



# Special Eurobarometer 504

## Summary

### Europeans, Agriculture and the CAP

Fieldwork

August – September 2020

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Survey requested by the European Commission,  
Directorate-General for Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural  
Development and co-ordinated by the Directorate-General for Communication

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The interpretations and opinions contained in it are solely those of the authors.

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Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development

Survey co-ordinated by the European Commission, Directorate-General for Communication  
(DG COMM "Media monitoring and Eurobarometer" Unit)



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>I. AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY IN THE EU: PERCEIVED IMPORTANCE, RESPONSIBILITIES AND MAIN OBJECTIVES</b>	<b>6</b>
1 The perceived importance of agriculture and rural areas in the EU	6
2 Agriculture and climate change	7
3 The situation of rural areas, and how things have changed over the past ten years	8
4 The responsibilities of farmers in our society	10
5 Main objectives of the EU in terms of agriculture and rural development policy	11
6 Change in the area covered by forests	12
7 Most important benefits of forests	13
<b>II. THE COMMON AGRICULTURAL POLICY (CAP): AWARENESS, IMPORTANCE AND CONTRIBUTION TO THE EU'S PRIORITIES</b>	<b>15</b>
1 Awareness of the CAP	15
2 The perceived performance of the CAP	16
3 The perceived importance of the priorities of the CAP	17
4 The contribution of the CAP	18
5 Does the CAP only benefit farmers?	19
<b>III. FINANCIAL AID FOR FARMERS AND THE CAP BUDGET</b>	<b>20</b>
1 Financial aid for farmers	20
2 Reasons justifying the CAP's share of the total EU budget	21
3 Future financial support to farmers	23
4 Opinions on payments given to farmers for implementing environmentally-friendly practices	25
<b>IV. PURCHASING DECISIONS, QUALITY LABELS AND THE AGRI-FOOD SECTOR</b>	<b>26</b>
1 Factors influencing Europeans' food products purchases	26
2 Awareness of quality labels	27
3 Perceptions of organic agriculture	28
<b>V. ATTITUDES TOWARDS INTERNATIONAL TRADE IN AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS</b>	<b>29</b>
1 The European Union and trade barriers to imports of agricultural products	29
2 EU trade agreements and exchange of agricultural and food products	30
<b>CONCLUSION</b>	<b>31</b>

## **ANNEXES**

### **Technical specifications**

## INTRODUCTION

Agriculture and the agri-food sector are important in the eyes of Europeans. One of the key policies in this area of the economy is the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) – a common policy for all Member States of the European Union, funded from the resources of the EU annual budget, of which the CAP constitutes around 35% of the total budget.

The main aims of the policy are to:

- Ensure a decent standard of living for farmers through income support and market measures;
- Ensure sustainable rural development according to the needs of each Member State.

Significant reforms have been made in recent years to adjust the CAP to the challenges ahead. Thus, the CAP reform, proposed by the European Commission in June 2018, introduces a more flexible, performance and results-based approach that takes into account local conditions and needs, while increasing EU level ambitions in terms of sustainability. Moreover, this CAP reform proposal is compatible with the Green Deal's ambitions.

The current survey was commissioned by the Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development, to explore public opinion about agriculture, rural areas and the CAP. It follows on from previous surveys on this topic in December 2017<sup>1</sup>, October 2015<sup>2</sup>, November-December 2013<sup>3</sup>, May 2011<sup>4</sup>, November 2009<sup>5</sup> and November-December 2007<sup>6</sup>. It covers the following topics:

- Opinions about the importance of agriculture and rural areas;
- The role of agriculture and farmers in fighting climate change;
- The situation of rural areas, and how things have changed over the past ten years;
- The responsibilities of farmers in our society;
- What the main objectives of agriculture and rural development policies should be;
- Awareness of the CAP, opinions about how it is performing, and views on its priorities and contribution to EU society;
- Who benefits most from the CAP;
- Financial support for farmers now and in the future, including justifications for the CAP's budget, and views on payments for implementing environmentally friendly practices;
- Factors that influence the purchase of food products, including the role of quality labels;
- Opinions about international trade in agricultural products including trade barriers and trade agreements;
- Change in the area covered by forests over the past ten years, and opinions about the main benefits provided by forests.

Where possible, results from the current survey are compared to those of previous surveys on this topic.

<sup>1</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/commfrontoffice/publicopinion/index.cfm/Survey/getSurveyDetail/instruments/SPECIAL/surveyKy/2161>

<sup>2</sup> <http://ec.europa.eu/commfrontoffice/publicopinion/index.cfm/Survey/getSurveyDetail/instruments/SPECIAL/surveyKy/2087>

<sup>3</sup> <http://ec.europa.eu/commfrontoffice/publicopinion/index.cfm/Survey/getSurveyDetail/instruments/SPECIAL/surveyKy/1081/p/2>

<sup>4</sup> <http://ec.europa.eu/commfrontoffice/publicopinion/index.cfm/Survey/getSurveyDetail/instruments/SPECIAL/surveyKy/996/p/3>

<sup>5</sup> <http://ec.europa.eu/commfrontoffice/publicopinion/index.cfm/Survey/getSurveyDetail/instruments/SPECIAL/surveyKy/777/p/3>

<sup>6</sup> <http://ec.europa.eu/commfrontoffice/publicopinion/index.cfm/Survey/getSurveyDetail/instruments/SPECIAL/surveyKy/629/p/4>

This survey was carried out by the Kantar network in the 27 Member States of the European Union between 3 August and 15 September 2020. 27,237 EU citizens from different social and demographic categories were interviewed face-to-face at their home in their mother tongue. This survey was commissioned by the European Commission, Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development.

The methodology used is that of Eurobarometer surveys as carried out by the Directorate-General for Communication (“Media monitoring and Eurobarometer” Unit). Given the impact of COVID-19 and subsequent health safety measures, the face-to-face methodology was either not possible or only to a certain extent in some countries. In Belgium, Denmark, the Netherlands and Spain, a share of interviews were conducted online, while the rest were conducted as normal, via face-to-face interviews. In Estonia, Finland, Luxembourg and Sweden, all interviews were conducted online<sup>7</sup>. A technical note on the manner in which the interviews were conducted by the institutes within the Kantar network is appended as an annex to this report. Also included are the interview methods and the confidence intervals.

**Note:** In this report, countries are referred to by their official abbreviation. The abbreviations used in this report correspond to:

Belgium	BE	Lithuania	LT
Bulgaria	BG	Luxembourg	LU
Czechia	CZ	Hungary	HU
Denmark	DK	Malta	MT
Germany	DE	The Netherlands	NL
Estonia	EE	Austria	AT
Ireland	IE	Poland	PL
Greece	EL	Portugal	PT
Spain	ES	Romania	RO
France	FR	Slovenia	SI
Croatia	HR	Slovakia	SK
Italy	IT	Finland	FI
Republic of Cyprus	CY *	Sweden	SE
Latvia	LV		
European Union – weighted average for the 27 Member States			EU27
BE, FR, IT, LU, DE, AT, ES, PT, IE, NL, FI, EL, EE, SI, CY, MT, SK, LV, LT			Euro area
BG, CZ, DK, HR, HU, PL, RO, SE			Non euro area

\* Cyprus as a whole is one of the 27 European Union Member States. However, the “acquis communautaire” has been suspended in the part of the country which is not controlled by the government of the Republic of Cyprus. For practical reasons, only the interviews carried out in the part of the country controlled by the government of the Republic of Cyprus are included in the “CY” category and in the EU27 average.

*We wish to thank the people throughout the European Union who have given their time to take part in this survey. Without their active participation, this study would not have been possible.*

<sup>7</sup> Online interviewing took the form of probabilistic panels and access panels, depending on what is available in the country.



## I. AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY IN THE EU: PERCEIVED IMPORTANCE, RESPONSIBILITIES AND MAIN OBJECTIVES

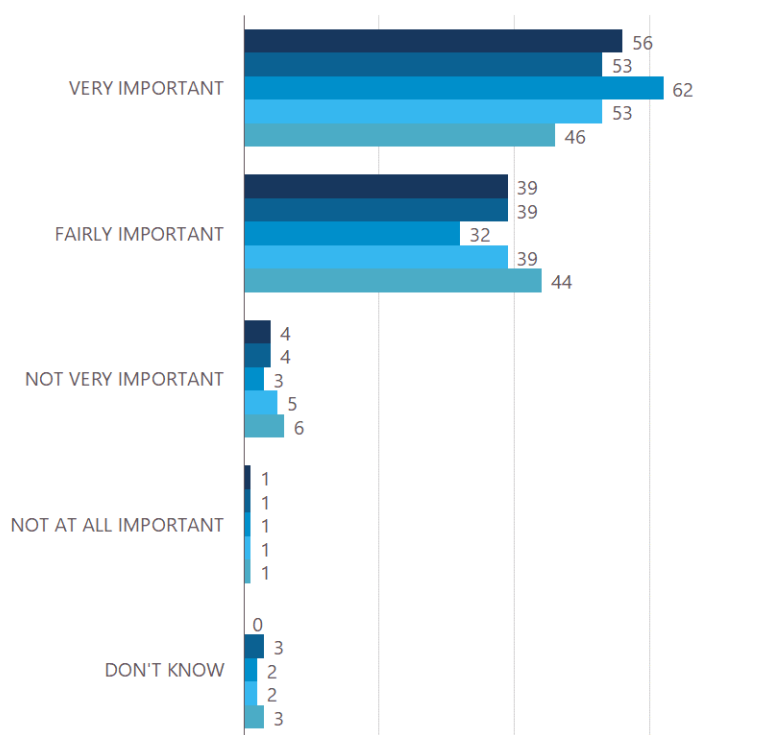
### 1 The perceived importance of agriculture and rural areas in the EU

**Nearly all respondents** (95%, +3 percentage points since 2017) **think that agriculture and rural areas are important ‘for our future’ in the European Union**, including more than half (56%, +3 pp) who consider they are ‘very important’. Just one in twenty respondents have a different view (5%, unchanged).

Looking at the longer trend, the proportion of respondents who believe that agriculture and rural areas are important for the future in the EU has increased by five percentage points since 2009.

**QA1** Do you think that, in the EU, agriculture and rural areas are ... for our future?  
(% - EU)

■ Aug.-Sept. 2020 ■ Dec. 2017 ■ Oct. 2015 ■ Nov.-Dec. 2013 ■ Nov.-Dec. 2009



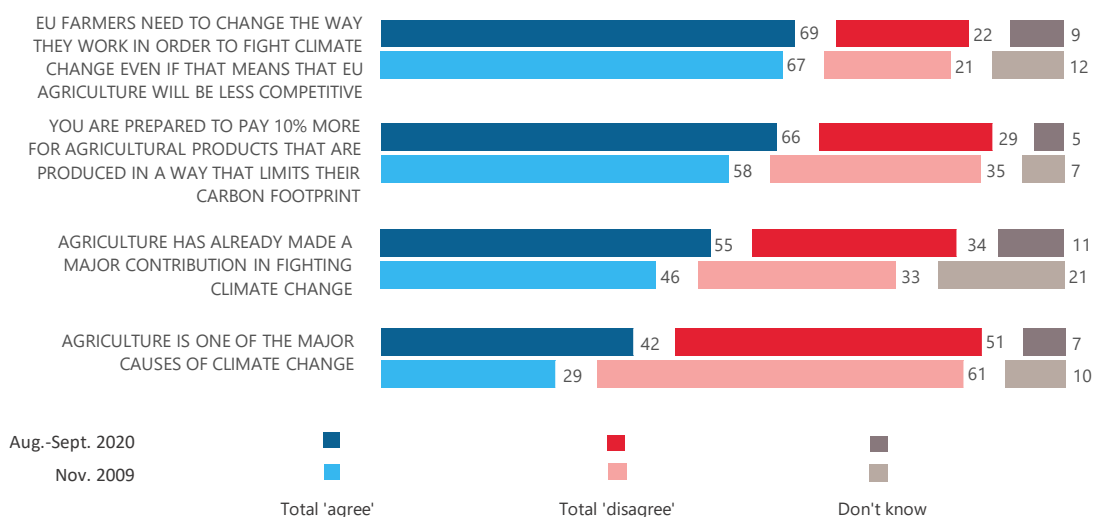
Base: all respondents (n.= 27,237)

## 2 Agriculture and climate change

Respondents were asked to say whether they agree or disagree with four statements about agriculture and climate change:

- Around seven in ten Europeans (69%, +2 percentage points since 2009<sup>8</sup>) say they agree with the statement **'EU farmers need to change the way they work in order to fight climate change even if that means that EU agriculture will be less competitive'**, with nearly a quarter (23%, unchanged) who 'totally agree'. Conversely, less than a quarter (22%, +1 pp) disagree with this statement, including 5% (unchanged) who answer 'totally disagree';
- A similar proportion (66%, +8 percentage points) say they **'are prepared to pay 10% more for agricultural products that are produced in a way that limits their carbon footprint'**<sup>9</sup>, including close to a quarter (24%, +3 pp) who 'totally agree'. Almost three in ten (29%, -6 pp) disagree with this statement, with 10% (-4 pp) who 'totally disagree';
- More than half of respondents (55%, +9 percentage points) agree with the statement **'agriculture has already made a major contribution in fighting climate change'**, with more than one in ten (13%, +2 pp) totally agreeing. Meanwhile, over a third (34%, +1 pp) have the opposite opinion, including 6% (-1 pp) who 'totally disagree';
- While remaining a minority, a sharply increasing share of respondents (42%, +13 percentage points) consider that **'agriculture is one of the major causes of climate change'**, including over one in ten (12%, +4 pp) who 'totally agree'. Conversely, more than half of respondents (51%, -10 pp) disagree with this statement, with 17% (-10 pp) totally disagreeing.

