

Agri-cooperatives cultivate sustainable solutions for farmers, business partners and consumers



SEVENTEEN
REASONS TO
COOP

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Introduction

Agricultural cooperatives play a pivotal role in promoting the sustainability of the sector.

These enterprises, created to respond to primary production's needs, owned and democratically managed by farmers, offer a collective approach to addressing various challenges and seizing opportunities.

By addressing economic, environmental, and social challenges, European agri-cooperatives can help create a more resilient, equitable, and sustainable food system.

Their recognition is well underlined on several EU policy papers and study that call for an active support of our cooperative enterprises at EU and national level. Among these recent publications:

- The 2024 Strategic Dialogue on the Future of EU Agriculture of the European Commission
- The 2023 Conclusions on a Long-Term Vision for the EU's Rural Areas by the Council of the European Union
- The 2023 Conclusions on opportunities of the bioeconomy in the light of current challenges with special emphasis on rural areas by the Council of the European Union.
- The 2022 Own-initiative report on Generational renewal in the EU farms of the future of the European Parliament
- The 2022 Resolution on a long-term vision for the EU's rural areas of the European Parliament
- The 2021 Communication on a long-term Vision for the EU's Rural Areas – "Towards stronger, connected, resilient and prosperous rural areas by 2040" of the European Commission
- The 2019 European Commission's "Study of the best ways for producers organisations to be formed, carry out their activities and be supported"

However, to ensure the sustainable competitiveness of the agri-food and forestry sectors, it is imperative to identify and implement the necessary tools and enablers that will facilitate its transition to a more sustainable and resilient food system.

This necessitates a comprehensive approach taken by EU policy makers, which addresses various interconnected factors, including policy coherence, market access, innovation, and infrastructure development.

Following the recent European Parliament elections and the formation of a new European Commission, it is imperative to acknowledge the crucial role that agri-cooperatives play in our sectors and in the sustainable development of our societies and economies.

Moreover, to bolster the competitiveness of agri-cooperative enterprises, maximize their contributions to sustainable growth, and avoid jeopardizing the positive externalities they create, it is essential that:

- **EU institutions consider the specific needs and governance elements of agri-cooperative enterprises.** This includes recognizing the unique structure and objectives of agri-cooperatives and tailoring policies accordingly.
- **An innovation-driven, science-based, and committed environment policy is designed and implemented.** This will enable agri-cooperatives to fully unlock their potential in delivering sustainable projects and products.
- **Enabling regulations and support schemes are essential in the fields of energy efficiency, climate actions, digital infrastructure and development, biodiversity, and environmental actions.** These measures will help agri-cooperatives adopt sustainable practices, reduce their environmental footprint, and improve their competitiveness.

By prioritizing these factors, the EU can create an environment that supports the growth and success of agri-cooperatives, fostering a more sustainable and prosperous future for our sectors and societies.

Enablers for a Sustainable and Competitive Agri-Food Sector



A Well-Functioning Single Market

A robust and level playing field within the Single Market is crucial for the competitiveness of the agricultural sector. By eliminating regulatory inconsistencies, conflicting objectives, and unnecessary complexity, our agri-coops can create a more conducive environment for growth, productivity, and innovation.



Horizontal and Vertical Cooperation

Strengthening collaboration among stakeholders, including farmers, researchers, industry players, consumers, and government agencies, is essential for enhancing the sustainability and resilience of the value chain. By fostering knowledge sharing, innovation, and collective problem-solving, our cooperative enterprises can better position the sector to withstand shocks and compete effectively in the global market.



International Dimension

Access to international markets is paramount for the competitiveness of the agricultural sector and our cooperative enterprises. Reducing trade barriers, improving logistics, and ensuring compliance with international standards are crucial for expanding market reach and promoting exports. However, it is equally important to ensure advocate for a level playing field at the international level to prevent unfair competition and protect the competitiveness of EU producers.



Policy Support and Coherence

A coherent policy framework is essential for providing stability and long-term vision for the sector and European agri-cooperatives. By implementing appropriate policy tools, our cooperatives can support the transition to a more competitive, resilient, and sustainable food system. This policy framework includes measures to improve the functioning of the supply chain, incentivize innovative practices, ensure fair market competition, promote research and development, and facilitate access to finance and investments.



Environmental and Climate Resilience

Recognising the wider services that agri-cooperatives and their farmer-owners provide to society as active land managers, such as carbon sequestration, water management, and sustainable energy production, is crucial. By supporting these activities, our cooperatives can enhance the sustainability and competitiveness of the sector while contributing to broader environmental and climate goals.



