

European agriculture is responsible for 10 percent of EU greenhouse gas emissions and is also the most frequently reported source of pressure on European habitats and species. Such a serious accusation requires a serious approach to a solution. It is, after all, about how we produce the food we eat and the serious limitations in the desire for change. It is therefore not surprising that negotiations on a new agricultural policy have failed. EU member states have failed to find a compromise to put forward in negotiations with the European Parliament and the European Commission.

The topic of the negotiations was the protection of small farms and the reduction of the negative impact of agriculture on climate change. Not even three years of negotiations on the CAP, the Common European Agricultural Policy, hardly even a third of the EU budget was enough to agree on the reform of this department. The new policy worth 387 billion euros should be applied in the period 2021-2027, but the new rules will be valid only from 2023.

The stumbling blocks are green subsidies, which can lead to lower yields, harder harvests and higher food prices. Some MEPs fear that small farmers will not even apply for green schemes. On the other hand, the Commission is concerned that members are trying to weaken the green provisions of the new policies by adding a number of minor exceptions, which collectively erase the meaning of the reform in the green direction. Among other controversies, the most well-known are those in which the EC demands that 30 percent of funds must be spent on eco-schemes, while member states believe that something can be done with 18 percent of payments. An even bigger problem than this is the question of how to redirect subsidies from large companies to small ones. Obstacles to this change will be interesting to follow, after 30 years the system has been built to prefer large ones, to the detriment of small producers. Other rules discussed would establish standards for working conditions and form a crisis fund in the event that agricultural markets are disrupted by emergencies such as pandemics. Negotiations have failed overall because EU agriculture is still not in line with the Commission's climate ambitions.

Source: bulletin.org