**QA22** Please tell me whether you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about agriculture and climate change?  
(% - EU27)



Base: all respondents (n.= 27,237)

<sup>8</sup> In 2009, the United Kingdom was an EU Member State, while Croatia was not. The opposite is true in this survey, and this might have an impact on the evolutions registered at EU level.

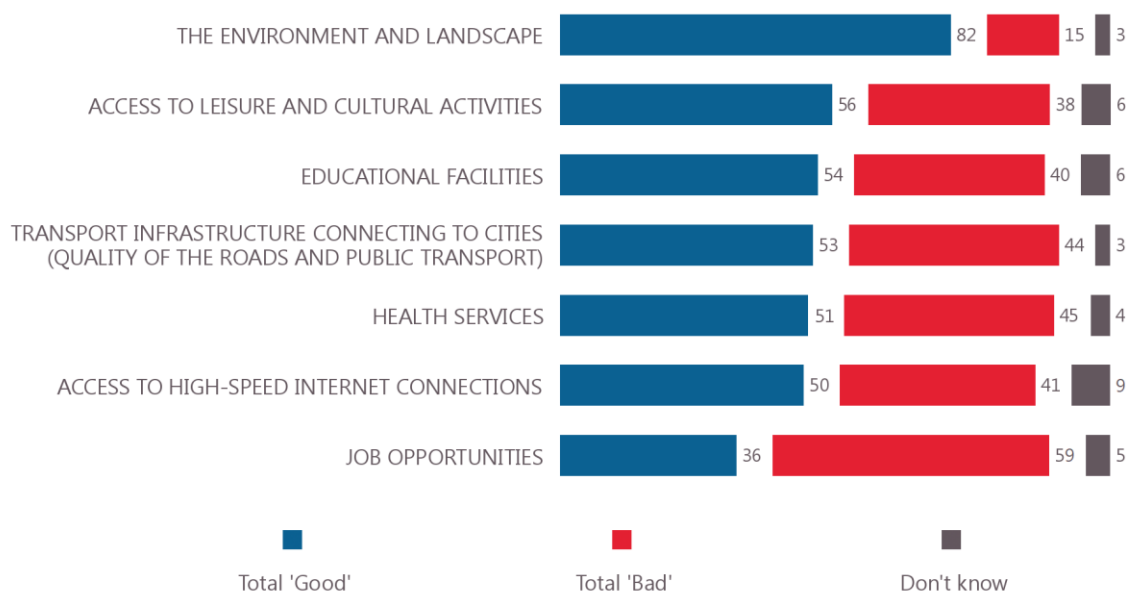
<sup>9</sup> In 2009, this statement was slightly different: 'You are ready to pay 10% more for agricultural products if they are produced in a way that does not increase climate change'

### 3 The situation of rural areas, and how things have changed over the past ten years

**The majority of Europeans consider that infrastructure and services are good in rural areas in their country, except for job opportunities:**

- More than eight in ten respondents (82%) think that **'the environment and landscape'** in rural areas are good in their country, including nearly three in ten (28%) who answered 'very good'. Conversely, 15% rate this aspect as bad;
- Slimmer majorities of respondents have a positive view of the five other aspects: over half of Europeans rate **'access to leisure and cultural activities'** as good (56% vs. 38% total 'bad'), **'educational facilities'** (54% vs. 40%), **'transport infrastructure connecting to cities (quality of the roads and public transport)'** (53% vs. 44%), **'health services'** (51% vs. 45%) and **'access to high-speed internet connections'** (50% vs. 41%);
- A minority of Europeans (36%) think that the **'job opportunities'** in rural areas are good in their country, with less than one in ten (7%) answering 'very good'. Nearly six in ten respondents (59%) say that the job opportunities are bad, including 16% who consider they are 'very bad'.

**QA18** Overall, how would you rate the following in rural areas in (OUR COUNTRY)?  
(% - EU)

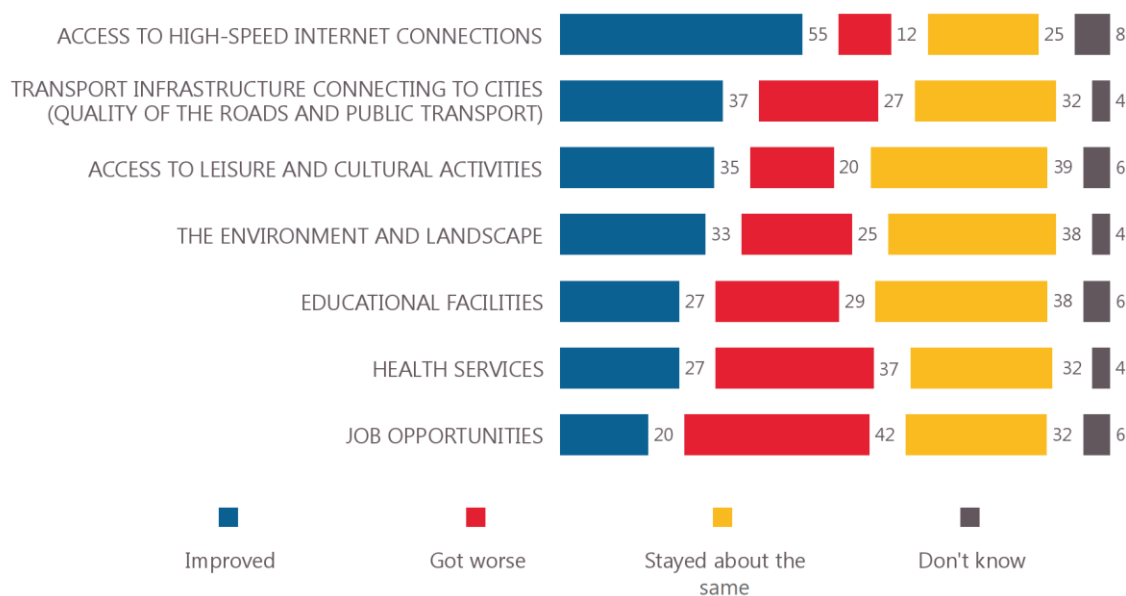


Base: all respondents (n.= 27,237)

Respondents were then asked whether things in rural areas in their country have improved, got worse or stayed about the same compared with ten years ago when it comes to the seven previously discussed matters:

- A larger share of respondents think that things have improved when it comes to **'access to high-speed internet connections'** (55% vs. 25% 'about the same' and 12% 'got worse') and **'transport infrastructure connecting to cities (quality of the roads and public transport)'** (37% vs. 32% 'about the same' and 27% 'got worse');
- **'Educational facilities'** have stayed about the same for most respondents (38% versus 29% 'got worse' and 27% 'improved'), as have **'access to leisure and cultural activities'** (39% versus 35% 'improved' and 20% 'got worse') and **'the environment and landscape'** (38% versus 33% 'improved' and 25% 'got worse');
- Conversely, a relative majority of Europeans answer that things have got worse for **'job opportunities'** (42% vs. 32% 'about the same' and 20% 'improved') and **'health services'** (37% vs. 32% 'about the same' and 27% 'improved').

**QA19** Compared with ten years ago, would you say things have improved, got worse or stayed about the same in rural areas in (OUR COUNTRY) when it comes to ...?  
(% - EU)



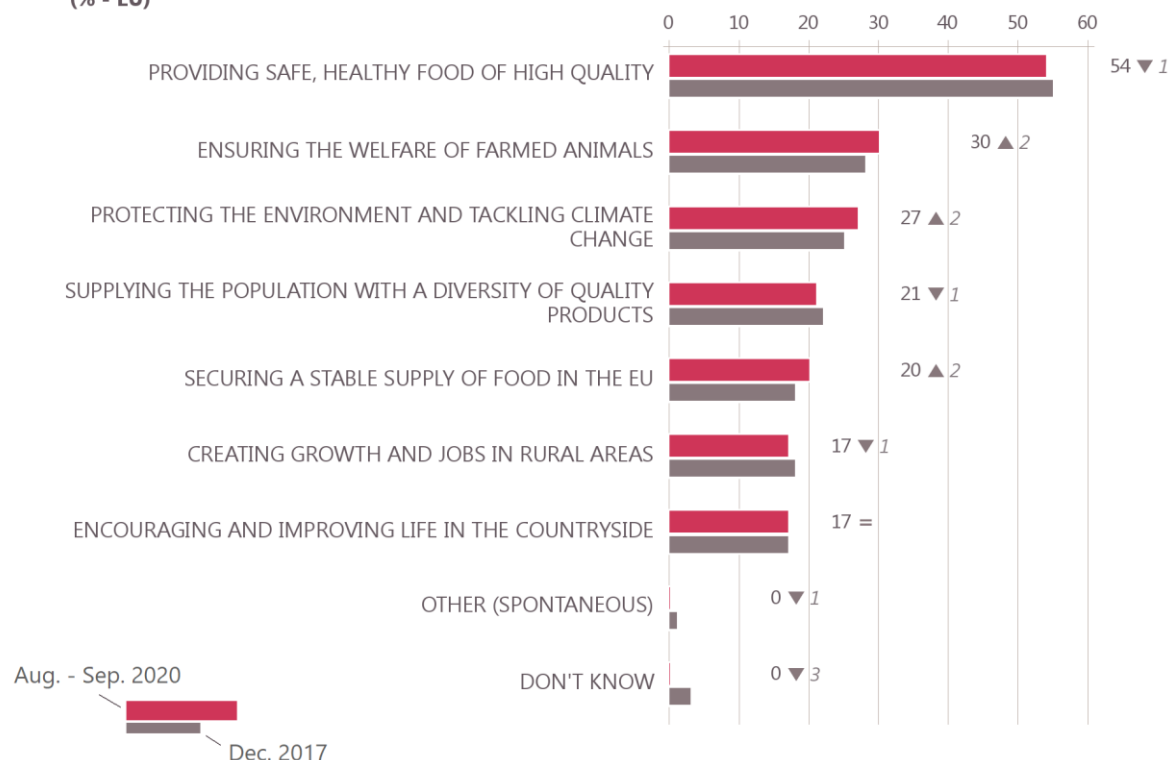
Base: all respondents (n.= 27,237)

## 4 The responsibilities of farmers in our society

Respondents were asked what the two main responsibilities of farmers in our society should be, from a list of seven:

- More than half of respondents (54%, -1 percentage point since 2017) mention '**providing safe, healthy food of high quality**' as one of the two main responsibilities of farmers, ahead of any other item by a large margin;
- In second position, 30% of Europeans (+2 pp) cite '**ensuring the welfare of farmed animals**', slightly ahead of '**protecting the environment and tackling climate change**' (27%, +2 pp);
- At least one in five respondents think that '**supplying the population with a diversity of quality products**' (21%, -1 pp) and '**securing a stable supply of food in the EU**' (20%, +2 pp) are among the two main responsibilities of farmers in our society;
- Finally, less than one in five Europeans mention '**creating growth and jobs in rural areas**' (17%, -1 pp) and '**encouraging and improving life in the countryside**' (17%, unchanged).