Access to Finance, Private Capital, and Investment

A competitive agri-food sector requires efficient access to funding. Mobilising investment and attracting private financing are essential for supporting our enterprises and the sector's transition to a more sustainable future. While a stable regulatory framework is conducive to a business-friendly environment, it is also important to address the specific needs of the agri-food sector and harness the opportunities presented by innovation and technology.



Risk Management

Developing and implementing effective risk management strategies and insurance tools are crucial for mitigating risks associated with climate change, market fluctuations, and other uncertainties.



Infrastructure Development

Supporting the investments in robust infrastructure, including storage facilities, transportation networks, and processing plants, is essential for reducing post-harvest losses, improving product quality, enhancing market reach, and efficiency of our agri-cooperatives.



Research and Innovation

Investing in research and innovation is crucial for maintaining the sector's competitiveness in the global market. By prioritizing research efforts and strengthening the translation of research results into practical applications, European agri-cooperatives can harness the power of innovative practices, address societal challenges and create value for their farmers, their business partners and consumers.



Digitalisation

Embracing digital technologies can significantly improve efficiency, productivity, and decision-making in cooperatives and the agri-food sector. By adopting technologies such as precision agriculture, IoT, AI, and data analytics, we can enhance the sector's competitiveness and sustainability.



Energy

A reliable and secure supply of affordable energy is essential for the competitiveness of the agricultural sector. By investing in renewable energy sources and improving energy efficiency, European agri-cooperatives can reduce our reliance on fossil fuels, lower energy costs, and contribute to a more sustainable future.



Circular Approaches

Adopting circular approaches can help reduce resource dependence, waste, and emissions, while also creating new business opportunities and revenue streams. A favorable regulatory environment can be the key supporting factor to close the loop and better deliver on economic, social and environmental goals.



Education and Skills

Investing in education and training programs is vital for equipping farmers and agri-cooperatives employees with the skills necessary to succeed in the sustainable and digital transitions. By providing access to knowledge about modern agricultural practices, business management, and emerging technologies, EU policy actions are required to foster a skilled and competitive workforce.



A Strong EU Budget

To effectively address the investment needs, the EU budget must be significantly increased and allocated strategically to support the sustainable competitiveness of agri-cooperatives and the agricultural sector.

European agricultural, forest and fishery cooperatives at a glance

European agricultural cooperatives are the democratic tool that empower farmers to go from the land to the market and to anticipate consumers' needs. They improve farmers' position in the food chain and collectively shape the future of agriculture.

As robust enterprises oriented on the long-term, agricultural cooperatives ensure competitiveness by adding value and improving rural resilience. With their integrated approach, agri-cooperatives move European agriculture collectively to a level of anti-fragility for the next generation. Agri-cooperatives are the most suitable and advanced tool to respond to farmers' organisational needs. They are successful businesses that unite farmers around common economic, social and environmental goals.

Their success or failure is based on their ability to serve their farmer members who decide democratically on the business's development and trajectory, according to their needs and circumstances. They strengthen farmers and give them bargaining power in the negotiation process with downstream operators.

WHO ARE THEY?

+7.000.000

European farmers are members of agri-cooperatives.

WHAT DO THEY DO?

+23.000

agri and forest cooperatives enable farmers to do those things that they cannot get done individually.

WHY ARE THEY IMPORTANT?

+607.000

women and men are employed by agri and forest cooperatives in the EU.

Be informed: IYC2025 - Cooperatives for a Better World

The United Nations has declared 2025 as the International Year of Cooperatives, with the theme "Cooperatives Build a Better World." This global initiative highlights the essential role cooperatives play in addressing pressing global challenges and contributing to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030.

"The decision by the General Assembly could not be timelier. The innovative contributions of cooperatives for sustainable development will be crucial for accelerating progress in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals as we approach 2030" said Li Junhua, Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs."

