

PRESS RELEASE

ORGANIC MOVEMENT WARNS OF INSUFFICIENT AMBITION IN CAP STRATEGIC PLANS

BRUSSELS, BELGIUM, 18 November 2021 – Today, the organic food and farming movement published an [evaluation of measures and budgets to support organic agriculture in Members States' draft CAP Strategic Plans](#) (CAP SPs). The analysis, based on organic farmers associations' feedback across 19 countries, shows that unless draft CAP national Strategic Plans are significantly improved in several Member States, the new CAP will not contribute to a significant development of organic farming in the EU.

IFOAM Organics Europe calls on the European Commission to ensure that Member States review their draft Strategic Plans and come up with better measures and appropriate budgets to boost organic production and demand, in line with the EU Action Plan on developing organic farming.

Jan Plagge, President of IFOAM Organics Europe warns: "There is a clear gap between the EU's ambition to reach 25% organic land by 2030 and the weakness of the measures and budgets currently foreseen to develop organic farming in many Member States. Organic agriculture can contribute to many of the new CAP objectives to protect nature, improve animal welfare, empower farmers, and revitalise rural areas. Organic farmers should be rewarded with fairer levels of CAP payments for the benefits they deliver to the environment and society, in line with the principle of public money for public goods. It is illogical and unfair that some governments consider giving similar CAP payments to standards much less ambitious than organic farming and with no proven environmental benefits. This will not incentivise more farmers to transition to organic."

Jan Plagge adds: "Despite the disappointing deal on the CAP Strategic Plans Regulation, that will be voted next week, Member States still face a huge responsibility to ensure the next CAP addresses the collapse of our biodiversity and the climate crisis. More conventional farmers should be incentivised to transition to organic farming, and organic farmers should be properly rewarded for the public goods they deliver by producing quality food while protecting nature. Increased support to organic farming is a smart public policy tool to ensure that the next CAP delivers on its promises and objectives."

The situation is especially worrying in large countries like France, where current draft measures would constitute a backsliding compared to the current CAP given that support for organic maintenance was withdrawn and that organic farming is currently foreseen to receive the same level of payment under an Eco-scheme as other standards such as HVE (so called "High Environmental Value") which provide lower environmental benefits and that allow the use of pesticides, synthetic fertilizers, and GMOs. In Germany organic farmers remain at risk of losing up to €80 per hectare compared to the current situation due to a perceived double funding issue between Eco-schemes and Rural Development measures. The nature and budget for support measures in Spain or Poland remain highly uncertain.

Other Member States set up targets for organic land that are not ambitious enough compared to business as usual growth trends, like in Austria, the leading EU country in terms of share of organic land, which only set a 30% target for 2030 (when it is already at 26% today) and decided to merge the biodiversity and organic farming measures, which will generate a decrease of the basic premium for organic farming practices.

In some countries such as Spain, Italy, Lithuania, Finland, organic farmers associations are not even involved in the official consultation process on the CAP SP.

On the positive side, a few countries have set clear national targets and realistic budgets and measures to reach them. This is the case in Belgium (Wallonia), Croatia, Denmark, and Hungary.

Background information

Read IFOAM Organics Europe's [evaluation of measures and budgets to support organic agriculture in Members States' draft CAP Strategic Plans](#) (CAP SPs).

The [European Organic Action Plan](#) states: "In December 2020, the Commission published recommendations to Member States on their future CAP strategic plans. These recommendations address economic, environmental, and social challenges of European agriculture and rural areas, focusing on the European Green Deal targets, including the target of 25% of agricultural land under organic farming by 2030. Member States are therefore invited to set national values in their CAP strategic plans for these Green Deal targets. Based on European averages and trends, Member States should focus on increasing the organic area by defining target percentages or encouraging positive trends. When drafting their CAP national strategic plans, Member States will be asked to respond to the aforementioned recommendations."

PROSPECTS & DEVELOPMENTS
FOR ORGANIC IN NATIONAL CAP STRATEGIC PLANS
EU-27 OVERVIEW

#ORGANICEUROPE

Below table provides you with an overview of the prospects and developments for organic in national CAP Strategic Plans for the European Union as well as each Member State. On the left, you can find the current share of organic land, followed by the current (2018) CAP support. The numbers in columns 'Corresponding CAP expenditure' refer to the minimum (least ambitious) and maximum (most ambitious) amounts a country could allocate to achieving the national/organic movement and enhanced scenarios detailed on the following country cards.