**QA6** What do you think should be the two main responsibilities of farmers in our society? (MAX. 2 ANSWERS)  
(% - EU)



Base: all respondents (n= 27,237)

## 5 Main objectives of the EU in terms of agriculture and rural development policy

Respondents were asked which items from a list of seven should be the main objectives of the European Union in terms of agriculture and rural development policy:

- Over six in ten Europeans (62%, unchanged since 2017) believe that **‘providing safe, healthy food of high quality’** should be one of the main objectives of the EU in terms of agriculture and rural development;
- Over half of respondents mention **‘ensuring a fair standard of living for farmers’** (51%, +3 percentage points) and **‘protecting the environment and tackling climate change’** (52%, +2 pp);
- Similar proportions cite **‘ensuring reasonable food prices for consumers’** (49%, no change) and **‘ensuring a sustainable way to produce food’** (49%, +3 pp);
- Finally, more than four in ten Europeans also consider that **‘creating growth and jobs in rural areas’** (45%, no change) and **‘securing a stable supply of food in the EU’** (43%, +5, the largest increase since 2017) should belong to the main objectives of the EU in terms of agriculture and rural development policy.

**QA4** In your opinion, which of the following should be the main objectives of the EU in terms of agriculture and rural development policy? (MULTIPLE ANSWERS POSSIBLE)  
(% - EU)



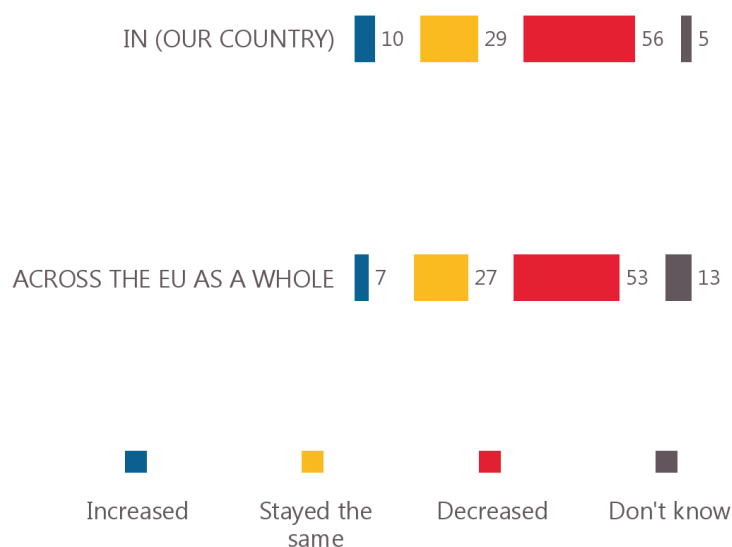
Base: all respondents (n= 27,237)

## 6 Change in the area covered by forests

**More than half of Europeans think that the area covered by forests has decreased both in their country and across the EU as a whole, compared with ten years ago, contrary to the fact that the EU forested area has expanded by an area larger than the whole of Slovenia in this time period:**

- 56% of Europeans think that **the area covered by forests in their country has ‘decreased’ compared with ten years ago**. Around three in ten think it has ‘stayed the same’ (29%), and one in ten believe that the area has ‘increased’;
- A similar proportion (53%) believe that **the area covered by forests across the European Union as a whole has ‘decreased’ compared with ten years ago**. For over a quarter of respondents (27%), this area has ‘stayed the same’, while less than one in ten (7%) consider that it has ‘increased’.

**QA20** Compared with ten years ago, do you think that the area covered by forests has increased, stayed the same or decreased...  
(% - EU)



Base: all respondents (n.= 27,237)

## 7 Most important benefits of forests

Respondents were asked what they think are the most important benefits provided by forests by choosing up to three items from a list of seven:

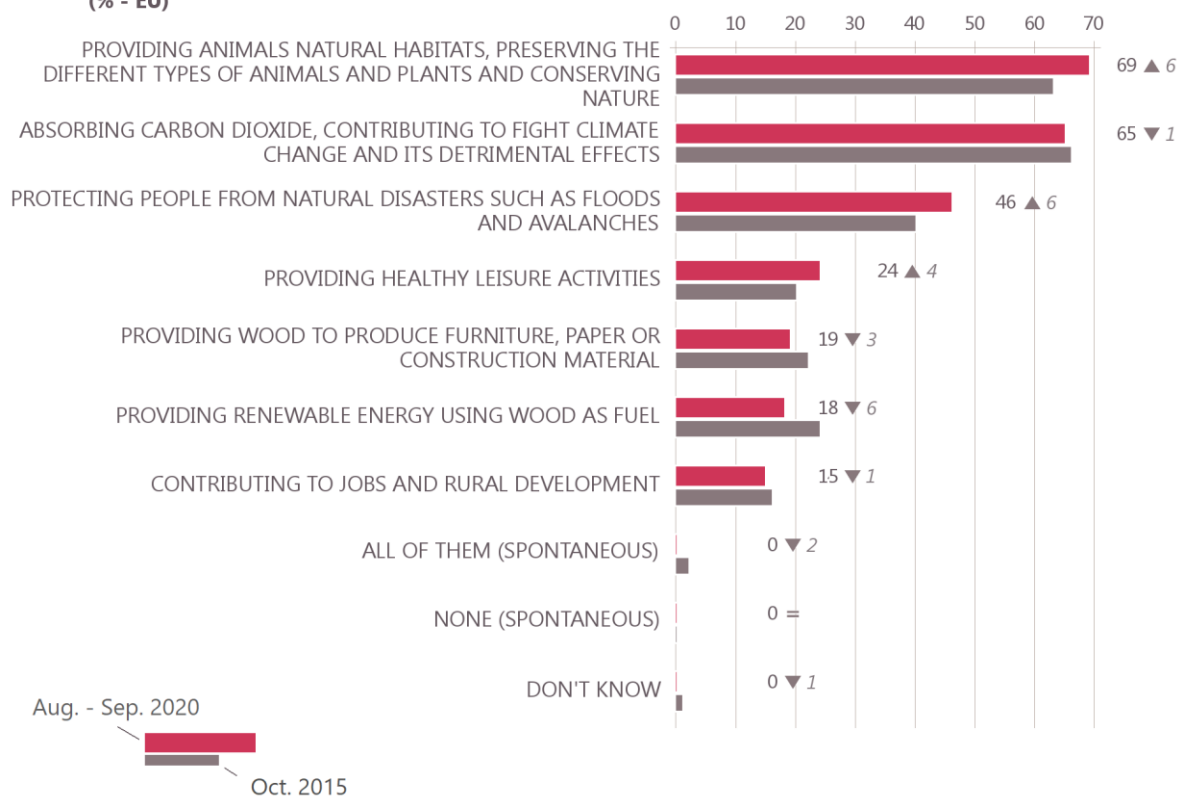
- Close to seven in ten respondents (69%, +6 percentage points since 2015) mention **'providing animals natural habitats, preserving the different types of animals and plants and conserving nature'** as one of the main benefits provided by forests;
- A similar proportion (65%, -1 pp) cite **'absorbing carbon dioxide, contributing to fight climate change and its detrimental effects'**;
- Nearly half of Europeans think that **'protecting people from natural disasters such as floods and avalanches'** (46%, +6 pp) is one of the most important benefits provided by forests;
- Close to a quarter of respondents also mention **'providing healthy leisure activities'** (24%, +4 pp);
- Close to one in five Europeans think that **'providing wood to produce furniture, paper or construction material'** (19%, -3 pp) is among the main benefits from forests, slightly ahead of **'providing renewable energy using wood as fuel'** (18%, -6 pp);
- **'Contributing to jobs and rural development'** comes last, mentioned by more than one in ten respondents (15%, -1 pp).

Since 2015, three benefits have registered a change of six percentage points. The share of respondents that mention **'providing animals natural habitats, preserving the different types of animals and plants and conserving nature'** has increased by six percentage points, and it is now the most mentioned benefit (it was in second position in 2015). Similarly, the share that mention **'protecting people from natural disasters such as floods and avalanches'** has also increased by six percentage points.

Conversely, the share that cite **'providing renewable energy using wood as fuel'** has decreased by six percentage points, now in sixth position (it was in fourth place in 2015).



**QA21** What do you think are the most important benefits provided by forests? (MAX. 3 ANSWERS)  
(% - EU)



Base: all respondents (n.= 27,237)

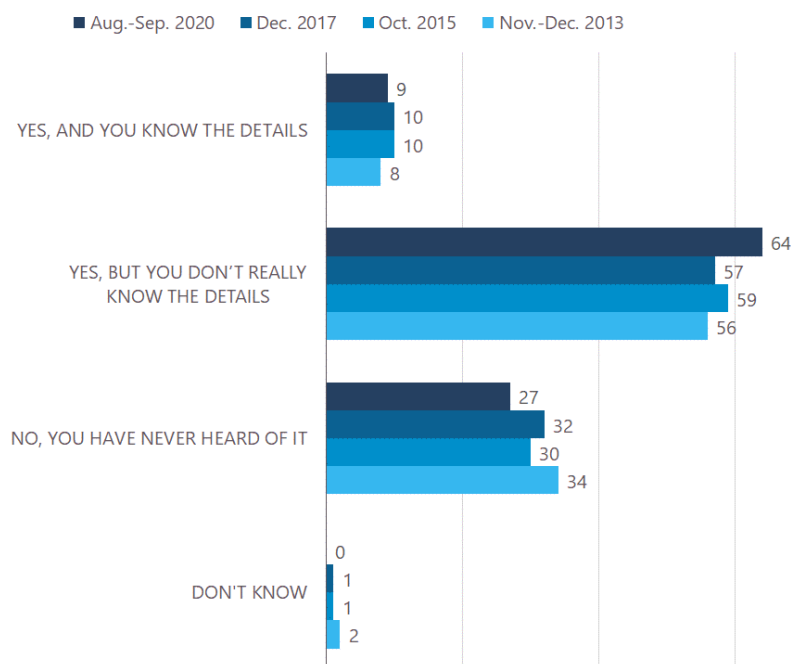
## II. THE COMMON AGRICULTURAL POLICY (CAP): AWARENESS, IMPORTANCE AND CONTRIBUTION TO THE EU'S PRIORITIES

### 1 Awareness of the CAP

**Nearly three quarters of Europeans** (73%, +6 percentage points since 2017) **have heard of the support that the European Union gives farmers through its CAP**, although less than one in ten (9%, -1 pp) 'know the details' and nearly two thirds (64%, +7 pp) 'don't really know the details'. Conversely, over a quarter of Europeans have never heard of the CAP (27%, -5 pp).

A longer trend analysis reveals that awareness of the CAP has reached its highest level since 2013, with a nine-point increase over the period.

