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STATEMENT

One year on, the EU Generational Renewal Strategy must translate ambition into action

One year after the European Commission presented its Strategy on Generational Renewal in Agriculture, young farmers' representatives from all over Europe are gathering in Brussels to take stock of progress and identify what remains to be done. For CEJA, the anniversary represents an important moment for political accountability.

The Strategy marked a significant step forward in recognising generational renewal as a strategic priority for Europe's agricultural future. Its ambition to double the share of young and new farmers to 24% by 2040 provided a common direction for EU institutions, Member States and agricultural stakeholders. Yet political recognition must now translate into concrete decisions. As negotiations on the next Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) and the post-2027 Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) advance, the coming months will be decisive in determining whether the Strategy's objectives are matched by adequate financial resources, effective policy instruments and, ultimately, sustained political commitment.

A dedicated budget in the next CAP: the first milestone

For CEJA, the re-establishment of a dedicated budget for young farmers and generational renewal within the future CAP represents the first major milestone towards delivering the Strategy. The ongoing negotiations on the 2028-2034 MFF and post-2027 CAP will be, in this context, a decisive test of the EU's commitment to generational renewal.

The European Commission's recommendation that Member States dedicate a share of their ring-fenced agricultural spending to generational renewal acknowledges the importance once again of directing financial resources to younger generations. For CEJA, the next step must be a dedicated budget secured in the future CAP legal framework, rather than leaving funding dependent on voluntary national choices. Europe's young farmers advocate for investment equivalent to 10% of CAP envelopes to support an ambitious and targeted starter pack in agriculture. Without it, the Strategy will lack the resources needed to fulfil its objectives.

From a European strategy to coordinated national action

Beyond the CAP, the Strategy rightly recognises that generational renewal cannot be addressed through agricultural policy alone. Access to land, finance and knowledge, as well as high

establishment costs, uncertainty and income volatility, living conditions in rural areas and increasingly complex transmission processes continue to discourage potential new entrants and constrain the development of existing young farmers. The Strategy recognises these interconnected challenges, but progress requires coordinated action by the EU and Member States.

National strategies for generational renewal become meaningful instruments for change in this context. Their development and implementation must involve young farmers' organisations, so that policy responses reflect the realities experienced on the ground. Stronger coordination between agricultural, economic, social and territorial policies will also be essential. Generational renewal cannot succeed if agricultural support is disconnected from land policies, taxation, social rights, education, rural development or the broader conditions affecting the attractiveness of agriculture.

Taking stock: political recognition must be followed by delivery

For young farmers, the first anniversary of the Strategy offers an opportunity to assess both the progress made, and the distance that remains between political ambition and practical implementation. Young farmers have had to navigate successive economic, geopolitical and environmental shocks, while continuing to face persistent barriers to the establishment of their businesses. In this context, confidence in the future of agriculture depends not only on political recognition, but on whether young people can expect meaningful improvements in their prospects.

While the Strategy provides a basis for action, many of its measures still depend on decisions that have yet to be translated into concrete commitments or implemented at the national level. This is an important moment to reinforce the connection between decision-makers and the next generation of farmers. When ambitions are not followed with tangible steps, agricultural youths may increasingly feel that their concerns and their future are being left behind. Maintaining their confidence requires clear priorities, credible timelines and visible progress on addressing the barriers they face.

The test is delivery

Over the past year, CEJA has taken its responsibilities in the Strategy's implementation and continued its work by dedicating funding in the post-2027 CAP as a central priority, both in the ongoing EU negotiations and by developing a Support Platform to assist young farmers from all over Europe in the development of their national strategies and instruments. The organisation has also provided concrete recommendations to support new generations in agriculture with accessible social rights and prospects on the front of climate adaptation, as well as advanced the work on sectoral barriers to generational renewal with a vision on the future of livestock.

As the EU marks the first anniversary of the Strategy, CEJA calls on the European Commission, the European Parliament, the Council and Member States to keep generational renewal high on the political agenda and ensure that the next CAP provides the dedicated funding and policy framework needed to deliver it.

Europe has set its ambition of doubling the share of young and new farmers by 2040. Achieving this objective will require sustained political commitment, adequate resources and accountability for resources. One year after the Strategy's publication, the measure of success remains tangible progress towards making farming a viable and attractive future for the next generation.

The European Council of Young Farmers (CEJA) represents the political interests of around two million young farmers from across Europe. Its main objectives are to facilitate the installation of young farmers, to inform and train them as well as act as a forum for communication and dialogue between them.

More information: Marion Picot, Secretary General | *Tel: +32 495 51 24 74* | *Email: m.picot@ceja.eu*