	Organic area share	Current (2018) CAP support (M€/year)	Potential organic area share	Corresponding CAP expenditure (M€/year)	Enhanced organic area share	Corresponding CAP expenditure (M€/year)
EU-27	9.0%	1,803	21.1%	4,405/8,817	25.0%	5,193/10,394
AUSTRIA	25.1%	121	40%	202/313	47.2%	238/369
BELGIUM	6.9%	19	20.0%	59/82	23.6%	69/97
BULGARIA	2.6%	24	10.0%	84/199	11.8%	100/235
CROATIA	6.9%	33	15.0%	75/103	17.7%	89/121
CYPRUS	5.6%	4	10.0%	6.9/11.3	11.8%	8.1/13.3
CZECH REPUBLIC	15.7%	53	25.0%	88/113	29.5%	104/133
DENMARK	10.9%	41	25.0%	104/150	29.5%	123/178
ESTONIA	22.2%	18	30.0%	27/39	35.4%	31/46
FINLAND	14.0%	56	25.0%	104/141	29.5%	122/166
FRANCE	8.1%	180	25.0%	615/1,504	29.5%	726/1,776
GERMANY	9.7%	300	20.0%	704/1,091	23.6%	831/1,288
GREECE	11.6%	97	20.0%	179/444	23.6%	212/525
HUNGARY	6.5%	21	15.0%	72/163	17.7%	85/192
IRELAND	1.5%	8	12.0%	63/81	14.2%	75/96
ITALY	15.8%	386	35.0%	870/1,938	41.3%	1,027/2,289
LATVIA	15.0%	28	25.0%	48/64.5	29.5%	56.7/76.1
LITHUANIA	8.3%	36	15.0%	66/108	17.7%	78/127
LUXEMBOURG	4.5%	1.3	25.0%	7.2/10.5	29.5%	8.5/12.4
MALTA	0.5%	0.002	2.0%	0.01/0.10	2.4%	0.01/0.12
NETHERLANDS	3.8%	0	25.0%	76.6/119.6	29.5%	90.4/141.3
POLAND	3.5%	47	10.0%	140/249	11.8%	166/294
PORTUGAL	8.1%	25	15.0%	65/85	17.7%	77/100
ROMANIA	3.2%	42	10.0%	163/362	11.8%	192/428
SLOVAKIA	10.5%	17	18.0%	31/46	21.2%	36/54
SLOVENIA	10.2%	10	15.0%	15/19	17.7%	17/23
SPAIN	10.1%	159	25.0%	410/1,102	29.5%	484/1,302
SWEDEN	20.3%	75	35.0%	130/279	41.3%	154/330

Action 9 of the new EU "Action Plan for the Development of Organic Production" foresees that "In the framework of the new CAP and CFP, the Commission will: starting in 2023 [when the new CAP enters into force], assess the specific circumstances and needs of Member States regarding the growth of the organic sector, and ensure Member States make the best use of the possibilities offered by the new CAP to support their national organic sector. This support will include technical assistance, the exchange of best practices and innovations in organics, and the full use of relevant CAP instruments such as eco-schemes and rural development environmental management commitments, which include organic farming. Farm advisory services on specific topics will be strengthened, notably as part of Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation System (AKIS), to promote relevant knowledge exchange".

On 29 June, IFOAM Organics Europe published [an estimation of national targets for organic production and the budgets necessary to reach them](#). The report estimates that the European Union should dedicate 3-5 times the current amount of CAP budget dedicated to conversion and maintenance of organic farming from 2023 onwards. Depending on their potential national target, baseline, and payments rates, in some cases, Member States should dedicate 10 times more national budget to organic support measures.

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IFOAM Organics Europe represents almost 200 member organisations in the EU-27, the EU accession countries and EFTA. Member organisations span the entire organic food chain and beyond: from farmers and processors organisations, retailers, certifiers, consultants, traders, and researchers to environmental and consumer advocacy bodies.



ANNEX

There are concerns with draft CAP SP in the following Member States:

Austria, the leading EU country in terms of share of organic land, only set an official 30% target for 2030 (when it is already at 26% today) and decided to merge the biodiversity and organic farming measures, which will generate a decrease of the basic premium for organic farming practices.

France only set an 18% target for 2030, which does not represent a fair contribution to the EU target. Moreover, the government withdrew support for organic maintenance under the second Pillar, which will significantly decrease the subsidies allocated for organic farmers. Through an Eco-scheme, **organic farming is currently foreseen to receive the same level of payment as other standards such as HVE** (so called “High Environmental Value”) which provide lower environmental benefits than organic farming and that allow the use of pesticides, synthetic fertilizers, and GMOs. In this context of reduced payments and lack of proportionality between Eco-schemes payments and the environmental benefits provided the different “quality” standards, there will be reduced incentives for farmers to convert to organic farming.