**QA2** Have you ever heard of the support that the EU gives farmers through its Common Agricultural Policy (CAP)?  
(% - EU)



Base: all respondents (n.= 27,237)

## 2 The perceived performance of the CAP

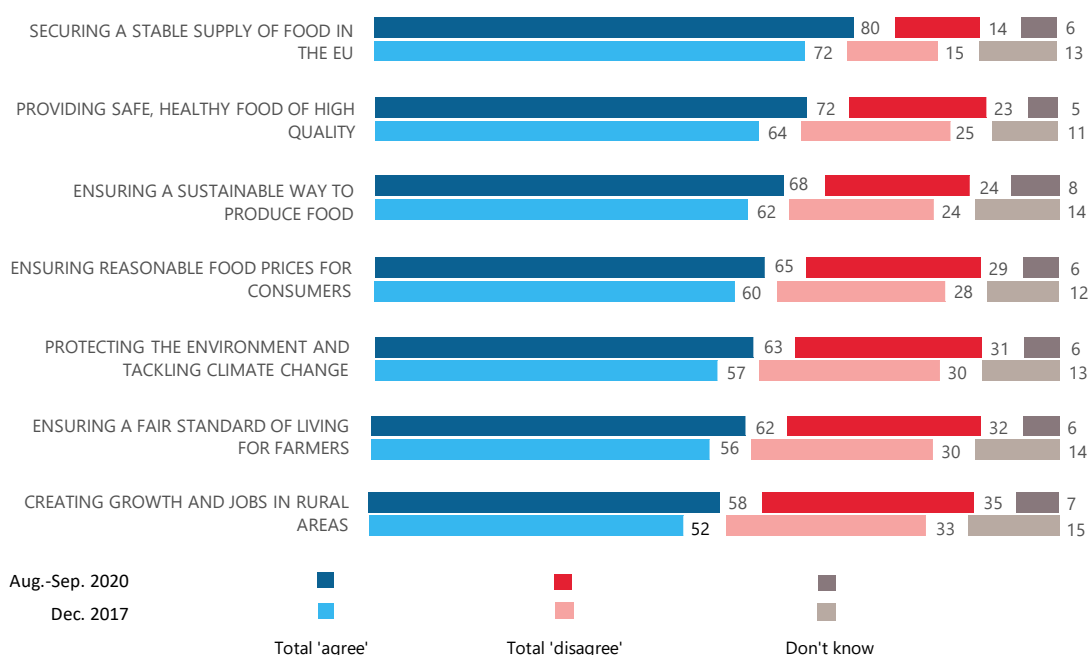
**The majority of Europeans think that the European Union through the CAP is fulfilling its role in all seven areas tested:**

- Eight in ten Europeans (+8 percentage points since 2017) consider that the European Union through the CAP is fulfilling its role in **'securing a stable supply of food in the EU'**, including 29% (+8 pp) who 'totally agree';
- More than seven in ten respondents (72%, +8 pp) think that way about **'providing safe, healthy food of high quality'** (with 28%, +6 pp, 'totally agree');
- Around two thirds of Europeans think that the CAP is fulfilling its role in both **'ensuring a sustainable way to produce food'** (68%, +6 pp, including 23%, +5 pp, 'totally agree') and **'ensuring reasonable food prices for consumers'** (65%, +5 pp, including 23%, +4 pp, 'totally agree');
- Slightly more than six in ten share this opinion about **'protecting the environment and tackling climate change'** (63%, +6 pp, including 25%, +6 pp, 'totally agree') and **'ensuring a fair standard of living for farmers'** (62%, +6 pp, including 23%, +6 pp, 'totally agree');
- Finally, less than six in ten respondents (58%, +6 pp) believe that the European Union is fulfilling its role in **'creating growth and jobs in rural areas'** (including 21%, +4 pp, 'totally agree').

These results highlight that large majorities of Europeans consider that the European Union through the CAP is fulfilling its role in the seven areas tested, with more than one in five respondents totally agreeing across each area. Moreover, since 2017, this opinion has increased by at least five percentage points in each domain.

**QA5** To what extent do you think the EU through the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) is fulfilling its role in ... ?

(% - EU27)



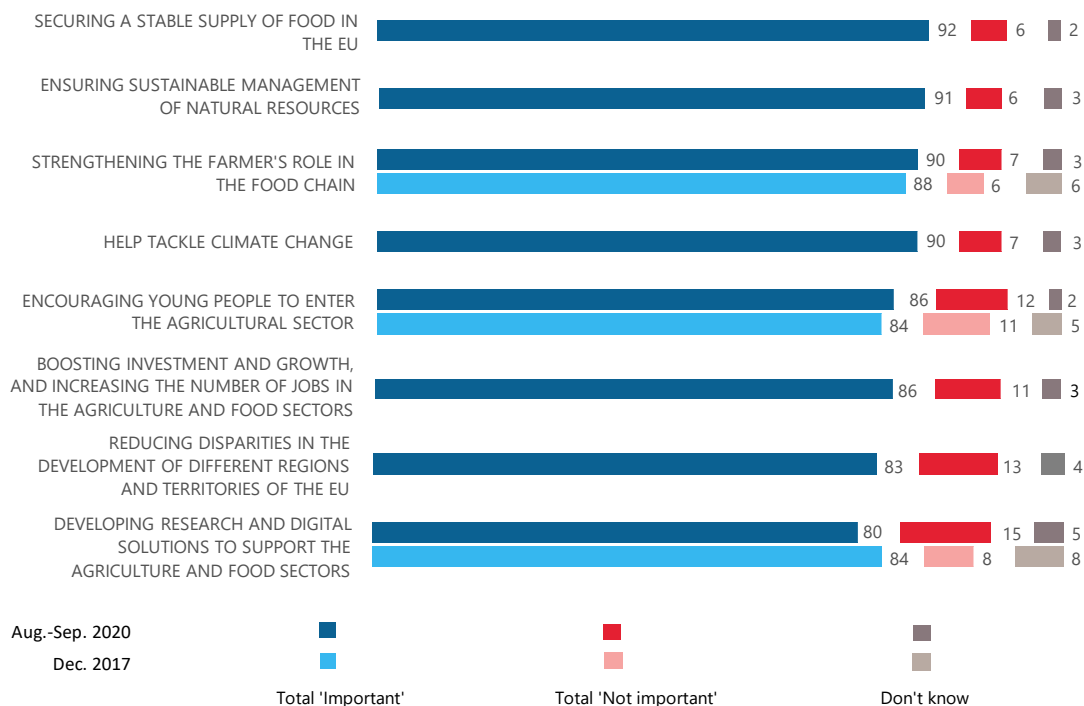
Base: all respondents (n= 27,237)

### 3 The perceived importance of the priorities of the CAP

**At least eight in ten Europeans consider that the eight priorities of the CAP tested are important:**

- At least nine in ten Europeans believe that **‘securing a stable supply of food in the EU’** (92%, with 50% ‘very important’), **‘ensuring sustainable management of natural resources’** (91%, with 51% ‘very important’), **‘strengthening the farmer's role in the food chain’** (90%, +2 percentage points since 2017, including 47%, +9 pp, ‘very important’) and **‘help tackle climate change’** (90%, with 52% ‘very important’) are important priorities of the CAP;
- At least eight in ten respondents share this opinion about the four other priorities of the CAP: 86% (+2 percentage point since 2017) for **‘encouraging young people to enter the agricultural sector’** (with 44%, +7 pp, ‘very important’), 86% for **‘boosting investment and growth, and increasing the number of jobs in the agriculture and food sectors’** (with 41% ‘very important’), 83% for **‘reducing disparities in the development of different regions and territories of the EU’** (with 38% ‘very important’) and 80% (–4 percentage points since 2017<sup>10</sup>) for **‘developing research and digital solutions to support the agriculture and food sectors’** (including 34%, no change, ‘very important’).

**QA7** How important do you think the following priorities of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) are?  
(% - EU27)



Base: all respondents (n.= 27,237)

<sup>10</sup> In 2017, this item was slightly different: 'Developing research and innovation to support the agri-food sector'

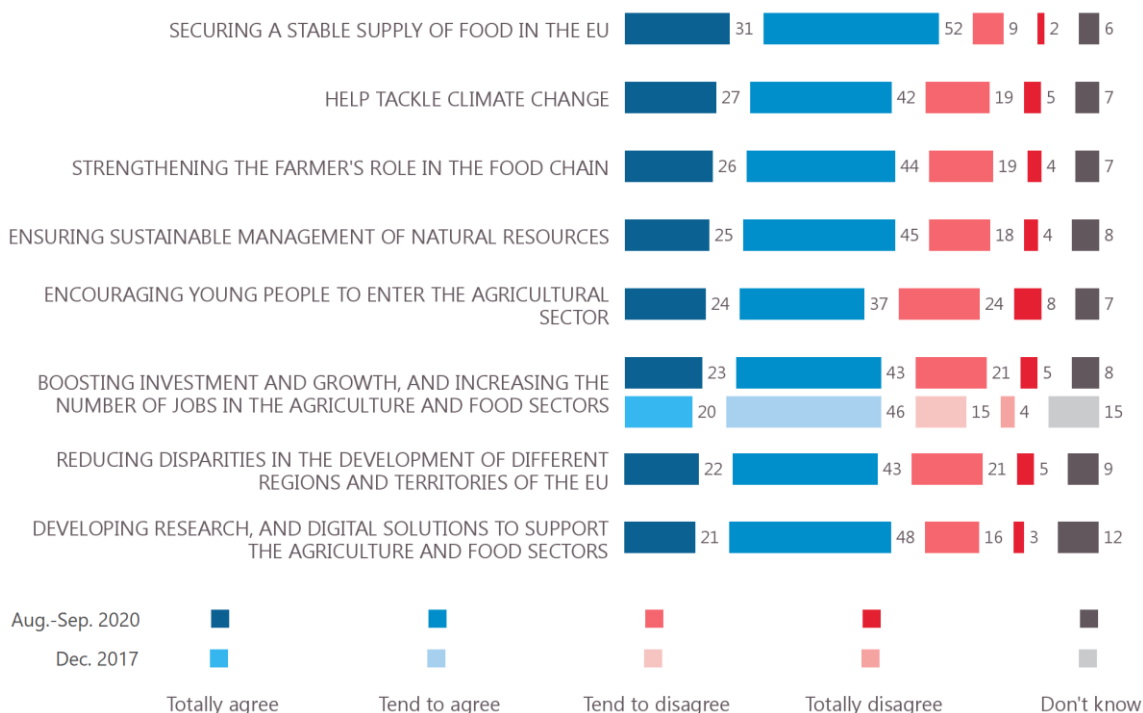
## 4 The contribution of the CAP

**Large majorities of Europeans consider that the CAP contributes to the eight areas tested, most notably to secure a stable supply of food in the EU:**

- Slightly more than eight in ten Europeans (83%) agree that the CAP contributes to securing **‘a stable supply of food in the EU’**, including 31% who ‘totally agree’;
- Around two thirds of respondents share this opinion about six other areas: **‘strengthening the farmer’s role in the food chain’** (70% for total ‘agree’, including 26% ‘totally agree’), **‘ensuring sustainable management of natural resources’** (70%, including 25% ‘totally agree’), **‘developing research, and digital solutions to support the agriculture and food sectors’** (69%, with 21% ‘totally agree’), **‘help tackle climate change’** (69%, with 27% ‘totally agree’), **‘boosting investment and growth, and increasing the number of jobs in the agriculture and food sectors’** (66%, which represents the total agreement and which remained stable since 2017, yet the proportion of those who ‘totally agree’ now stands at 23%, +3 pp) and **‘reducing disparities in the development of different regions and territories of the EU’** (65% with 22% ‘totally agree’);
- Finally, slightly more than six in ten respondents (61%) believe that the CAP contributes to the encouragement of **‘young people to enter the agricultural sector’** (including 24% ‘totally agree’).

These results shows that a large majority of Europeans think that the CAP contributes to EU society in a number of ways, with more than one in five respondents totally agreeing in each of the eight areas tested.

**QA8** Do you agree or not that the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) contributes to ...?  
(% - EU)



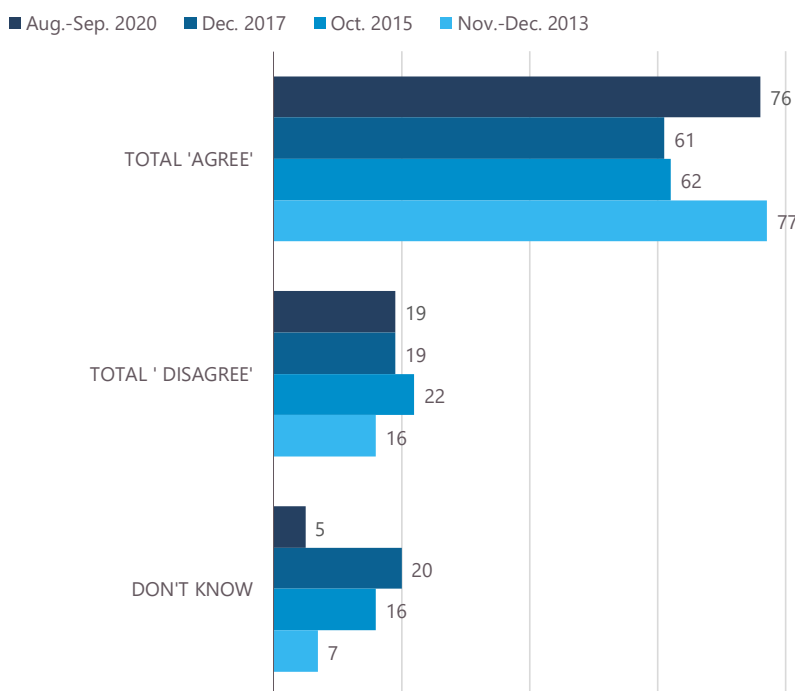
Base: all respondents (n.= 27,237)

## 5 Does the CAP only benefit farmers?

**Around three quarters of Europeans** (76%, +15 percentage points since 2017) **agree that the CAP benefits all European citizens and not only farmers**, including nearly a quarter (24%, +9) who 'totally agree' with it. Conversely, less than one in five respondents (19%, unchanged) disagree with this statement. Finally, just 5% say that they do not know, a much lower proportion compared with 2017 (20%).

