



What is the link between gender equality and agriculture sustainability?

Background note

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This short compilation of data starts by highlighting some extract from the literature on gender equality and agriculture sustainability (1), it then looks at the share of seats and decision between men and women in the three Institutions, namely the European Parliament (2), the Council of the European Union (3), and the European Commission (4). It also looks at the share of leadership positions in the largest farm unions across the EU (5).

For the co-legislators (European Parliament and Council) the note looks in particular at the Committees for agriculture (as well as rapporteurs and shadow rapporteurs on CAP) and the AGRIFISH Council.

We look at data from the previous reform in 2013 and onwards¹ (given that before that reform, the European Parliament were not co-deciding on the CAP) and at the total number of women in COMAGRI (leading Committee).

For the AGRIFISH Council, we collected data around the share between men and women hosting the Council of agriculture Presidency since 2013.

¹ From 2011, after the proposals from the European Commission were on the table

Gender equality and agriculture sustainability

There is an increasing amount of literature establishing a link between gender and sustainability, especially regarding sustainable farming practices: women farmers are more often involved in alternative, and environmentally friendly approaches. Sustainable agriculture is indeed more open and less patriarchal.

Conventional agriculture is a masculine or family-based environment, which is characterised by gender inequalities in terms of wages, access to opportunities, technologies, and lands (Guérillot 2021). It is also marked by a gendered division of labour which makes women's work invisible: women are traditionally assigned to administrative, direct sales or diversification activities. If they work full time on the farm, they are perceived as the wife or the mother (Lemarchant, Seillier 2021). However, this trend starts changing, with the number of female farm managers increasing in recent years. According to the latest Eurostat estimates (2016), on average, 29% of farms across the EU are managed by a woman.

Sustainable agriculture is therefore seen as a mean of emancipation and empowerment of women. Their activity is better recognised and is more accessibly legitimate than conventional agriculture. Alternative practices are therefore seen as a way to challenge the traditional gender division of agricultural work and to reclaim their profession. *"Living as an organic farmer today implies a complete claim of the prerogatives of the farm manager figure, challenging the traditional gender-based division of agricultural labour [translated]"* (Guérillot 2021).

According to a study by the FNAB² in France, female organic farm managers rarely come from a farming background. They are young women (under 40 years old), graduates (40% have a bachelor's degree and 64% have completed agricultural education) and committed (53% are members of a union; 62% are members of an organisation for the defence of organic or peasant agriculture). They more often have a status, since 46% runs the farm (as opposed to 21% in French agriculture as a whole and 29% in European agriculture) and 34% have a partner status.

In the Southern countries, the involvement of women in the agricultural sector is also recognised by the UN as a means of achieving the objectives of sustainable development. Women account for half of all agricultural employment in Southern Europe and this sector offers multiple economic opportunities and therefore independence. Women therefore have a key role to play in the agricultural transition and in rural recovery.

Women farmers are also increasingly asking for their place in the agricultural sector and policies, and this includes a demand for representation in agricultural decision-making bodies. While some efforts have been made to integrate the gender dimension into the CAP, this focuses mainly on the symptoms of gender inequality in agriculture rather than its causes, and therefore does not lead to real changes. The CAP remains an economic policy before being a

² https://www.fnab.org/images/actions/MEP_FEMMES_EN_AB_PAGE_A_PAGE_VF.pdf#page=9

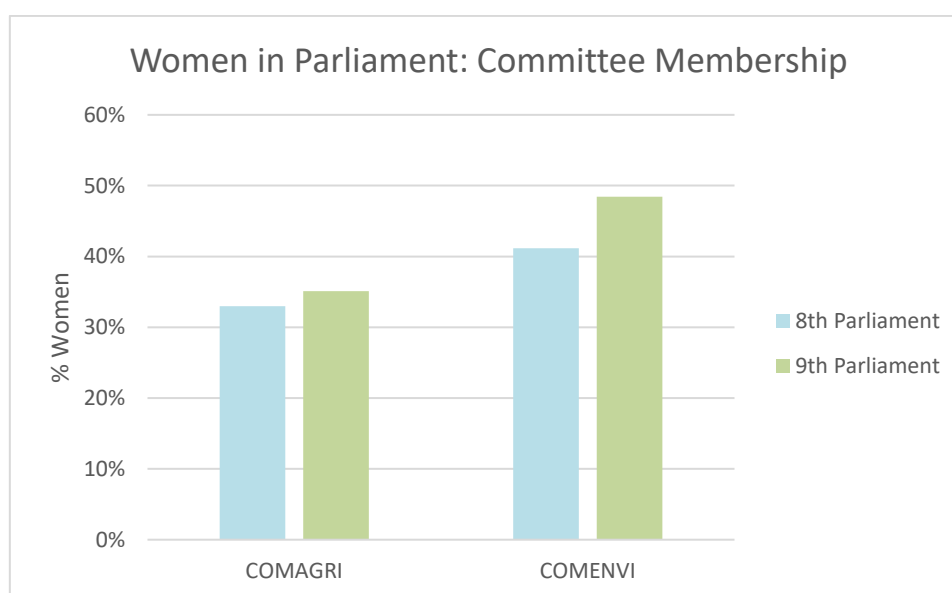
social policy that takes account of social inequalities. The stated commitment to gender mainstreaming has not yet been translated into real action (Shortall, 2015).