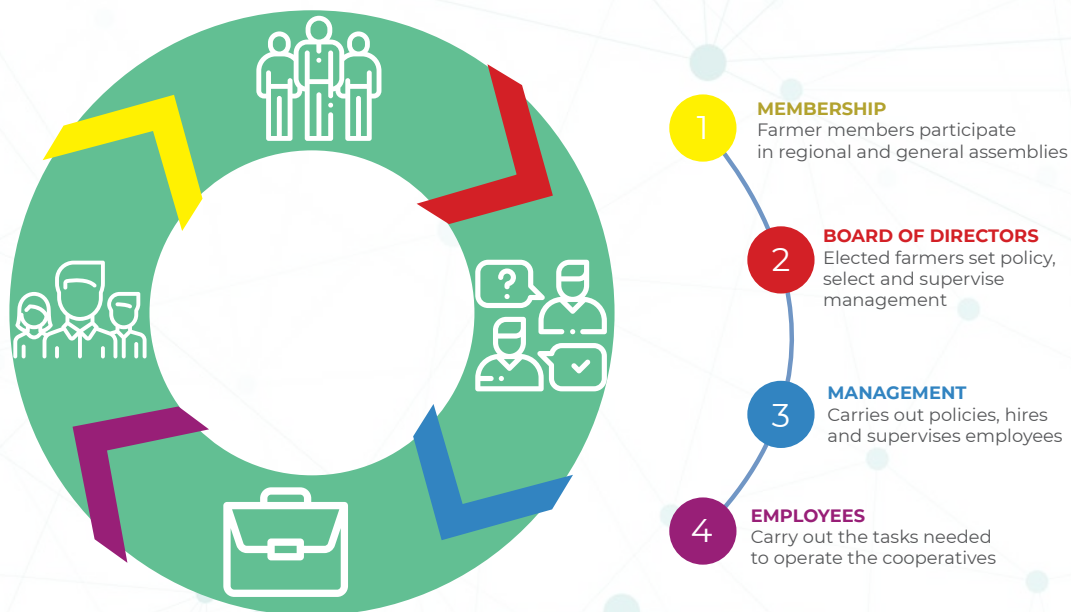
Why do agri-cooperatives exist?

European agri-cooperatives exist to allow farmers to do collectively those things that cannot be done individually by their farmer members.

Since their very first establishment, the purpose of European agri-cooperatives is to respond to members' needs, democratically expressed through active participation in the governance life. European agri-cooperatives are created to pool farmers' resources in certain areas of activity and provide various services and advice to their farmer members.

While marketing the agricultural produce of their farmers, with an integrated approach they add value, process food and undertake transportation, packaging, and distribution.

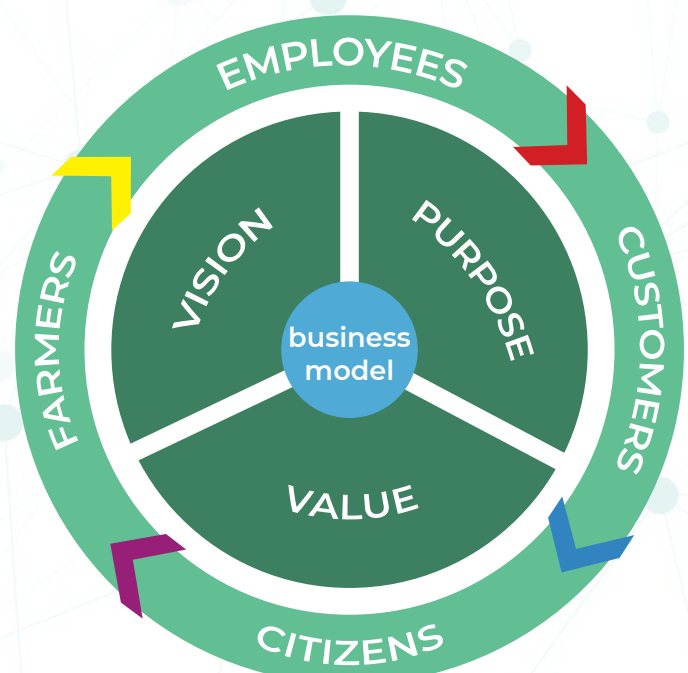
Agri-cooperatives' purpose is to be efficient and create an economy of scale.



European agri-cooperatives are values-led organisations.

European agri-cooperatives' purpose, vision, and values provide focus and direction and guide them in their everyday business interactions.

These elements are key to their business model as they guide their approach to their people: their farmer-members, employees, customers and communities.



What is the vision of European agri-cooperatives?

The vision of European agri-cooperatives is to ensure the sustainability and competitiveness of the sector, by serving farmer members and understanding consumers' demand. While their primary objective is to support farmers in rebalancing their position in the food chain, they pool existing processing assets and keep them in the hands of their farmer members.

The TOP 3 strategic and operational priorities of European agri-cooperatives:

1

To provide farmers with tools so that they can thrive in a circular, resilient and innovative agricultural economy;

To continue empowering farmer members and strengthening their position in the value chain;

2

3

To be resilient while increasing and consolidating farmers' market position.

The cooperative difference

European agri-cooperatives' strategies are based on a successful model in which business efficiency is combined with the values of solidarity, social responsibility and social cohesion. Agri-cooperatives' core values are the guiding principles that stipulate what these enterprises stand for, in good and bad times. The set of values and principles behind their work distinguishes them from investor-owned businesses.