A longer trend analysis reveals that the share of respondents who agree that the CAP benefits all Europeans has reached its second highest level since 2013 (76%, compared with 77% in 2013). This is a much higher proportion than what was registered in 2015 (62%) and 2017 (61%), mainly due to a strong decrease in the 'don't know' rate (down from 16% in 2015 and 20% in 2017 to 5%, a similar proportion as the one registered in 2013, 7%).

**QA3** To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) benefits all European citizens and not only farmers.  
(% - EU)



Base: all respondents (n.= 27,237)

### III. FINANCIAL AID FOR FARMERS AND THE CAP BUDGET

#### 1 Financial aid for farmers

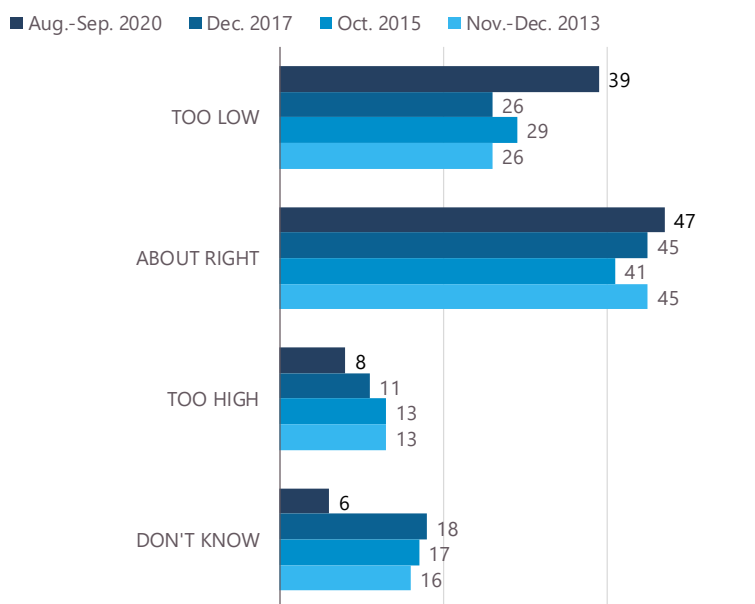
**Nearly half of Europeans** (47%, +2 percentage points since 2017<sup>11</sup>) **consider that the EU financial support to farmers in order to help them stabilise their incomes is about right.**

On the other hand, close to four in ten (39%, +13 pp) think that this support is ‘too low’, while less than one in ten (8%, -3 pp) say that it is ‘too high’. Finally, 6% (-12 pp) answer that they ‘don’t know’.

In terms of the longer trend, the proportion of respondents who consider that the EU financial support to farmers is ‘about right’ has reached its highest level since 2013, after a two-percentage point increase between 2013 and 2020 (up from 45% to 47%).

However, the share of respondents who answer ‘too low’ has increased significantly, up from 26% in 2013 to 39% in 2020. At the same time, the answer ‘too high’ has reached its lowest level after a second consecutive decrease (down from 13% in 2013 to 8% in 2020).

**QA9** The EU gives financial support to farmers to help stabilise their incomes. This aid represents around 1% of the combined public expenditure of the 27 Member States of the EU and almost 35% of the total EU budget. Do you think that this support is too low, about right or too high?  
(% - EU)



Base: all respondents (n.= 27,237)

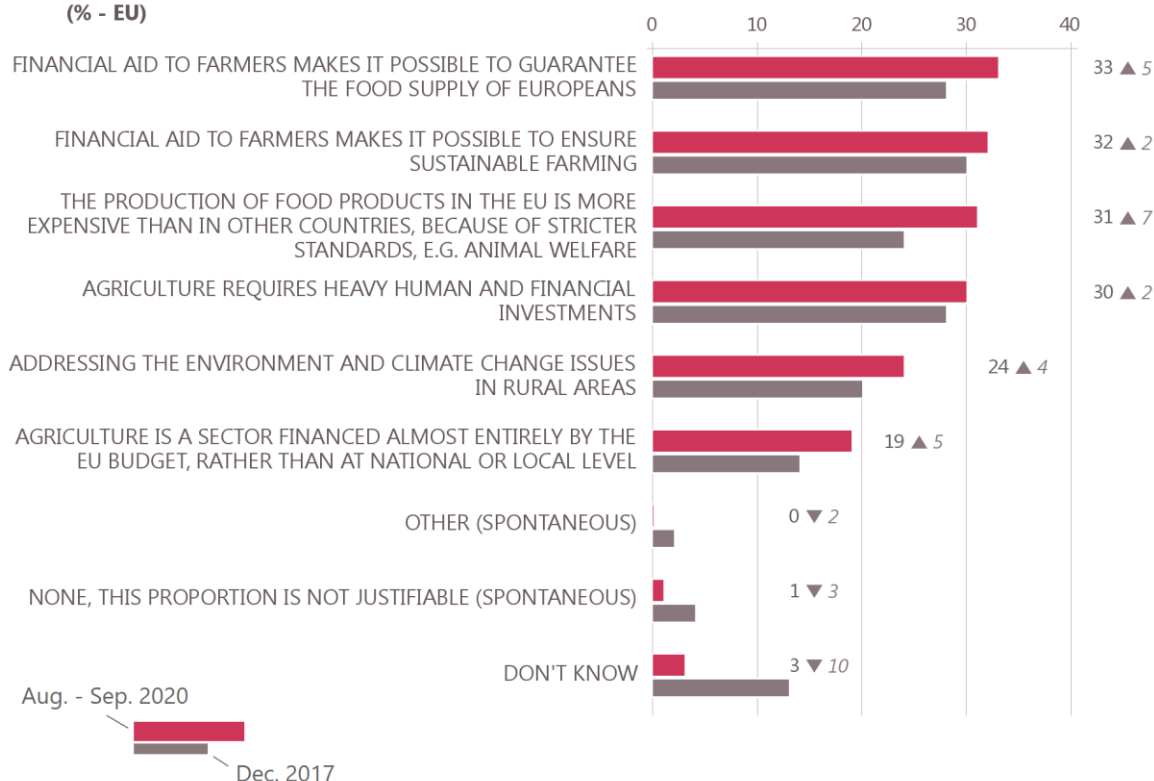
<sup>11</sup> Since 2017, the number of EU Member States and the percentage were updated in the question text. It was previously: 'The EU gives financial support to farmers to help stabilise their incomes. This aid represents around 1% of the combined public expenditure of the **28** Member States of the EU and **almost 40%** of the total EU budget.'

## 2 Reasons justifying the CAP's share of the total EU budget

Respondents were asked to identify the main reasons why the EU spends a significant proportion of its budget on the CAP by choosing up to two from a list of six:

- Four topics are cited by at least three in ten Europeans: **'financial aid to farmers makes it possible to guarantee the food supply of Europeans'** (33%, +5 percentage points since 2017<sup>12</sup>), slightly ahead of **'financial aid to farmers makes it possible to ensure sustainable farming'** (32%, +2 pp), **'the production of food products in the EU is more expensive than in other countries, because of stricter standards, e.g. animal welfare'** (31%, +7 pp) and **'agriculture requires heavy human and financial investments'** (30%, +2 pp);
- Close to a quarter of respondents believe that **'addressing the environment and climate change issues in rural areas'** (24%, +4 pp) is one of the main reasons why the EU spends a significant proportion of its budget on the CAP;
- Finally, nearly one in five Europeans (19%, +5 pp) consider that **'agriculture is a sector financed almost entirely by the EU budget, rather than at national or local level'**.

**QA10** What do you think are the main reasons why the EU spends a significant proportion of its budget (around 35% of the total EU budget) on the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP)? (MAX. 2 ANSWERS)  
(% - EU)



Base: all respondents (n.= 27,237)

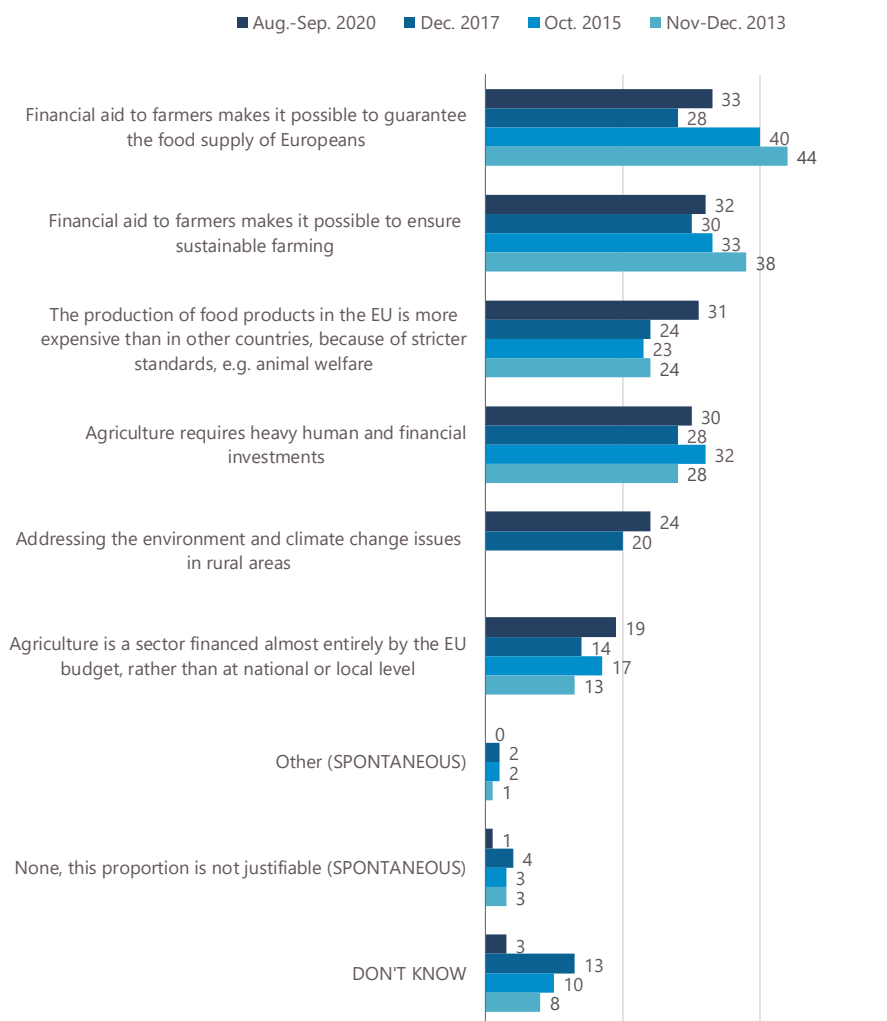
<sup>12</sup> Since 2017, the percentage have been updated in the question, which was before: 'What do you think are the main reasons why the EU spends a significant proportion of its budget (almost 40% of the total EU budget) on the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP)?'



A longer trend analysis since 2013 reveals that the two most cited reasons have lost ground, down from 44% to 33% for **‘financial aid to farmers makes it possible to guarantee the food supply of Europeans’** and from 38% to 32% for **‘financial aid to farmers makes it possible to ensure sustainable farming’**.

