

Solution notes

Greenpeace

Basic assessment of EU agricultural policy:

Greenpeace criticizes the EU's existing agricultural policy model. Above all, it benefits the owners of large agricultural areas and hardly considers the respective farms' production methods. This leads to an unfair distribution of agricultural subsidies. Large companies could improperly enrich themselves with EU funds. The model allows for abuse and fraud ([Eräjää 2021](#)). The EU politicians, even the members of the EU Parliament, showed little initiative to remedy these grievances. This is partly due to the fact that many EU parliamentarians are farmers themselves and benefit from the existing system. It is therefore not to be expected that serious agricultural reforms will be launched. But this is necessary because the current model bears responsibility for the decline in biodiversity ([ibid.](#)).

Assessment of the latest agricultural reform:

The EU's latest agricultural reform has come in for strong criticism. The vision of a forward-looking, ambitious agricultural policy has been trampled underfoot. Greenpeace criticizes that direct payments via area payments are essentially maintained. It is not sufficient that only 25% of these subsidies are tied to environmental programs (eco-schemes), especially since this share can be reduced by additional special regulations. Accordingly, in the first years, only 20% would be provided ([Greenpeace Luxembourg 2021](#)). Serious reform efforts would have been averted - adequate support for organic farming, crop rotation, and environmental protection would be lacking. Small farms would not be sufficiently taken into account. The strongest players could continue to dominate the market. The EU Court of Auditors had also determined that efforts to make agriculture more climate-friendly had failed in the last funding period. The 100 billion euros invested for this purpose had missed their target. The most recent reform of EU agricultural policy meant "carrying on as before" on a deeply misguided path ([ibid.](#)).

Demands for the future of agricultural policy:

According to Greenpeace, the EU's agricultural policy should be fundamentally renewed. Different players should have their say in shaping it. According to the organization, consumers, health and environmental experts should be given a stronger voice. The current state of affairs, in which the agricultural sector is controlled, must be overcome ([Eräjää 2021](#)). A fundamental change in the funding model should stop the disappearance of smaller companies. The current model primarily subsidizes the cultivation of land used for animal husbandry. For ecological and health reasons, however, a reduction in meat and milk consumption should be sought. Animal husbandry also harbors the risk of zoonoses being transmitted – on the one hand directly through transmission from animals to humans, on the other hand indirectly due to the destruction of forests ([Greenpeace European Unit 2020](#)). Furthermore, the NGO calls for a move away from chemical fertilizers and pesticide treatment, for animal husbandry to be tied to land and for a circular economy ([Greenpeace Luxembourg 2021](#)).

References:

Eräjää, S. (2021). *Why is EU farm policy so hard to change?* Greenpeace European Unit. <https://www.greenpeace.org/eu-unit/issues/nature-food/45625/why-is-eu-farm-policy-so-hard-to-change/> (29.10.2021).

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