



Third EU multi-actor working group workshop  
A just transition to ensure a sustainable future for EU  
agri-food systems

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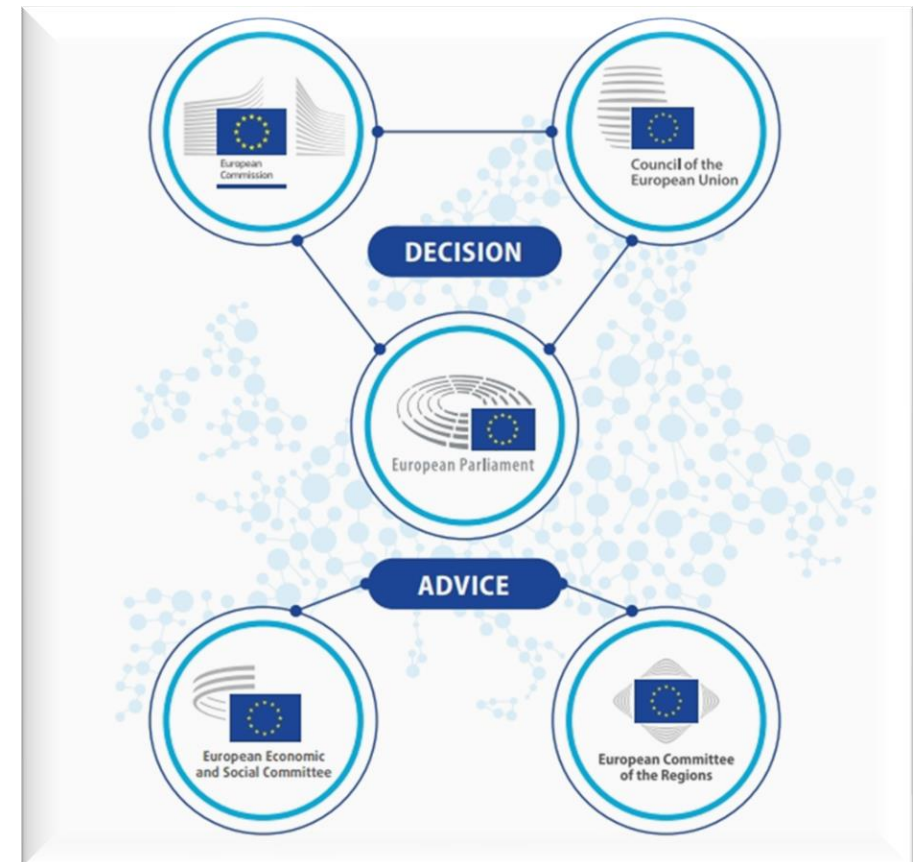
Member of the European Economic and Social Committee



The European Economic and Social Committee is a consultative body that represents organised civil society.

“ The European Parliament, the Council and the Commission shall be *assisted by an Economic and Social Committee* and a Committee of the Regions acting in *an advisory capacity.*”

Treaty on European Union, Article 13





## WHAT DOES ORGANISED CIVIL SOCIETY MEAN?

It comprises all the groups and organisations in which people work cooperatively:



**They are committed to defending their interests and causes, and they often act as intermediaries between decision-makers and citizens.**



## Fairness – a complex concept

Income and Living Standards for Farmers

Equitable Value Distribution Across the Supply Chain

Social Justice and Labour Rights

Access to Healthy and Affordable Food

Environmental Fairness and Sustainability

Equal Opportunities and ... much more than that!



Dynamic situation



Economic

Social

Environmental



The concept of fairness should be based on the principles of:

*distributive justice*

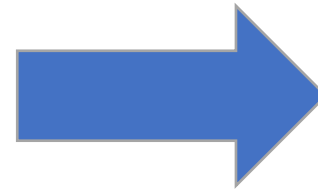
*recognition*

*participation*

*environmental and climate ambition*

*human rights*

*'leaving no one behind'*



Based on a **holistic**,  
**coordinated** and  
**integrated** policy approach



The principles of social and ecological fairness must guide the development of sustainable food systems, ensuring **a fair distribution of costs, resources and benefits, and supporting the right to food and nutrition.**

Balanced information and consultation processes that consider **the realities of vulnerable actors** the **availability of information, transparency**, education, and reskilling and upskilling, and aim to **build capacity at all levels** of food systems for all stakeholders.