The other reasons have gained ground, particularly **‘the production of food products in the EU is more expensive than in other countries, because of stricter standards, e.g. animal welfare’** (up from 24% to 31%) and **‘agriculture is a sector financed almost entirely by the EU budget, rather than at national or local level’** (up from 13% to 19%). **‘Addressing the environment and climate change issues in rural areas’** is also more likely to be seen as one of the main reasons, up from 20% in 2017 to 24%. This is also true for **‘Agriculture requires heavy human and financial investments’**, which now stands at 30% (+2pp. since 2017)

**QA10** What do you think are the main reasons why the EU spends a significant proportion of its budget (around 35% of the total EU budget) on the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP)?  
(% - EU)



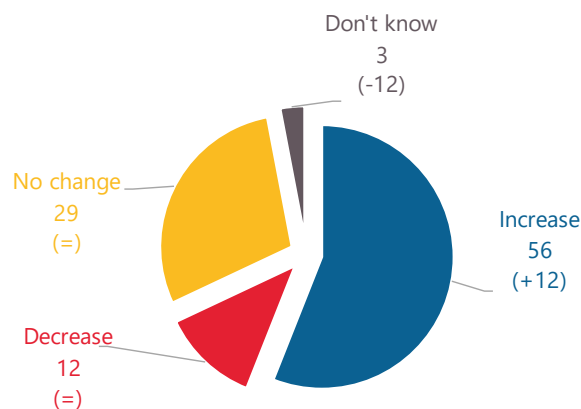
Base: all respondents (n.= 27,237)

### 3 Future financial support to farmers

**Nearly six in ten respondents** (56%, +12 percentage points since 2017) **would like to see an 'increase' in EU financial support to farmers over the next ten years.** Slightly more than one in ten (12%, unchanged) would like to see a 'decrease' in this support and close to three in ten (29%, unchanged) would like to see 'no change'.

Since 2017, the share of respondents in favour of an 'increase' had increased by more than ten percentage points, while the proportions of respondents in favour of a 'decrease' or 'no change' have remained unchanged. Over the period, the share of respondents who are unable to give an opinion has decreased by 12 points.

**QA11** And over the next 10 years, would you like to see an increase, decrease or no change in EU financial support to farmers?  
(% - EU)

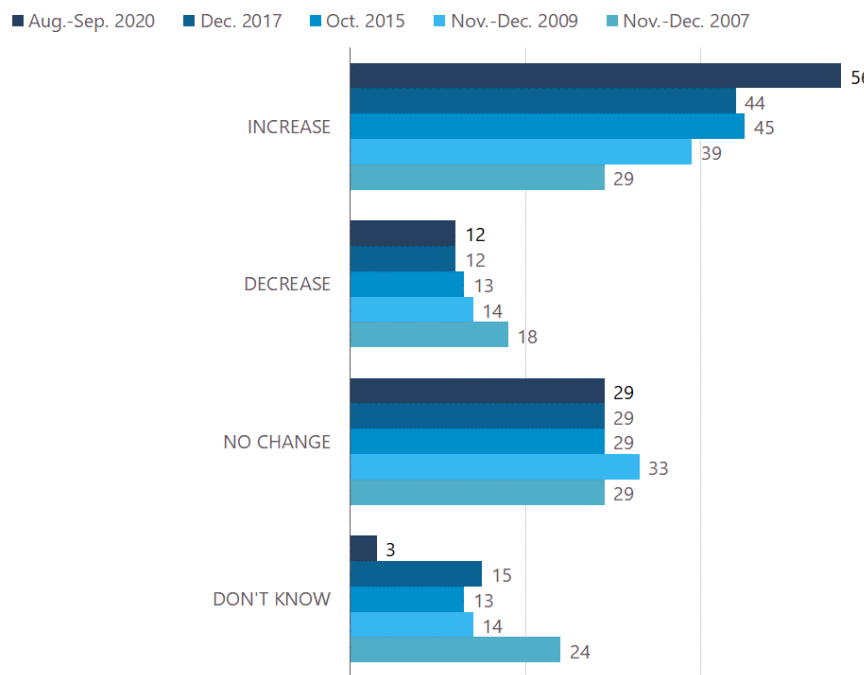


(Aug.-Sep. 2020 – Dec. 2017)

Base: all respondents (n.= 27,237)

The longer trend analysis highlights that the proportion of respondents who would like to see funding increase has sharply risen since 2007 (+27 percentage points, up from 29% to 56%). Meanwhile, the proportion who want funding to decrease has lost ground (-6 pp, down from 18% to 12%).

**QA11** And over the next 10 years, would you like to see an increase, decrease or no change in EU financial support to farmers?  
(% - EU)



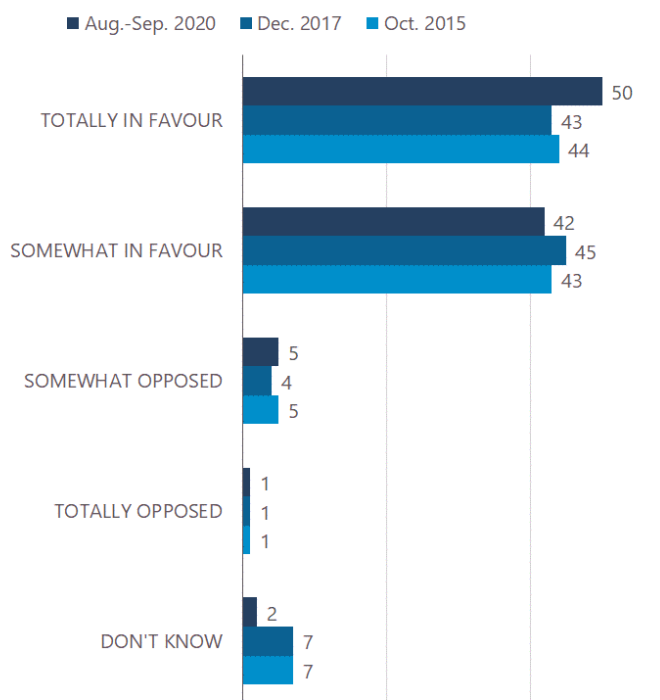
Base: all respondents (n.= 27,237)

## 4 Opinions on payments given to farmers for implementing environmentally-friendly practices

**A large majority of Europeans** (92%, +4 percentage points since 2017) **are in favour of the European Union continuing to make subsidy payments to farmers for carrying out agricultural practices beneficial to the climate and the environment.** Moreover, half of respondents (50%, +7) are 'totally in favour'. Conversely, just 6% (+1pp) are against such EU subsidies.

Since 2017, the share of respondents 'totally in favour' of these EU subsidies has increased substantially, now representing half of respondents in this survey (up from 43% in 2017 to 50% in 2020).

**QA15** The EU is currently making subsidy payments to farmers for carrying out agricultural practices beneficial to the climate and the environment. Are you in favour or opposed to the EU continuing to do so?



Base: all respondents (n.= 27,237)

## IV. PURCHASING DECISIONS, QUALITY LABELS AND THE AGRI-FOOD SECTOR

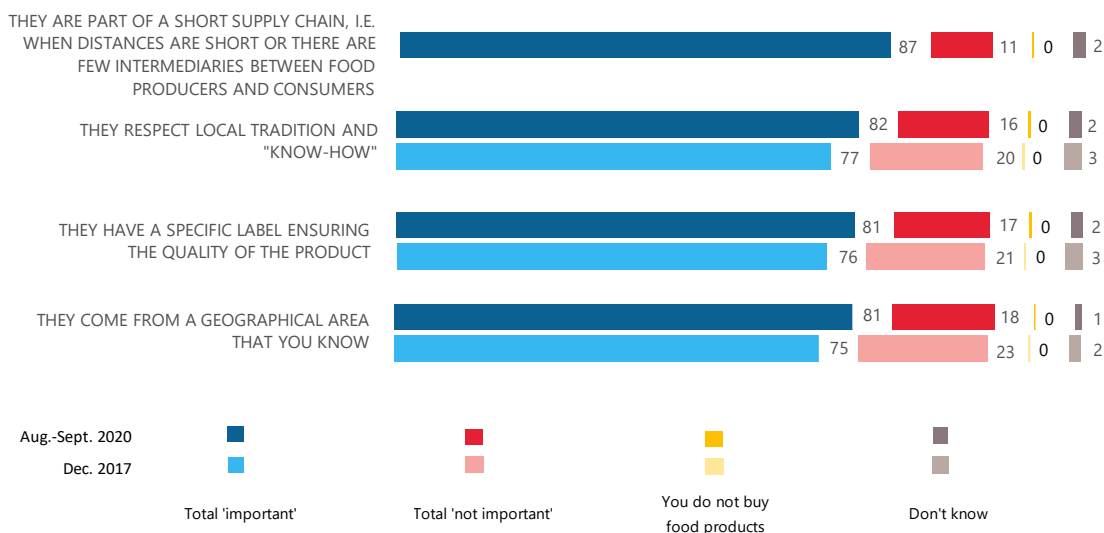
### 1 Factors influencing Europeans' food products purchases

When asked whether four factors are important or not in their decision to buy food products, more than eight in ten respondents answer that each of these factors is important:

- Close to nine in ten Europeans (87%) say that **being 'part of a short supply chain, i.e. when distances are short or there are few intermediaries between food producers and consumers'** is an important factor in their decision to buy food products, including nearly half (47%) who answer 'very important';
- Around eight in ten respondents consider the three other factors important in their decision to buy food products:
  - **Coming from a geographical area that they know** is 'very important' for 41% (+10 percentage points since 2017);
  - **Having 'a specific label ensuring the quality of the product'** is a 'very important' factor for 41% (+8pp) of respondents;
  - The fact that food products **'respect local tradition and "know-how"'** is very important for four in ten Europeans (40%, +9pp).

In terms of the change in opinion since 2017, the importance of the three factors previously asked about has gained ground: +6 percentage points for coming from a known geographic area, +5pp for having a specific label ensuring quality and +5pp for a respect for local tradition and "know-how". The increase in these views is largely driven by those who now say that each factor is 'very important'.

**QA12** How important or not are the following factors in your decision to buy food products?  
(% - EU27)



Base: all respondents (n.= 27,237)

## 2 Awareness of quality labels

Five logos were shown to respondents, and they were then asked which logos they were aware of:

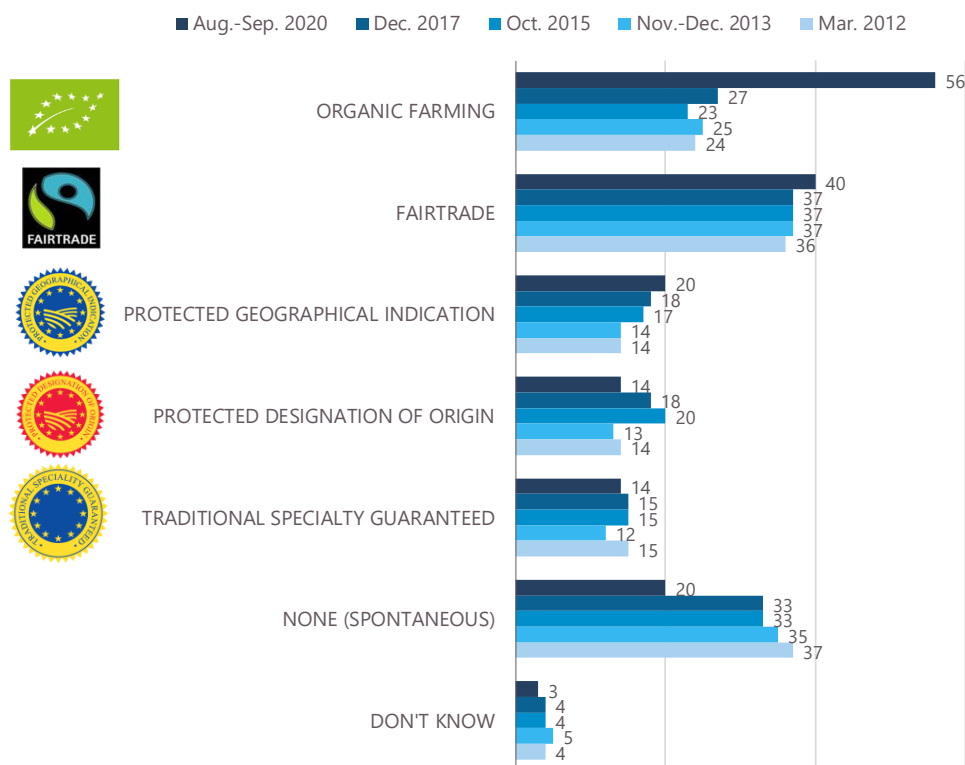
- Nearly six in ten respondents (56%, +29 percentage points since 2017) recognise the '**organic farming**' logo, far ahead of any other logo;
- In second position, four in ten Europeans (40%, +3 pp) are aware of the '**fairtrade**' logo (which is not an EU logo);
- One in five respondents (20%, +2 pp) know the '**protected geographical indication**' logo;
- Finally, over one in ten respondents are aware of both the '**protected designation of origin**' (14%, -4 pp) and '**traditional specialty guaranteed**' logos (14%, -1 pp).