European agri-cooperatives are based on the values of:

- Self-help
- Equality
- Equity and fairness
- Solidarity
- Market orientation
- Social responsibility
- Transparency

Benefits of farmer cooperation

- Cooperation between farmers makes activities possible that can benefit them by generating added value that they could not achieve on their own, e.g.
 - better market access (e.g. through concentration of supply, joint marketing or distribution)
 - greater contractual leverage vis-à-vis buyers of their products and suppliers of agricultural inputs
 - more efficient production (e.g. through better access to technical knowledge, risk management mechanisms)

Economic incentives for farmers joining an agri-cooperative

- 1**
 - Greater bargaining power through joint selling:
 - lower transaction costs through larger volumes, marketing of baskets of complementary products, leaving fewer alternative suppliers for buyers
 - better prices, long-term contracts, advance payments, etc.
- 2**
 - Greater market knowledge of agri-cooperatives (time and expertise to study markets and new products)
- 3**
 - Greater market penetration through access to more profitable sales channels and new markets (requiring a minimum scale of production or quality certifications)
- 4**
 - Shortening of supply chains (fewer intermediaries, better understanding of demand)
 - Better and more predictable prices (due to greater negotiation power, market knowledge and penetration, shorter supply chains)
- 5**
 - Lower ex ante and ex post transaction costs (e.g. searching buyers or dealing with buyer opportunism and unfair trading practices)
- 6**
 - Less competitive pressure
- 7**
 - Cooperatives invest in joint activities or facilities that add more value (e.g. integration thru storage or processing)
- 8**
 - Risk sharing and risk management through agri-cooperatives (e.g. price pooling, insurance schemes, income stabilisation/mutual funds, joint investments)
- 9**
 - Greater delivery and payment security
- 10**
 - Crisis management (e.g. timing of sales, market withdrawals)
- 11**
 - Better access to bank loans as farmer business model is integrated in the one of agri-cooperatives with long-term and sustainability objectives

Wider benefits of farmer cooperation

- Cooperation between farmers can also bring advantages to the rest of the food supply chain
- Dealing with fewer Agri-cooperatives instead of many farmers can help downstream operators reduce transaction costs:
 - lower uncertainty for their long-term planning
 - fewer business relationships and more stable prices
 - more efficient organisation and delivery of supplies
 - better quality assurance (specs, traceability, safety)

Benefits agri-cooperatives can offer other operators in the value chain

1

- Agri-cooperatives can offer buyers a more stable and timely supply of agricultural products in required quantities and qualities from a single interlocutor

- Sourcing from fewer suppliers helps buyers stabilise the prices they pay and reduces transaction costs

2

3

- Bigger agri-cooperatives can better work with customers to adapt agricultural products to their requirements

- Agri-cooperatives can provide downstream operators greater assurance in terms of traceability, quality control, compliance with food safety standards, etc.

4

5

- Buying from agri-cooperatives whose members are linked to a specific rural area can help downstream operators meet consumer demand for local products

- Some buyers prefer to deal with agri-cooperatives recognised as POs, considering them to be particularly credible and trustworthy

6

“ The positive impact and influence European agri-cooperatives can have on farmers’ needs, for the competitiveness of the sector, for the environment and society is exponential. Our big job is to make sure more people know and understand the cooperative model. ”

Lennart Nilsson - Cogeca’s President

Smart Cooperation for sustainable growth

in each link of the value chain



PRODUCING MORE
AND BETTER

MANA
AGRICU
WIT
PRECIS

HARNESSING
AGTECH &
FOOTECH

TAKING AN
ECOSYSTEM
APPROACH

SHARING
KNOW-HOW

“ We are the democratic tool empowering farmers to go from the land to the market anticipating consumers' needs. ”

OPENING NEW
MARKETS

IMPROVING
TRACEABILITY
OF THE
AGRI-FOOD
SECTOR

LEAD
NURTURING
IN THE
AGRI-FOOD
CHAIN

ING
LTURE
TH
SION

FERTILISING
AND CARING
FOR PLANTS

IMPROVING
ANIMAL
NUTRITION

ADAPTING AND
MITIGATING
CLIMATE
CHANGE

IMPROVING
FARMERS
BARGAINING
POWER

MANAGING
AND
MUTUALISING
RISKS

FOSTERING QUALITY
& PROMOTING
ACCESS TO A BETTER
NUTRITION
FOR ALL

SUPPORTING
LOCAL & RURAL
COMMUNITIES

CREATING JOB
AND GROWTH

DELIGHTING
CUSTOMERS

PROVIDING
ACCESS TO
LOCAL
PRODUCE

PLACING PEOPLE
AT THE HEART OF
OUR ACTIONS



BROADENING
SOCIAL,
ECONOMIC &
ENVIRONMENTAL
ACTIONS

INNOVATING
IN FOOD
PRODUCTION &
MARKETING

The cooperatives principles of the International Cooperative Alliance:

1. Voluntary and Open Membership:

Cooperatives are voluntary organisations, open to all persons able to use their services and willing to accept the responsibilities of membership.