With regard to decision-making, the scientific literature establishes a correlation between gender and environmental considerations. Women in positions of power tend to push countries to adopt ambitious climate change policies (Mavisakalyan, Tarverdi 2019).

Number of women deciding on CAP in the European Parliament, focus on COMAGRI

Share of seats in COMAGRI and COMENVI between men and women³

From the 8th to the 9th Parliament, the number of women in COMAGRI and COMENVI increased. However, both committees are still not at gender parity.



Body	Session	Total number of members	Number of women	% Women
COMAGRI	9th Parliament	94	33	35
COMAGRI	8th Parliament	91	30	33
COMENVI	9th Parliament	159	77	48
COMENVI	8th Parliament	136	56	41

³ substitutes included

Share of rapporteurs and shadow rapporteurs seats in COMAGRI on the CAP

During the 2013 CAP reform, there has been no woman rapporteur among the 4 regulations, and only 25% of women shadow rapporteurs.

During the 2021 CAP reform, there has been one woman rapporteur among the 3 regulations and 33% of women shadow rapporteurs.

CAP	Regulation	Status	Number of Members	Number of Women
2013	Horizontal	Rapporteur	1	0
		Shadow Rapporteur	5	1
	Direct Payments	Rapporteur	1	0
		Shadow Rapporteur	5	0
	CMO	Rapporteur	1	0
		Shadow Rapporteur	5	2
EAFRD	Rapporteur	1	0	
	Shadow Rapporteur	5	2	
2021	CSP	Rapporteur	1	0
		Shadow Rapporteur	6	1
	Horizontal	Rapporteur	1	1
		Shadow Rapporteur	6	3
	CMO	Rapporteur	1	0
		Shadow Rapporteur	6	2

Share of women hosting the Presidency of the Council of agriculture since 2013

Since 2013, amongst the Chairs of the Council of the agriculture council, only 22% were women

Year	Semester	Country	Farm Minister	Gender
2013	Jan-June	Ireland	Simon Coveney	Male
	July-Dec	Lithuania	Vigilijus JUKNA	Male
2014	Jan-June	Greece	Athanasios TSAFTARIS	Male
	July-Dec	Italy	Maurizio MARTINA	Male
2015	Jan-June	Latvia	Jānis Dūklavs	Male

	July-Dec	Luxem- bourg	Fernand Etgen	Male
2016	Jan-June	Nether- lands	Martijn van Dam	Male
	July-Dec	Slovakia	Gabriela Matečná	Female
2017	Jan-June	Malta	Roderick Galdes	Male
	July-Dec	Estonia	Tarmo TAMM	Male
2018	Jan-June	Bulgaria	Rumen Porodzanov	Male
	July-Dec	Austria	Elisabeth Köstinger	Female
2019	Jan-June	Romania	Petre Daea	Male
	July-Dec	Finland	Jari Leppä	Male
2020	Jan-June	Croatia	Marija Vučković	Female
	July-Dec	Germany	Julia Klöckner	Female
2021	Jan-June	Portugal	Maria do Céu An- tunes	Female
	July-Dec	Slovenia	Jože Podgoršek	Male
TOTAL OF WOMEN				22,22%

Note: Due to political changes within national governments, and because farms ministers are sometimes represented by their deputy in AGRIFISH Council, it wasn't possible to make a relevant and realistic listing of all women members of that council across the years. Instead, we chose to study the number of women who chaired the AFRI FISH Council since 2013.

Number of women in top agriculture position in the European Commission

Since 2004, there was only one female Commissioner, Mariann Fischer Boel, for Agriculture from 2004 to 2010.

Name	DG	Commis- sion	Date	Member State	Gender
Mariann Fischer Boel	Agriculture	Barroso I	2004- 2010	Danemark	Female
Dacian Cioloș	Agriculture	Barroso II	2010- 2014	Roumania	Male
Phil Hogan	Agriculture	Junker	2014- 2019	Ireland	Male
Janusz Woj- ciechowski	Agriculture	Von Der Leyen	2019 -	Poland	Male

Men/Women balance in leadership positions in large farm unions across Europe in 2021

The leadership in the majority of farmer unions across Europe are dominated by men.

Union	Country	Number of Members in Leadership	Number of Women	% Women
COPA	National	7	1	14%
COGECA	National	7	2	29%
EFFAT	National	13	10	77%
FNSEA	France	5	1	20%
JA	France	8	0	0%
Coopérative Agricole	France	2	1	50%
DBV	Germany	8	0	0%
DRV	Germany	4	1	25%
ASAJA	Spain	2	0	0%
COOPERATIVAS AGRO-ALIMENTARIAS DE ESPAÑA	Spain	2	0	0%
FBZPR	Poland	1	0	0%
KRIR	Poland	2	0	0%
DAFC	Denmark	5	1	20%
SEGES	Denmark	5	1	20%
Coldiretti	Italy	10	1	10%
Confagricoltura	Italy	12	1	8%
Total		92	20	22%

Note : The selection of these agricultural unions does not reflect all of these actors at the European level. The idea was to reflect the main ones.

This total average is lower than the EU average number of women leading farms in the EU (29%) in 2016