

Sustainable employment for a stronger Europe

Geopa's priorities for the 2024 EU elections

A challenging context

Like other major economic sectors, agriculture is facing great challenges with staff shortages, diminishing competitiveness and increased production costs. While the effects of the pandemic and the Russian war on Ukraine are still strongly felt, farmers have proven once more to be at the forefront of Europe's response by providing essential products amidst very adverse conditions.

To guarantee Europe's unity and independence in the new global context, the strength of European agriculture is more necessary than ever.

What we propose

A new thrust is required to consolidate our sector as a leader of change in our economy and as the most advanced form of agriculture in the world. With this objective in mind, we must strive for more sustainable employment.

Sustainable employment in European agriculture requires:

- * a better distribution of resources to fairly compensate farmers and farm workers for their fundamental work and the added value of their activities,
- * enough skilled workers joining the sector and driving the much-needed generational renewal,
- * constructive legislation and simplified bureaucracy to facilitate business operations and reduce costs,
- * investments in rural areas to fight depopulation and improve living conditions,
- * equal conditions for EU and non-EU agricultural products to prevent job dumping to outside the EU.

Our call to action

The new European legislature will be key in promoting and advancing employment within European agriculture. In view of the next EU elections, we therefore call upon the European political groups to explicitly support the sector and respond to our urgent demands.



Balance the value chain: we need to work towards more self-sufficient business operations within the value chain. The current market obliges European farmers to operate under very restrictive conditions, often forcing them to sell at a loss. This structural situation drastically limits the sector's possibilities to offer better compensation to new farmers and farm workers.

Invest in rural areas: more and better public transport, infrastructure, access to basic services and digital connectivity all directly contribute to better living conditions for farmers, farm workers and the overall attractiveness of the sector.

Support our digital transition: digitalisation, automation and new AI technologies will translate into safer, greener, more attractive and more efficient jobs.

Make agriculture part of public education: this will not only to teach people about the true value of the most essential sector and counteract misconceptions, but also showcase the multiple career opportunities available to all qualification levels.

Legislate better, reduce bureaucracy: we must depart from a sanctions-based approach. We need legislation to regulate and support what works and provide incentives and guidance to adopt best practices. A sanctions-based response to our challenges only punishes those farmers already doing a good job by piling more bureaucracy on top of an already highly regulated sector.

Put farmers at the centre: we need to work together to find solutions. The farmers and their representatives must be fully involved in all legislative procedures. To this end, we need a stronger social dialogue than ever.

About Geopa

Geopa is the voice of the European agricultural employers. We represent 22 national employer associations in the sector.

Geopa is the European social partner for agriculture officially recognised by the European Commission. It is a member of DG AGRI's Civil Dialogue Groups, a core member of the Agri-Food Pact for Skills and a key partner in several European projects promoting skills, safety and social dialogue in the sector.