One in five respondents (20%, -13 percentage points since 2017) are not aware of any of these logos.

Focusing on the trend since 2017, the share of respondents who aware of the 'organic farming' logo has risen dramatically (+29 percentage points, up from 27% in second position to 56% in first place).

A look at the results since 2012 shows that awareness for 'organic farming' (+32 percentage points) and, to a lesser extent, 'protected geographical indication' (+6 pp)' and 'fairtrade' (+4 pp) have gained ground.

**QA13** Which of the logos are you aware of? (MULTIPLE ANSWERS POSSIBLE)  
(% - EU)



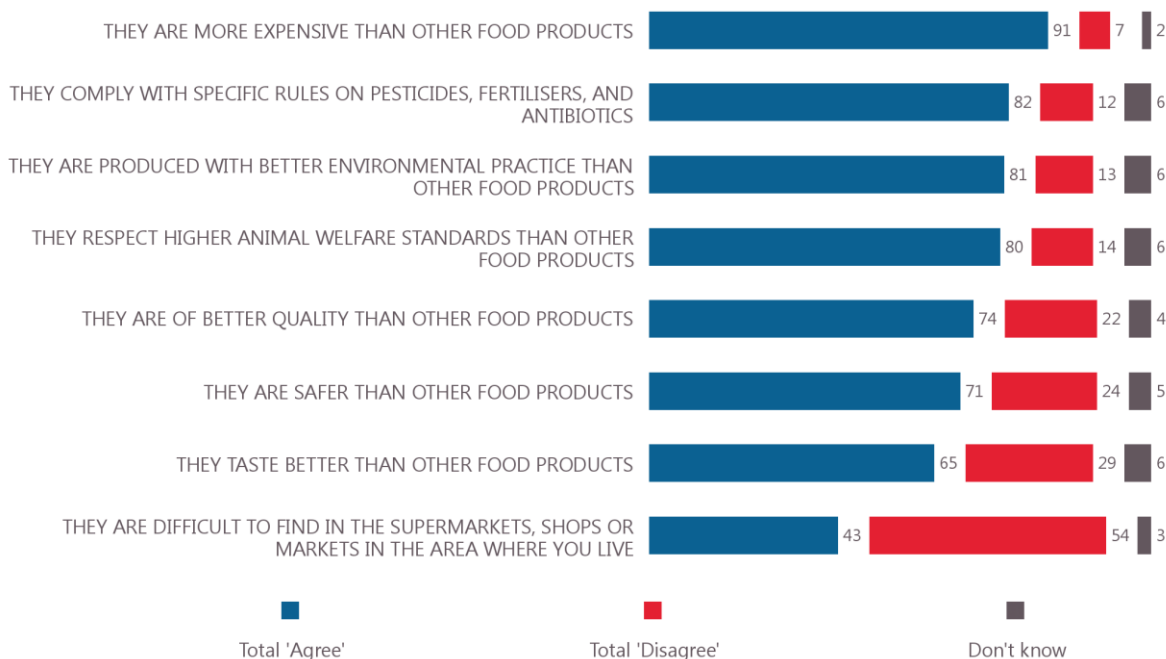
Base: all respondents (n.= 27,237)

### 3 Perceptions of organic agriculture

Respondents were asked to say whether they agree or disagree with eight statements related to food products coming from organic agriculture:

- More than nine in ten Europeans (91%, including 58% who 'totally agree') agree with the statement **'they are more expensive than other food products'**;
- At least eight in ten respondents think that food products coming from organic agriculture **'comply with specific rules on pesticides, fertilisers, and antibiotics'** (82%, with 37% 'totally agreeing'), **'are produced with better environmental practice than other food products'** (81%, with 34% 'totally agreeing') and **'respect higher animal welfare standards than other food products'** (80%, with 34% 'totally agreeing');
- At least seven in ten Europeans agree with the statements **'they are of better quality than other food products'** (74%, including 28% who 'totally agree') and **'they are safer than other food products'** (71%, including 26% who 'totally agree');
- Nearly two thirds of respondents (65%, with 24% who 'totally agree') believe that organic food products **'taste better than other food products'**;
- Conversely, only a minority of respondents agree to say that **'they are difficult to find in the supermarkets, shops or markets' in the area where they live** (43%, including 15% who 'totally agree'), while more than half (54%, with 23% 'totally disagree') disagree with this statement.

**QA14** Do you agree or not with the following statements related to food products coming from « organic » agriculture ...?  
(% - EU)



Base: all respondents (n.= 27,237)

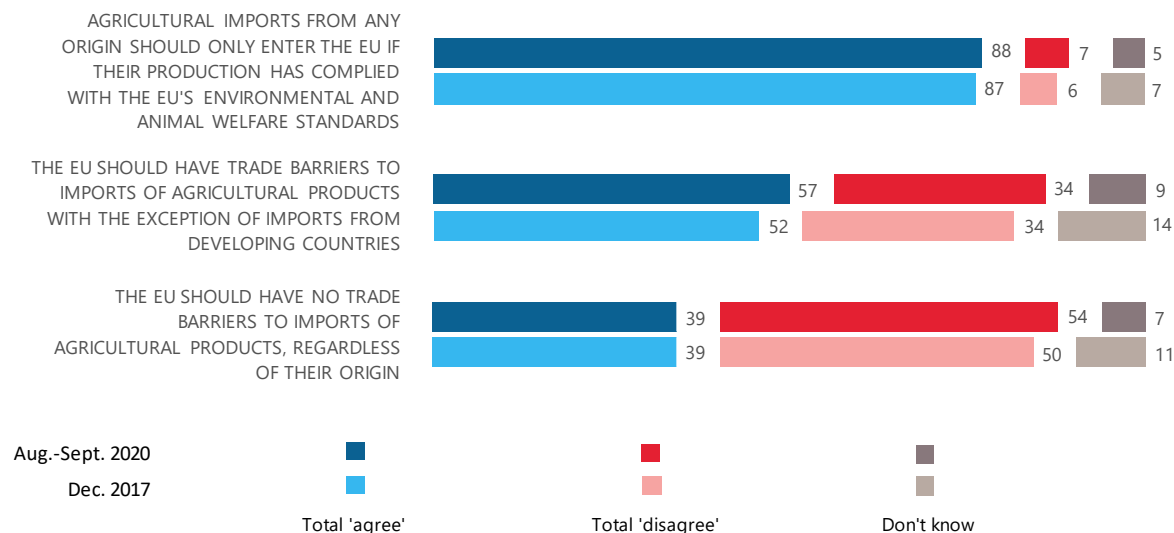
## V. ATTITUDES TOWARDS INTERNATIONAL TRADE IN AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS

### 1 The European Union and trade barriers to imports of agricultural products

Respondents were asked whether they agree or disagree with three statements about the European Union and trade barriers to imports of agricultural products:

- Close to nine in ten Europeans (88%, +1 percentage point since 2017<sup>13</sup>) agree with the statement **'agricultural imports from any origin should only enter the EU if their production has complied with the EU's environmental and animal welfare standards'**, including 56% (+2pp) who 'totally agree';
- Nearly six in ten respondents (57%, +5pp) consider that **'the EU should have trade barriers to imports of agricultural products with the exception of imports from developing countries'**, with close than one in five (19%, +3pp) totally agreeing. More than a third (34%, unchanged) disagree;
- Less than four in ten Europeans (39%, no change) agree to say that **'the EU should have no trade barriers to imports of agricultural products, regardless of their origin'**, with 15% (+2pp) who 'totally agree'. Conversely, a majority (54%, +4pp) disagree with this statement, including more than a quarter (27%, +4pp) totally disagreeing.

**QA16** Do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about the European Union and trade barriers to imports of agricultural products?  
(% - EU27)



Base: all respondents (n.= 27,237)

<sup>13</sup> In 2017, this statement was slightly different: 'Agricultural imports from any origin should only enter the EU if they fully comply with EU standards in terms of safety and quality'



## 2 EU trade agreements and exchange of agricultural and food products

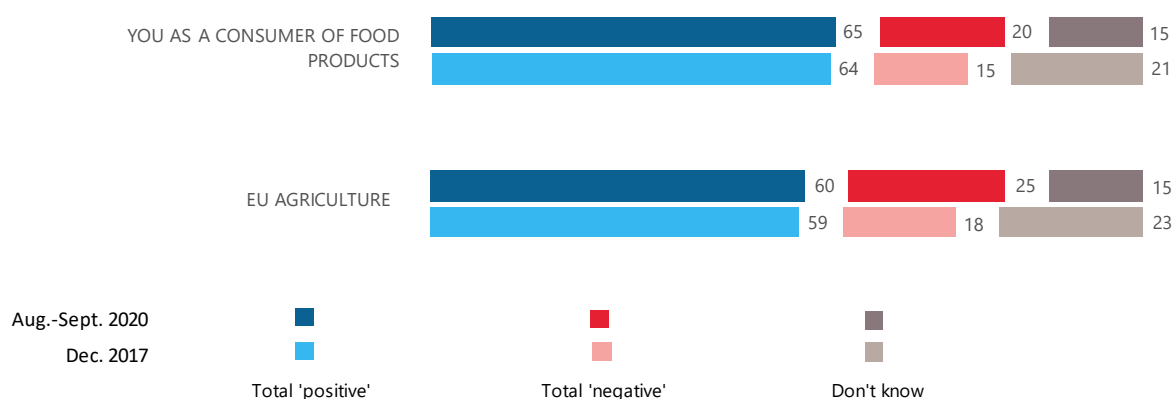
**At least six in ten Europeans believe that trade agreements between the European Union and other countries of the world have been positive for EU agriculture and themselves as consumers of food products:**

- Two thirds of Europeans (65%, +1 percentage points since 2017) think that these **trade agreements have been positive for them as a consumer of food products**, including 12% (unchanged) who believe they have been 'very positive'. One in five (20%, +5 pp) say they have been negative for them;
- Six in ten respondents (+1 pp) believe that **trade agreements between the EU and other countries have been positive for EU agriculture**, with 12% (+1 pp) answering 'very positive'. Conversely, 25% (+7 pp) see these agreements as negative.

Large majorities of Europeans consider that these trade agreements have been positive for both **EU agriculture** and **them as consumers of food products**. However, in terms of evolutions since 2017, the feeling that these trade agreements have been negative has gained ground: +7 percentage points for EU agriculture, and +5 pp for consumers of food products.

**QA17** Currently, there are a number of trade agreements between the European Union and other countries of the world, with the aim among other things of facilitating the exchange of agricultural and food products. Overall, would you say that these trade agreements have been positive or negative for ...?

(% - EU27)



Base: all respondents (n= 27,237)

## CONCLUSION

The vast majority of Europeans continue to believe that agriculture and rural areas in the EU are important for their future – a view that has gained considerable ground over the last 10 years. Yet when it comes to the relationship between agriculture in the EU and climate change, perceptions are mixed: more than two thirds believe that EU farmers need to change the way they work to fight climate change. The majority of Europeans agree that agriculture has already made a major contribution in fighting climate change. While still remaining a minority, a much larger share of respondents think that agriculture is one of the major causes of climate change. Two-thirds of respondents are prepared to pay 10% more for agricultural products that are produced in a way that limits their carbon footprint.

Asked how rural areas have changed in their country over the past ten years, Europeans are on balance positive, particularly when asked about access to high-speed internet connections and the transport infrastructure. Conversely, large shares think that health services and job opportunities in rural areas have gotten worse over the last decade.