2. Democratic Member Control:

Cooperatives are democratic organisations controlled by their members, who actively participate in setting their policies and making decisions. Men and women serving as elected representatives are accountable to the membership. Members have equal voting rights (one member, one vote). Second degree cooperatives are also organised in a democratic manner.

3. Member Economic Participation:

Members contribute equitably to, and democratically control, the capital of their cooperative. At least part of that capital is usually the common property of the cooperative. Members usually receive limited compensation, if any, on capital subscribed as a condition of membership. Members allocate surpluses for any or all of the following purposes: developing their cooperative, possibly by setting up reserves, part of which at least would be indivisible; benefiting members in proportion to their transactions with the cooperative; and supporting other activities approved by the membership.

4. Autonomy and Independence:

Cooperatives are autonomous, self-help organisations controlled by their members. If they enter into agreements with other organisations, or raise capital from external sources, they do so on terms that ensure democratic control by their members and maintain their cooperative autonomy.

5. Education, Training and Information:

Cooperatives provide education and training for their members, elected representatives, managers, and employees so they can contribute effectively to the development of their cooperatives. They inform the general public - particularly young people and opinion leaders about the nature and benefits of cooperation.

6. Cooperation among Cooperatives:

Cooperatives serve their members most effectively and strengthen the cooperative movement by working together through local, national, regional and international structures.

7. Concern for Community:

Cooperatives work for the sustainable development of their communities through policies approved by their members.

Number of agricultural, fisherman and forest Cooperatives per country Tot 23.196



■ Cogeca internal survey "agri-cooperatives monitor" - updated 2024
■ DG Agri study - 2019



**NUMBER OF MEMBERS OF
AGRI-COOPERATIVES**
KEY DATA - update 2024

Austria 344.875
Estonia 2.036
Finland 125.000
France 350.000
Germany 1.452.000*
Hungary 4.000
Ireland 175.000
Italy 742.078
Latvia 4.846
Malta 4.000
Portugal 300.000
Slovenia 13.082
Spain 1.150.341
Sweden 160.350

***including non active members**





LEVEL OF EMPLOYEMENT GIVEN BY AGRICOOPS

KEY DATA - update 2024

Austria 28.789
Croatia 2.581
Finland 26.130
France 200.000
Germany 107.478
Hungary 520
Ireland 40.000
Italy 91.584
Portugal 9.000
Slovenia 2.595
Spain 100.883

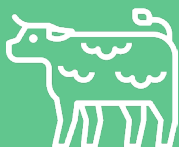
Sectors in which agri-cooperatives are active