**Leaving no one behind must be more than a slogan!!!!!!**



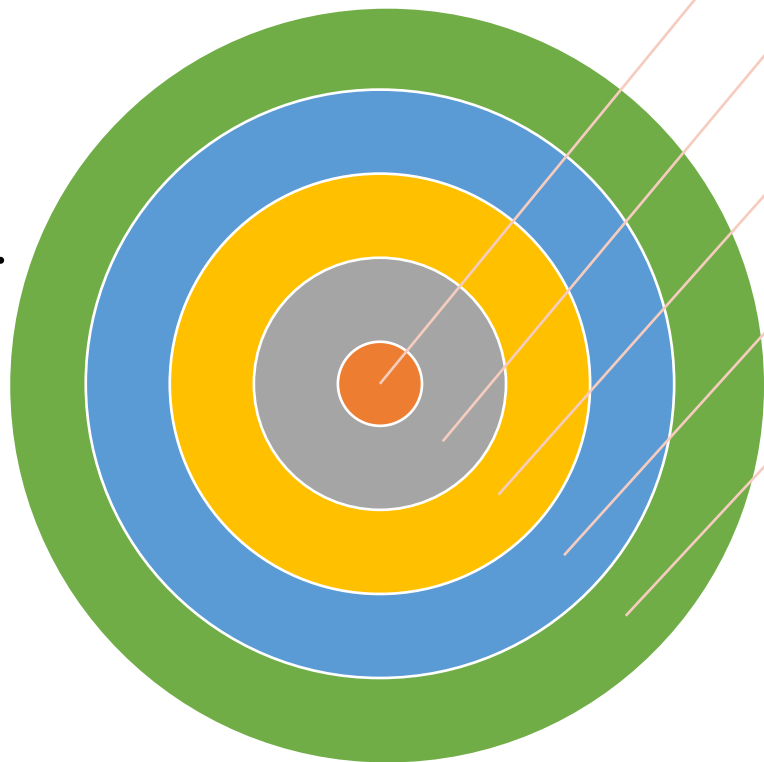
Distributive justice would mean that the cost of the transition are borne by those who have most benefitted and that have the most resources.

Fairness is requiring an **effective and improved social conditionality system**.

Confronting the persistent inequities in CAP subsidies is not just a matter of fairness, it is a political imperative to uphold the **unity, credibility, and cohesion of the European Union**, ensuring that no Member State is left behind in the transition toward a sustainable and just agricultural future.



Consolidating fairness...



solidarity economy

well-being society

community-supported agriculture  
schemes

workers' and consumers'  
cooperatives

rural development initiatives that create  
employment opportunities and improve  
living standards



The EESC considers that the application of the principle of distributive justice to the agri-food transition means introducing public policies and measures that address current and future inequities and inequalities throughout food systems, while at the same time strengthening labour rights, guaranteeing healthy and accessible diets for all, enhancing innovation and competitiveness of the operators and promoting animal welfare.





Mental health

Sustainable and fair food procurement and fair prices

The role of the women and young people in current and future agri-food systems

Addressing speculative practices on food commodities and other forms of financialisation

Dedicated institutions: A Just Transition Observatory for EU food systems, modelled after the existing Rural Observatory



1. The future of agri-food systems requires a **comprehensive and systemic approach** that integrates **social, ecological, and participatory justice**. This entails fair distribution of resources, costs, and benefits, while ensuring the protection of all workers' rights, including living wages for farmers and their workers.
2. A just transition must go beyond agricultural production to **tackle systemic issues such as speculation and the financialization of food systems**. Policies should focus on creating transformative changes across the entire food system, from distribution to land access and the concentration of power in the retail and manufacturing sectors. Public investments in sustainable practices and technologies must **prioritize marginalized groups**, such as small-scale farmers and vulnerable workers, while **ensuring fair access to healthy and nutritious food**.
3. Public actors at all levels—from the EU to local city councils—hold key tools to **drive the just transition towards sustainable and democratic food systems**. The Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), public procurement for socially and environmentally sustainable food, and stronger enforcement of workers' rights are crucial for systemic change. The creation of land banks, innovative approaches that prioritize the common good, and ethical, inclusive participatory mechanisms must be central in the decision-making processes.

For more details: [\*A just transition to ensure a sustainable future for EU agri-food systems\*](#)



Thank you!