More than half of Europeans think that the area covered by forests has decreased compared with ten years ago both in their country and across the EU as a whole<sup>14</sup>. Asked about the benefits provided by forests, around two thirds of Europeans mention providing animals natural habitats and conserving nature and absorbing carbon dioxide to fight climate change.

Providing safe, healthy food of high quality remains the most mentioned objective of the EU in terms of what people think should be its focus with regards to agriculture and rural development policy, while securing a stable supply of food in the EU ranks last of seven listed objectives. However, securing a stable supply of food in the EU is the objective through which the largest share of respondents think the EU is fulfilling its role via the Common Agricultural Policy.

Three quarters of respondents think that the CAP benefits all European citizens and not only farmers – a view that has gained considerable ground since 2017. Awareness of the Commons Agricultural Policy has also continued to increase, now with nearly three quarters of respondents who have heard of it, although only very few know the details.

Almost all consider each of the various priorities of the CAP as important, particularly ‘securing a stable supply of food in the EU’, ‘ensuring sustainable management of natural resources’, ‘strengthening the farmer’s role in the food chain’ and ‘helping to fight climate change’. Moreover, the vast majority of Europeans agree that the CAP contributes to each of these areas.

A much larger share of Europeans think that the amount of financial support that the EU gives to farmers to support their incomes is too low, and a majority would now like to see the EU financial support to farmers increase, up by 27 percentage points since the question was first asked in 2007. Furthermore, almost all respondents are in favour of continued EU subsidy payments to farmers for carrying out agricultural practices beneficial to the climate and the environment.

When buying food products, more than eight in ten respondents give importance to a short supply chain, knowing the geographical area of the products’ origin, a specific label ensuring the quality and respect for local tradition and “know-how”. Regarding quality labels, 56% know the organic farming logo, after a 29-percentage point increase since 2017. The fairtrade (40%)<sup>15</sup> and protected geographical indication (20%) logos are the only other logos recognised by at least one in five respondents.

Although more than nine in ten Europeans agree that food products coming from organic agriculture are more expensive than other food products, at least two thirds of respondents associate organic products with higher standards, better environmental practice, higher animal welfare, better quality,

<sup>14</sup> In fact, the EU forested area has expanded by an area larger than the whole of Slovenia in the last ten years.

<sup>15</sup> Please note that this is not an EU logo.

safety and taste. However, around four in ten respondents experience difficulty to find organic products in the area where they live.

At least six in ten respondents say trade agreements between the EU and other countries of the world have been positive both for EU agriculture and themselves as consumers of food products. Nearly nine in ten respondents consider that agricultural imports from any origin should only enter the EU if their production has complied with the EU's environmental and animal welfare standards and a majority is also in favour of trade barriers with the exception of imports from developing countries.

## TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

Between the 3<sup>rd</sup> August and 15<sup>th</sup> September 2020, Kantar carried out the wave 93.2 of the EUROBAROMETER survey, at the request of the European Commission, Directorate-General for Communication, "Media monitoring and Eurobarometer" Unit.

The wave 93.2 covers the population of the respective nationalities of the European Union Member States, resident in each of the 27 Member States and aged 15 years and over.

The basic sample design applied in all States is a multi-stage, random (probability) one. In each country, a number of sampling points was drawn with probability proportional to population size (for a total coverage of the country) and to population density.

In order to do so, the sampling points were drawn systematically from each of the "administrative regional units", after stratification by individual unit and type of area. They thus represent the whole territory of the countries surveyed according to the EUROSTAT NUTS II (or equivalent) and according to the distribution of the resident population of the respective nationalities in terms of metropolitan, urban and rural areas.

In each of the selected sampling points, a starting address was drawn, at random. Further addresses (every N<sup>th</sup> address) were selected by standard "random route" procedures, from the initial address. In each household, the respondent was drawn, at random (following the "closest birthday rule"). If no one answered the interviewer in a household, or if the respondent selected was not available (not present or busy), the interviewer revisited the same household up to three additional times (four contact attempts in total). Interviewers never indicate that the survey is conducted on behalf of the European Commission beforehand; they may give this information once the survey is completed, upon request.

The recruitment phase was slightly different in the Netherlands and Denmark. In these countries, a sample of addresses within each areal sampling point (1km<sup>2</sup> grid) were selected from the address or population register. The selection of addresses was done in a random manner. Households were then contacted by telephone and recruited to take part in the survey.

	COUNTRIES	INSTITUTES	N° INTERVIEWS	FIELDWORK DATES		POPULATION 15+	PROPORTION EU27
BE	Belgium	Kantar Belgium (Kantar TNS)	981	13/08/2020	15/09/2020	9,188,369	2.45%
BG	Bulgaria	Kantar TNS BBSS	1,057	03/08/2020	24/08/2020	5,995,194	1.60%
CZ	Czechia	Kantar CZ	1,027	04/08/2020	24/08/2020	8,956,740	2.39%
DK	Denmark	Kantar Gallup	1,022	07/08/2020	03/09/2020	4,848,611	1.29%
DE	Germany	Kantar Deutschland	1,527	05/08/2020	07/09/2020	71,728,398	19.10%
EE	Estonia	Kantar Emor	1,104	17/08/2020	31/08/2020	1,073,224	0.29%
IE	Ireland	Kantar Belgium	1,239	27/08/2020	15/09/2020	3,896,482	1.04%
EL	Greece	Taylor Nelson Sofres Market Research	1,016	07/08/2020	30/08/2020	9,187,524	2.45%
ES	Spain	TNS Investigación de Mercados y Opinión	1,049	13/08/2020	15/09/2020	40,006,943	10.65%
FR	France	Kantar Public France	1,001	03/08/2020	31/08/2020	52,732,499	14.04%
HR	Croatia	Hendal	1,019	05/08/2020	24/08/2020	3,488,460	0.93%
IT	Italy	Kantar Italia	1,021	04/08/2020	26/08/2020	52,397,331	13.95%
CY	Rep. Of Cyprus	CYMAR Market Research	505	03/08/2020	01/09/2020	734,695	0.20%
LV	Latvia	Kantar TNS Latvia	1,024	06/08/2020	01/09/2020	1,568,124	0.42%
LT	Lithuania	TNS LT	1,008	10/08/2020	03/09/2020	2,300,257	0.61%
LU	Luxembourg	Kantar Belgium	608	20/08/2020	15/09/2020	503,275	0.13%
HU	Hungary	Kantar Hoffmann	1,058	08/08/2020	24/08/2020	8,351,017	2.22%
MT	Malta	MISCO International	502	05/08/2020	31/08/2020	426,055	0.11%
NL	Netherlands	TNS NIPO	1,086	05/08/2020	31/08/2020	14,165,638	3.77%
AT	Austria	Das Österreichische Gallup Institut	1,008	07/08/2020	23/08/2020	7,580,083	2.02%
PL	Poland	Kantar Polska	1,057	03/08/2020	25/08/2020	32,139,021	8.56%
PT	Portugal	Marktest – Marketing, Organização e Formação	1,061	05/08/2020	30/08/2020	8,869,051	2.36%
RO	Romania	Centrul Pentru Studierea Opiniei si Pietei (CSOP)	1,103	03/08/2020	30/08/2020	16,372,216	4.36%
SI	Slovenia	Mediana DOO	1,011	04/08/2020	19/08/2020	1,767,202	0.47%
SK	Slovakia	Kantar Slovakia	1,046	06/08/2020	23/08/2020	4,592,379	1.22%
FI	Finland	Kantar TNS Oy	1,099	20/08/2020	03/09/2020	4,488,064	1.20%
SE	Sweden	Kantar Sifo	998	18/08/2020	10/09/2020	8,149,850	1.90%
TOTAL EU27			27,237	03/08/2020	15/09/2020	375,506,702	100%*

\* It should be noted that the total percentage shown in this table may exceed 100% due to rounding

\*\* Recruitments in Luxembourg, Ireland, Belgium and Spain are carried out by Ronin International, Kantar Belgium, Kantar Spain, Infas and GDCC. Non-probabilistic sample in Luxembourg and Ireland was randomly drawn from Kantar's LifePoints panel

	COUNTRIES	N° OF CAPI INTERVIEWS	N° OF CAWI INTERVIEWS	TOTAL N° INTERVIEWS
BE	Belgium	388	593	981
BG	Bulgaria	1,057		1,057
CZ	Czechia	1,027		1,027
DK	Denmark	936	86	1,022
DE	Germany	1,527		1,527
EE	Estonia		1104	1,104
IE	Ireland		1239	1,239
EL	Greece	1,016		1,016
ES	Spain	302	747	1,049
FR	France	1,001		1,001
HR	Croatia	1,019		1,019
IT	Italy	1,021		1,021
CY	Rep. Of Cyprus	505		505
LV	Latvia	1,024		1,024
LT	Lithuania	1,008		1,008
LU	Luxembourg		608	608
HU	Hungary	1,058		1,058
MT	Malta	502		502
NL	Netherlands	754	332	1,086
AT	Austria	1,008		1,008
PL	Poland	1,057		1,057
PT	Portugal	1,061		1,061
RO	Romania	1,103		1,103
SI	Slovenia	1,011		1,011
SK	Slovakia	1,046		1,046
FI	Finland		1,099	1,099
SE	Sweden		998	998
	TOTAL EU27	20,431	6,806	27,237

CAPI : Computer-Assisted Personal interviewing

CAWI : Computer-Assisted Web interviewing

### Consequences of the coronavirus pandemic on fieldwork

Where feasible, interviews were conducted face-to-face in people's homes or on their doorstep and in the appropriate national language. In all countries where face-to-face interviewing was feasible CAPI (Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing) was used. At the start of the fieldwork it was intended that interviewers offer respondents the possibility to answer the question online, if they were reluctant to do it face-to-face. Eventually this option was not needed (except in Denmark and Netherlands), as the number of required interviews could be reached through regular face-to-face interviewing. For all interviews conducted face-to-face, hygiene and physical distancing measures were respected in line with government regulations, and whenever possible, interviews were conducted outside homes, on doorsteps, to remain in open air and maintain social distance.

In **Netherlands** and **Denmark**, face-to-face interviewing was feasible, but it was not possible to reach the target number of interviews within the fieldwork period. Therefore, to reach the target number of interviews within the fieldwork period an online survey was offered to those who refused the face-to-face option at the telephone recruitment stage. As a result, data collection was made through interviews via CAPI and CAWI modes.

Due to the coronavirus pandemic, **face-to-face interviews were not possible in Belgium, Estonia, Finland, Ireland, Luxembourg and Spain**<sup>1</sup>. In these countries, interviews were conducted online using Computer-Assisted Web Interviewing (CAWI). However, at a later stage during the fieldwork, face-to-face interviews became feasible in **Belgium** and **Spain**. As a result 388 and 302 interviews were conducted face-to-face.

The online design in each country differed based on what was feasible within the fieldwork period. In all but Luxembourg the online sample was based on a probabilistic sample design: in other terms, respondents were recruited in a probabilistic random manner, ensuring that all individuals in this country have an equal chance to be interviewed.

In **Belgium, Ireland and Spain**, respondents were recruited by telephone via a probabilistic dual frame sample of telephone numbers, drawn from national telephone numbering plan.

In **Luxembourg**, the same approach was implemented. However, the observed response rates were not sufficient to achieve the target sample size in the fieldwork period, so this sample was supplemented with a non-probabilistic sample randomly drawn from Kantar's LifePoints panel. In total 155 interviews were conducted via the probabilistic sample and 453 via the LifePoints panel in Luxembourg. The sample for Ireland was also supplemented from the same panel but to a lesser extent (349 interviews).

In **Estonia, Finland and Sweden**, only people randomly selected through a probabilistically drawn sample were interviewed online.

In Estonia and Finland, the respondents are recruited through a telephone survey. In Estonia a dual frame random sample is drawn from the national telephone numbering plan whilst in Finland and Sweden a random sample is drawn from the telephone register.

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<sup>1</sup> See also the case of Sweden detailed above.

## Margins of error

Readers are reminded that survey results are estimations, the accuracy of which, everything being equal, rests upon the sample size and upon the observed percentage. With samples of about 1,000 interviews, the real percentages vary within the following confidence limits:

Statistical Margins due to the sampling process  
(at the 95% level of confidence)

various sample sizes are in rows						various observed results are in columns					