cereal



poultry



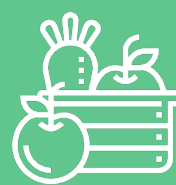
beef meat



eggs



fishery



fruits & vegetables



dairy



olive & olive oil



pig meat



horticulture



forestry



rabbit



sheep meat



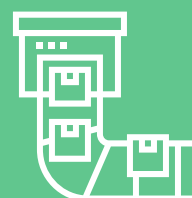
sugar



tobacco



wine



supply & distribution



bioeconomy



water



flax & hemp



multipurpose



honey

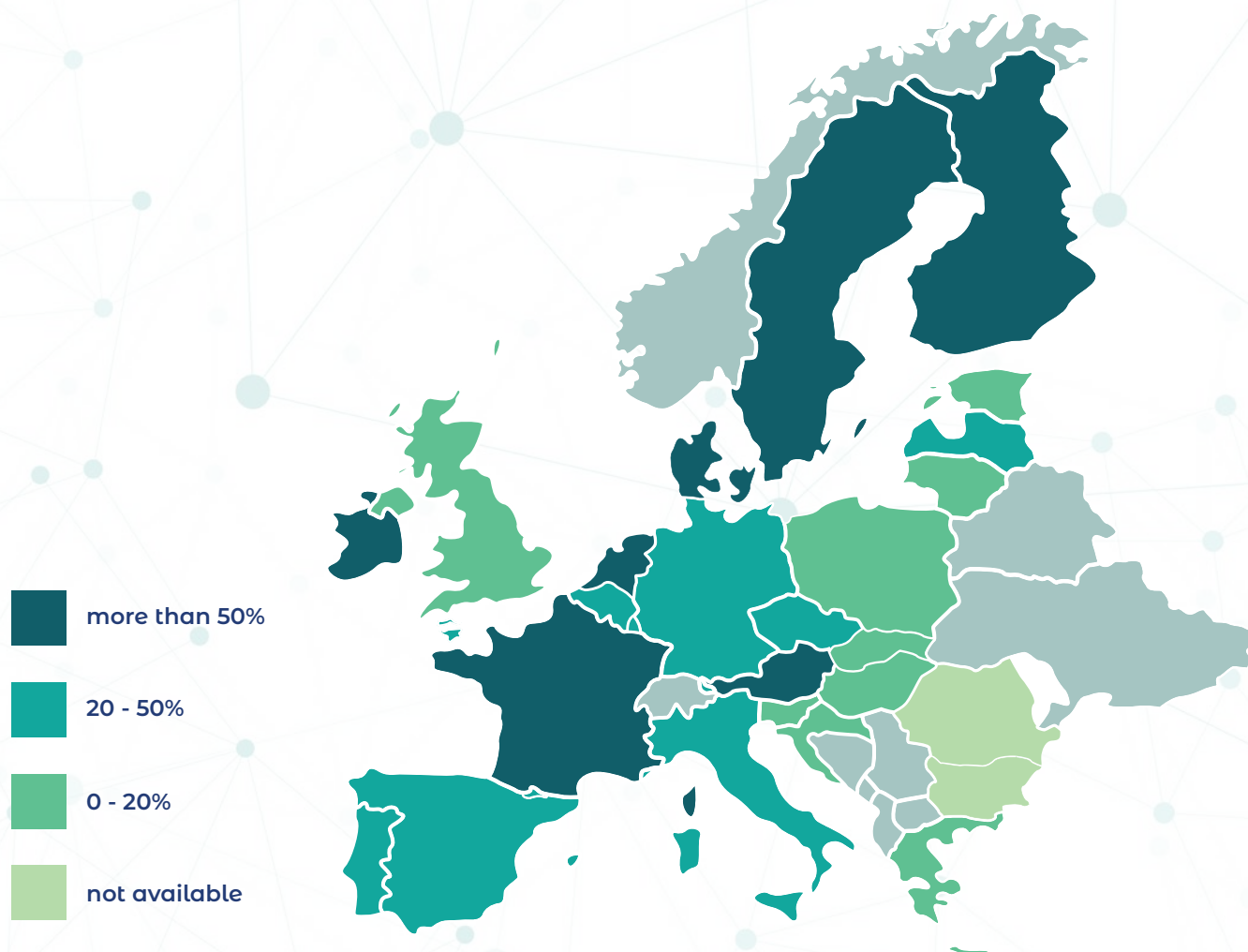


alfalfa



retail

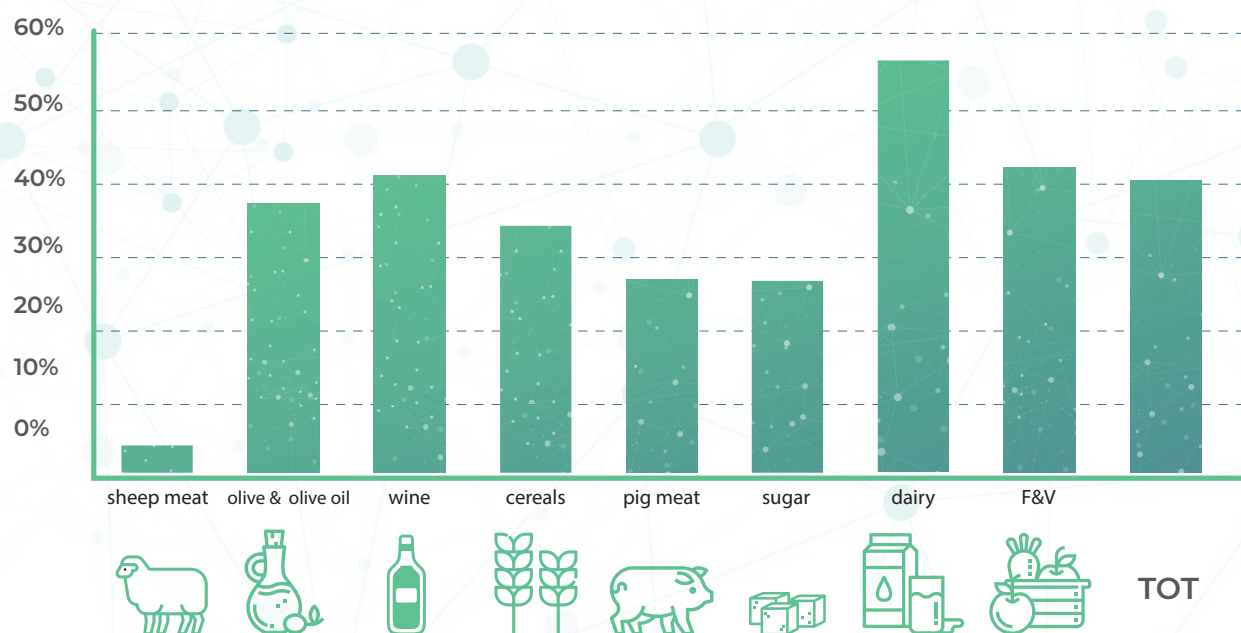
European agri-cooperatives market shares outlook in EU Member States in 2019



© European Union, 2019

EUROPEAN COMMISSION Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development - Study of the best ways for producer organisations to be formed, carry out their activities and be supported

Market shares of European agri-cooperatives in main sectors



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT EUROPEAN AGRI-COOPERATIVES

What is an agri-cooperative?