Germany set a target of 20% at national level, but **organic farmers remain at risk of losing up to €80 per hectare compared to the current situation due to a perceived double funding issue between Eco-schemes and Rural Development measures**. Conversion and maintenance budget will remain funded through the second Pillar, but no information is available yet on the budget. Approximately €50 million per year would be needed to reach this 20% target, which would mean to double the current CAP amount.

In **Lithuania** the situation remains fluid and unclear according to the information received. The government set a target of 13% organic farmland by 2027, but how **organic maintenance and conversion will be supported** in the draft Strategic Plan, and with which budget, is unclear at the moment, making it unlikely that this target be reached.

Luxembourg has a 20% target of organic farmland for 2025 (against a current share of 5%) but it seems that the budget foreseen will not be sufficient to reach it. Moreover, it will not be possible for farmers to cumulate subsidies for biodiversity and organic farming because of an alleged **double funding issue**. **There is therefore a lack of comparative advantage for organic farming which will lead to a lower attractiveness to convert to organic**.

The Netherlands is one of the only two countries where **no support for organic maintenance nor conversion to organic is planned**, and the country has not even set a target for organic farmland in the draft Strategic Plan. The only positive aspect is that organic farmers will automatically get the highest amount for Eco-schemes.

The situation is critical in **Spain** where both support for organic maintenance and conversion are not ensured, and where farmers will be able to only access one eco-scheme, and none will be dedicated to organic farming. This critical situation occurred in a context where organic farmers’ representatives were not involved in the consultation process and could not provide recommendations to the Spanish Government.

The situation remains uncertain in some countries:

Italy has set an objective to reach 25% organic land by 2027, but the Italian organic movement, which has not been properly involved in the consultation process, considers that this target is not ambitious enough to represent a fair contribution to the EU average target. On the positive side a specific Eco-scheme is dedicated to organic farming in the draft Italian CAP Strategic Plan, but no detailed information is available yet on the budget foreseen for this Eco-scheme nor other support measures.

In **Poland**, there are still some unclarities about organic support in the CAP Strategic Plan. **The latest draft now mentions a national target of 7%** (currently organic farmland represents 3.4% of the total agricultural land) but, strangely, it mentions that only 3.52% of the land will be able to receive organic payments. The government plans to use Eco-schemes for both organic conversion and maintenance.

On the positive side:

Despite remaining uncertainties on the budget, **Belgium (Wallonia)** has a clear ambition to double its organic area to reach 30% organic land by 2030. **Croatia**, after an inclusive consultation process, also has the ambition to double its organic area and to reach 15%, a clear and sufficient budget, and organic farmers will have access to eco-schemes. **Denmark** is planning to continue to invest in policy support to develop organics, with a clear target of 20% and a realistic budget to reach it. It is worth noting that Denmark one of the only countries that will introduce a **specific Eco-scheme for organic farming**. In **Hungary**, despite some concerns on the consultation process, there is also a clear target to reach 10% by 2027, with stronger incentives for farmers since it is planned that subsidies for organic farmers will increase by 74% on average for the 2022-24 period. **Sweden** is already a leading organic country and is planning to continue to develop to reach 30% of organic farmland by 2030 and 60% share of organic products in public procurement by the same year. Organic farming will be eligible to AECM without any double funding issue. However, there is still no clear information regarding the budget and detailed support measures.

		Content	Budget	Process
Austria		⊖	⊖	✓
Belgium	Flanders	⊖	?	⊖
Belgium	Wallonia	✓	?	✓
Bulgaria		⊗	?	⊖
Croatia		✓	✓	✓
Czech Republic		✓	⊖	✓
Denmark		✓	✓	✓
Finland		⊖	⊖	⊗
France		⊗	⊗	⊖
Germany		⊖	⊗	⊖
Hungary		✓	✓	⊖
Ireland		⊗	⊖	✓
Italy		✓	?	⊗
Lithuania		⊗	⊗	⊗
Luxembourg		⊗	✓	⊖
Netherlands		⊗	?	⊖
Poland		⊖	⊗	✓
Portugal		⊖	?	⊗
Spain		⊗	⊗	⊗
Sweden		✓	?	⊖

Legend: For a full explanation about the colours, see the previous page. No sufficient information was received to evaluate the situation in Cyprus, Estonia, Greece, Latvia, Malta, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia.