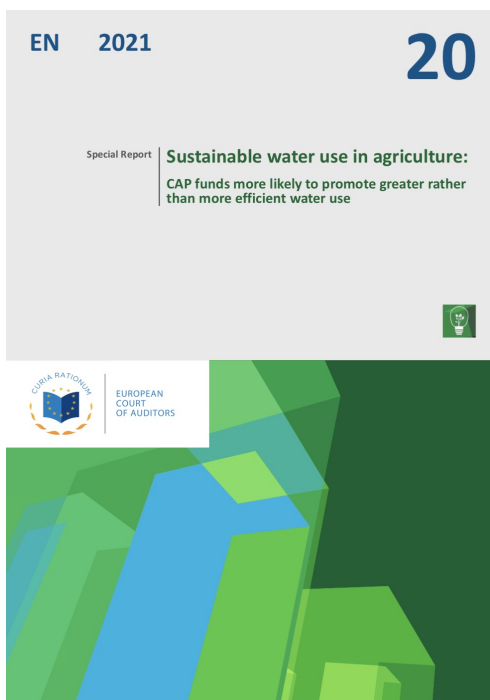


## Lessons for CAP Evaluation Plans

This report from the European Evaluation Helpdesk for Rural Development summarises the main outcomes of the Good Practice Workshop, '[A journey through evaluation plans: Learning from past experiences for the future CAP](#)'.

It reviews the design and implementation of Evaluation Plans in order to identify what worked well and what could be avoided. Content also discusses specific elements of the Evaluation Plans in relation to the process, governance, content, management, and communication.

Best practices are highlighted to help further promote evaluation culture and for better design and implementation of the CAP's Evaluation Plans.



## Audit viewpoints on CAP and sustainable water practices

The European Court of Auditors (ECA) has published a special report this month on sustainable water use in agriculture.

The auditors consider how the CAP can promote sustainable water use practices through its different funding mechanisms including direct payments, rural development support, and market measures. ECA findings also aim to help Member States avoid risks of financing (directly or indirectly) practices that stimulate depletion of water resources in water-stressed areas.

See the [new ECA special report on sustainable water use in agriculture](#) for a complete review of the audit and responses by the European Commission.

# Events

7 October 2021

**Cultivating Rural Business Success**

**Organiser:**  
RUBIZMO and LIVERUR  
HORIZON projects

Find  
out  
more

11-14 October  
2021

**European Week of Regions and Cities**

**Organiser:**  
The European  
Commission

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12 October 2021

**Being young in a mountain area in 2021**

**Organiser:**  
Euromontana

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12 October 2021

**Daily mobility and quality of life of mountain inhabitants**

**Organiser:**  
Euromontana

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14-15 October  
2021

**2nd Farm to Fork Conference**

**Organiser:**  
The European  
Commission

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19 October 2021

**16th Rural Networks Steering Group Meeting**

**Organiser:**  
DG AGRI

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20-21 October  
2021

**New tools for monitoring and evaluation: insights from the Evaluation Knowledge Bank**

**Organiser:**  
ENRD European Evaluation  
Helpdesk for Rural  
Development

24 October 2021

**International trade show for organic products**

**Organiser:**  
Natexpo

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25-29 October 2021

**EU Sustainable Energy Week**

**Organiser:**  
The European  
Commission

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26 October 2021

**Measures for the food industry to go carbon-neutral**

**Organiser:**  
EURACTIV

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30 November - 3  
December 2021

**LEADER 30 years celebration and conference**

**Organiser:**  
ELARD and Swedish Rural Network

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7 December 2021

**8th meeting of the EU Rural Networks Assembly**

**Organiser:**  
DG AGRI

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9-10 December  
2021

**Agricultural Outlook Conference**

**Organiser:**  
DG AGRI

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10-14 April 2022

**European farming systems conference**

**Organiser:**  
The Mediterranean Institute for Agriculture, Environment and Development (MED)

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