How does it differ from other types of businesses?

Agricultural cooperatives enable farmers to join forces to collect, process and market their produce. They are different from other types of business as they are owned and controlled by their farmer members which can use the services to their benefit.

Why should farmers join agri-cooperatives?

Does it help them to maintain their businesses and overcome crises?

Agri-cooperatives enable farmers to better market their produce and to get a better price for it. This allows them to improve their competitive position in the food chain and to increase their power against a handful of retailers. This is especially important in the current economic and business climate. Being ahead in business today is demanding. Economic resources are vital for research and innovation and for developing new products, and agri-cooperatives enable farmers to stay ahead.

Which sectors are represented?

Agri-cooperatives play a more dominant role in the dairy sector with a market share of almost 60%. This is followed by the fruit & vegetable and the wine sectors which have market shares of around 40%. There is a much lower percentage in the olive oil and olives sector, the cereals, pig meat and sugar sectors. Sheep cooperatives have a limited presence representing some 5% of the market. As a whole, some 40% of the total sales is generated by EU agri-cooperatives.

Why is the European Commission keen to encourage farmers to join agri-cooperatives?

What measures are available under the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP)?

Agri-cooperatives have a strong presence and good economic performance mostly in some Nordic and Western Member States. They are also achieving good results in the Mediterranean countries, while their presence remains limited in the Eastern Member States. It is therefore of critical importance to encourage their development especially in the latter group of countries as well as in some particular sectors. Support measures to encourage the development of Producer Organisations (POs) like cooperatives are of fundamental importance in the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP).

Will it become more important for farmers to join agri-cooperatives in the future?

Faced with increasing challenges like extreme market volatility, an increasingly competitive marketplace and climate related risks, it will be more important than ever for farmers to join agri-cooperatives so that they can have a viable future, grasp the opportunities and continue to feed the world. It is essential to involve young men and women and new entrants in the cooperative's structures and their governing bodies.

How do agri-cooperatives contribute to the achievements of the UN SDGs?

The 17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), are global objectives that succeeded the Millennium Development Goals on 1st January 2016. The SDGs shape national and regional development plans. From ending poverty and hunger to responding to climate change and sustaining our natural resources, food and agriculture lie at the heart of the 2030 Agenda.



Poverty isn't only about the lack of money. European agri-cooperatives are fully engaged in fighting rural poverty, which is linked to the specific disadvantages of rural areas. With their core activities, they increase farmers' income and find additional sources of income. With their special actions, agri-cooperatives offer farmers and their families the opportunity to increase standards of living, education, participation in cultural activities, well-being and happiness.



Every day European agri-cooperatives produce fresh and processed foods and deliver vital proteins, nutrients and tasty food products to people all over the world. Through partnerships and investments in research and development, European agri-cooperatives always aim at making their products and processes more sustainable.



As agri-food businesses, agri-cooperatives are at the forefront of consumer-led nutrition trends. Their success is dependent on collaboration with customers and strong ties with their farmer-owners and other suppliers. Through these collaborations, European agri-food cooperatives are contributing to solutions to improve health, livelihoods and sustainable food production.



European agri-cooperatives actively contribute to the economic viability of rural areas. The participation of women in the labour market and in the governance of these enterprises is of great importance. Gender representation is improving in agricultural and forest cooperatives and for this reason, they put in place instruments to improve the representation of women in their governance and management bodies.



Through their investment in education and training programmes, European agricultural and forest cooperatives have a community of passionate farmers, directors, employees who work hard to build strong and trusted brands, backed by their leadership in education.



The growing global population and economic activity have put increased pressure on the world's water resources and water scarcity is now one of the greatest global challenges. European agricultural and forestry cooperatives are coping with this challenge and saving water, CO2 and energy without compromising food safety and production.



European agricultural and forestry cooperatives are actively addressing the challenge of reducing energy consumption and increasing the contribution the sector makes to renewable energy production. It is clear that the energy and agriculture nexus is not just about a trade-off. Indeed, it also provides significant opportunities for synergies. The synergies are transposed into benefits for farmer-members.



People working for agricultural and forestry cooperatives bring cooperative values to life and enable the enterprises to fulfil their purpose of delivering high-quality produce and food while empowering farmer members in the food supply chain. The talent, commitment and pride of the people working for European agricultural and forestry cooperatives are fundamental to their long-term success.



