

EUROPE NEEDS MORE FARMERS

THE RIGHT TO LAND FOR SMALL-SCALE FARMERS

THE PROBLEM

LAND AFFECTS US ALL BUT IS CONTROLLED BY FEW

Land politics – who controls what land, how it is used, for what purposes and to whose benefit – dictates how food you eat is produced, where it comes from and what you pay for it. It shapes rural communities, impacts climate change and biodiversity, and determines who receives subsidies under the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), funded by public money. Currently, a **lack of transparency** and **concentration of power** means powerful industry actors exert pressure to control land politics, and many examples of corruption have been publicised in recent years.



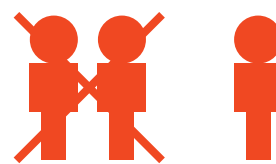
LAND GRABBING

Land grabbing is the control of larger than locally typical amounts of land (through ownership or other agreements) for purposes of speculation, extraction, resource control or commodification at the **expense of peasant farmers**, agroecology, food sovereignty and human rights.



MORE MONEY

Land grabbing is particularly fuelled by agricultural policies like the CAP that subsidise farms based on how big they are. As **more land leads to more money**, the incentive is to acquire as much as possible, leading to **land concentration**.



FOR A FEW

Land is treated as a commodity and financial asset and is used to **reap huge profits for a small number of people**, without considering that access to land is essential to grow healthy food for the population, combat climate change and biodiversity loss, provide jobs and maintain communities.



ECHOING INEQUALITIES Increasing land concentration often impacts marginalised ethnic, gender, age and class groups. It prevents farming entrants' access to land and affects the ability of small farmers to retain access to their land when faced with powerful actors. With an ageing population of farmers in Europe and climate commitments that require a move away from exports, insufficient access to land for new entrants may lead to future food insecurity.

WHO CONTROLS LAND?

IN 2016, 6.9% OF EU FARMS

CONTROLLED 68.2% OF THE EU'S UTILISED AGRICULTURAL AREA

ON AVERAGE 80% OF CAP DIRECT PAYMENTS

GO TO 20% OF CAP BENEFICIARIES

SIZE MATTERS

THE LARGEST 1.95% OF A TOTAL 6.7M EU FARMS

RECEIVE 30% OF THE TOTAL CAP DIRECT AID



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THE SOLUTION

ACCESS TO LAND FOR PEASANT FARMING

Land cannot be treated as a commodity: it is a **finite resource** with social, cultural, environmental, and economic functions. The ageing population of farmers means that millions of hectares of farmland will change hands in the coming two decades and what happens when that land becomes available will be key. As peasant agroecological farming is **more diverse** and **less intense**, access to land for small-scale farmers helps maintain biodiversity, creates jobs, ensures animal welfare, and provides healthy, local food that does not impact the planet or our health in the same way as industrial farming.

HOW TO CHANGE THINGS



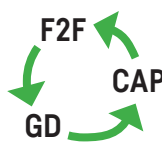
Better **transparency**, through a **European Land Observatory**, that monitors land



An independent assessment of the **impact** of land policy by a high-level **institutional task force**, working with small-scale producers



Better **guidance** on land governance as well as public policy objectives on land that are coherent, effective and transparent through an **EU Land Directive**



Coherence between EU policies like the Green Deal, F2F Strategy and the CAP, including stopping negotiating Free Trade Agreements



Guaranteed **fair income** for farmers through CAP subsidies linked to no. of workers and not land size, as well as market regulation mechanisms



National and regional land policy that facilitates democratic and transparent access to land for **agroecology**, encouraged by these EU level measures



LAND AND FOOD SOVEREIGNTY

Food sovereignty ensures the right to healthy and culturally appropriate food produced through ecologically sound and sustainable methods, and the right to define our own food and agriculture systems. It is a process that strives for solidarity, not competition, building a fairer world from the bottom up. Without access to land, peasant farmers do have the autonomy to grow what and how they want, and citizens are denied the full story behind the food they eat.



UNDROP

Article 17 of the UN Declaration of the Rights of Peasants and other people working in rural areas (UNDROP) outlines access to land as a human right. 'Measures must be adopted to carry out agrarian reform in order to facilitate wider, more equal and guaranteed access to land for peasants. It must limit land concentration and excessive land control, respecting the social function of land.'

THE EU LOST OVER

3.5 MILLION
FARMS UNDER 5 HA. BETWEEN 2005-16

FARMERS' INCOMES ARE

50% LOWER

THAN THE REST
OF SOCIETY IN EUROPE

70 % OF THE WORLD POPULATION



ARE FED BY NETWORKS OF
SMALL-SCALE FOOD PRODUCERS

INFO + DOCS: <https://www.eurovia.org/main-issue/land> and SOURCES: Roots of Resilience, Nyeleni ECA, 'How can public policy support small-scale family farms?', 2021 / ECVC et al, 'Who will feed us', 2015 / ETC Group, 2017