Innovation is the catalyst for the growth of European agricultural and forestry cooperatives. By supporting farmers in addressing societal goals, agri-cooperatives became more efficient. They are now excelling in innovation in the sector. They create new products that delight consumers and help them live a balanced and healthier life. Their research, digital and innovation teams push the boundaries of science and technology to build a bright future for agriculture.



Agricultural and forestry cooperatives are acutely aware of their social responsibilities with regard to their farmer-members, employees and society as a whole. They implement initiatives to improve the position of farmers in the food supply chain and their standards of living. They care about the quality of life at work and they support the local and often disadvantaged communities in which they operate.



Minimising resource consumption in the food and fibre production is an integral part of the daily work of all European agricultural and forestry cooperatives. This is especially the case for the consumption of natural resources, minimising waste and implementing cleaner technologies. European agri-cooperative efforts are driven by a common goal: to build sustainable communities.



Food waste is a significant challenge that needs to be tackled from farm to fork because it has a major social, environmental and climate impact. The European Agri-cooperative approach aims to reduce food waste by optimising the food value chain in its entirety and shifting from a linear use of resources to a circular use.



Agricultural and forestry cooperatives are investing in technologies and adopting targeted programmes that will allow them to take climate actions. European agri-cooperatives recognise the importance of becoming ever more efficient and taking every available opportunity to reduce emissions and implement adaptation actions.



European agricultural, fishing and forestry cooperatives prevent and significantly reduce all forms of marine pollution. They do this by selecting suppliers who adhere to marine pollution reduction programmes, especially target pollution resulting from activities carried out on land. Additionally, specific programmes and projects are promoted by ichthyic and fishing cooperative enterprises that aim to preserve local ichthyic reserves.



Through their on-farm programmes, European agricultural and forestry cooperatives are working to enhance both land and water quality, as laid out in Goal 15, which as they interpret it also includes the health and welfare of their livestock and biodiversity.



Democracy lies at the heart of agri-cooperatives and the participation of their farmer-members in the decision-making process is of extreme importance. In this context, European agri-cooperatives put in place participatory stakeholder consultation processes on economic, environmental and social issues to ensure an inclusive decision-making approach. They also develop codes of good governance and reporting related to the financial statements, sustainability and environmental performance of the cooperative enterprises.



European agricultural and forest cooperatives strengthen partnerships to support and achieve the ambitious targets of the 2030 Agenda, bringing together national governments, the international community, civil society, the private sector and other actors. In this respect, Cogeca, the European voice of agri-cooperatives is also a platform for the exchange of best practices. It allows members to assess the advances in certain areas and the necessary steps to be done to accelerate progress.

Want to
know more?



Tarragona Manifesto

Fostering the future of farming: Twenty-three aspirational objectives of agricultural and forestry cooperatives in support of young farmers and cooperators.

Generational renewal in the agri-food and forestry sectors is the most significant challenge for our sectors.

Young farmers, agricultural cooperative leaders, and high-level policymakers gathered on 9 November 2023 in Tarragona, Spain, to exchange best practices and strategies to address this challenge that may endanger the long-term sustainability of the sectors as well as food security.

Cogeca and its members are committed to promoting policies, strategies and interventions that enable young people and new entrants to develop their entrepreneurial and managerial skills, and create new economic opportunities for them, their enterprises, and rural communities.

European agri-cooperatives declare their commitments to twenty-three aspirational objectives to foster generational renewal in European agricultural and forestry sectors and achieve these main five goals:

- Support young farmers and their involvement in cooperative enterprises and direct them toward the achievement of long term economic, social, and environmental objectives.**
- Encourage the involvement of young farmers and forest owners in the life of the cooperative and ensure that young farmers are given the opportunities to grow and take their place in our cooperative movement.**
- Develop training programmes for new entrants in cooperatives and fill the skills gap in sustainability, digitalisation and the bio and circular economy.**
- Promote cooperative entrepreneurship through adequate enabling environments with dedicated financial resources.**
- Build and strengthen constructive partnerships to achieve common objectives as well as democratic and inclusive cultures of cooperation.**



Discover our commitments by scanning the QR code!



european agri-cooperatives

Cogeca is the voice of agri-cooperatives in the EU. Created in 1959, Cogeca represents the interests of +23.000 agricultural cooperatives who employ over +607.000 people. Cogeca aims to ensure that the EU agriculture and agri-food sector is sustainable, market-orientated, innovative and competitive so that agri-cooperatives can provide over half a billion people with quality food supplies at a reasonable prices. Cogeca provides a platform for its members to exchange their views and agree on a common position on upcoming issues affecting the EU agrifood and forestry sectors and agri-cooperatives.