



At a glance:

SLOVAKIA'S CAP STRATEGIC PLAN

Agriculture
and Rural
Development

CAP Strategic Plans support the transition towards a smart, sustainable, competitive, resilient and diversified agricultural sector, while ensuring long-term food security. They also contribute to climate action, the protection of natural resources and the preservation/enhancement of biodiversity, as well as strengthen the socio-economic fabric of rural areas.

CAP Plans support a wide range of interventions addressing the specific needs of Member States and their territories. Designed in line with a new result- and performance-oriented approach, they aim to deliver tangible results in relation to EU-level CAP specific objectives, while contributing to the European Green Deal.

For the first time, each CAP Plan defines a strategy covering all the main CAP funded instruments: direct payments, support for rural development and interventions specific to certain market sectors.

The needs of rural areas will also be addressed by other EU instruments such as the Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF) or the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF).

The Russian aggression against Ukraine and the ongoing commodity price surge highlight the integral link between climate action and food security. In this context, the Commission invited Member States to review their CAP Strategic Plans to exploit all opportunities: to strengthen the resilience of the EU's agricultural sector; to reduce their dependence on synthetic fertilisers and scale up the production of renewable energy without undermining food production; and to transform their production capacity in line with more sustainable production methods.

Slovakia submitted its first proposal for a CAP Strategic Plan on 16 February 2021, after consultation with stakeholders. On 4 November 2022, Slovakia submitted a revised proposal, addressing the Commission's observations on the first draft. The Commission adopted this proposal on 24 November 2022. This document presents some of the main features of the CAP Strategic Plan of Slovakia.

1. DID YOU KNOW?



Slovak agriculture, together with forestry, represents around 2.8% of the gross value added of the country's economy. It plays a crucial role in providing food and public goods by utilizing the resources of rural areas. Slovakia produces mainly cereals, oilseeds, industrial crops and forage plants, while milk, cattle and pigs dominate the animal production. The socio-economic conditions differ across the regions of Slovakia. The lack of labour opportunities and limited access to basic services remain the main challenges in rural areas.

- ➔ **Agricultural areas cover around 47%** of the Slovak territory, out of which 61% are areas facing natural constraints. **41% of the country's territory is covered with forests.**
- ➔ **Rural areas comprise 46% of the Slovak territory** and host 42% of its population.
- ➔ There are more than 25 660 farms in Slovakia, while **the average farm**, supported by the CAP, **manages about 101 hectares of land.**



2. GOALS AND STRATEGY OF THE CAP STRATEGIC PLAN OF SLOVAKIA

Slovakia's strategy is aimed at ensuring the sustainable competitiveness and resilience of farms and a fairer income for agricultural producers with special attention to small and young farmers. At the same time, the Plan also focuses on improving the protection of natural resources and the climate. It contributes substantially to improving the vitality and quality of life in rural areas through investments, knowledge transfer and innovation.

2.1 AN ECONOMICALLY SUSTAINABLE AND FAIRER CAP

Slovakia aims to tackle the disadvantages stemming from its natural conditions, historical farm structure and specific sectoral characteristics in order to help increase the agricultural sector's overall competitiveness and resilience.

The Plan will introduce a more **targeted and fairer system of financial support to farmers**, through the combination of setting a limit for support based on farm size, redistributive support from large to small- and medium-sized farms and support for agricultural sectors in difficulties. 61% of the agricultural area of Slovakia faces natural constraints, such as mountains. Therefore, farmers in those areas will receive further **support to compensate for income loss** that will enable them to continue using agricultural land, thus helping to avoid land abandonment and biodiversity loss.

To improve the predictability of agricultural income, Slovakia introduces a risk management tool that will **help farmers mitigate the consequences of production risks**, such as loss of production volume or livestock damages caused by adverse weather events. In total, 10 000 farmers are expected to benefit from this insurance scheme.

Special attention is given to the enhancement of organisation among producers in sectors such as milk and milk products, pig meat, sheep meat, goat meat and potatoes.

- ➔ *Slovakia will support farmers' income and provide increased support to small- and medium-sized farms through a redistributive payment of EUR 80 for the first 100 hectares and EUR 40 for areas between 100 and 150 hectares.*
- ➔ *Slovakia will dedicate EUR 370 million to areas facing natural constraints, supporting 1.28 million hectares annually.*

2.2 A GREENER CAP

Slovakia faces major challenges linked to the management of natural resources and biodiversity loss, especially in light of the intensification of agricultural production and the impacts of climate change. In order to deliver on higher environmental goals, Slovakia will apply stricter mandatory standards for keeping farmland in good agricultural and environmental conditions (GAECs).



More than **EUR 513 million of EU funds are reserved for farmers voluntarily committing to more environmentally ambitious actions** on agricultural land, as part of the new whole-farm eco-scheme. This includes practices such as improving soil structure, setting aside non-productive areas and sowing them with pollinator mixtures, limiting the maximum area of cultivated land or postponing mowing. Slovakia aims to **cultivate 20% of its agricultural land under organic farming by 2030**. The CAP Strategic Plan will help this process by providing financial aid to 270 000 hectares (14% of the agricultural land).



Under rural development, about **46% of funds are reserved for environmental and climate-related objectives**, such as agri/forest-environmental and climate measures. On more than 27% of the agricultural area practices leading to sustainability and reduced use of pesticides will be applied. Furthermore, following the Russian invasion of Ukraine, the Plan foresees enhanced investments in the production of renewable energy.

- ➔ *11% of Natura 2000 sites will be supported to improve and maintain the conservation status of their habitats and species, such as the habitats of natural permanent grasslands, the habitats of ground squirrel and great bustard.*
- ➔ *More than EUR 42 million will be invested in afforestation, preventive and restoring actions in forests on the area of 5 497 hectares.*



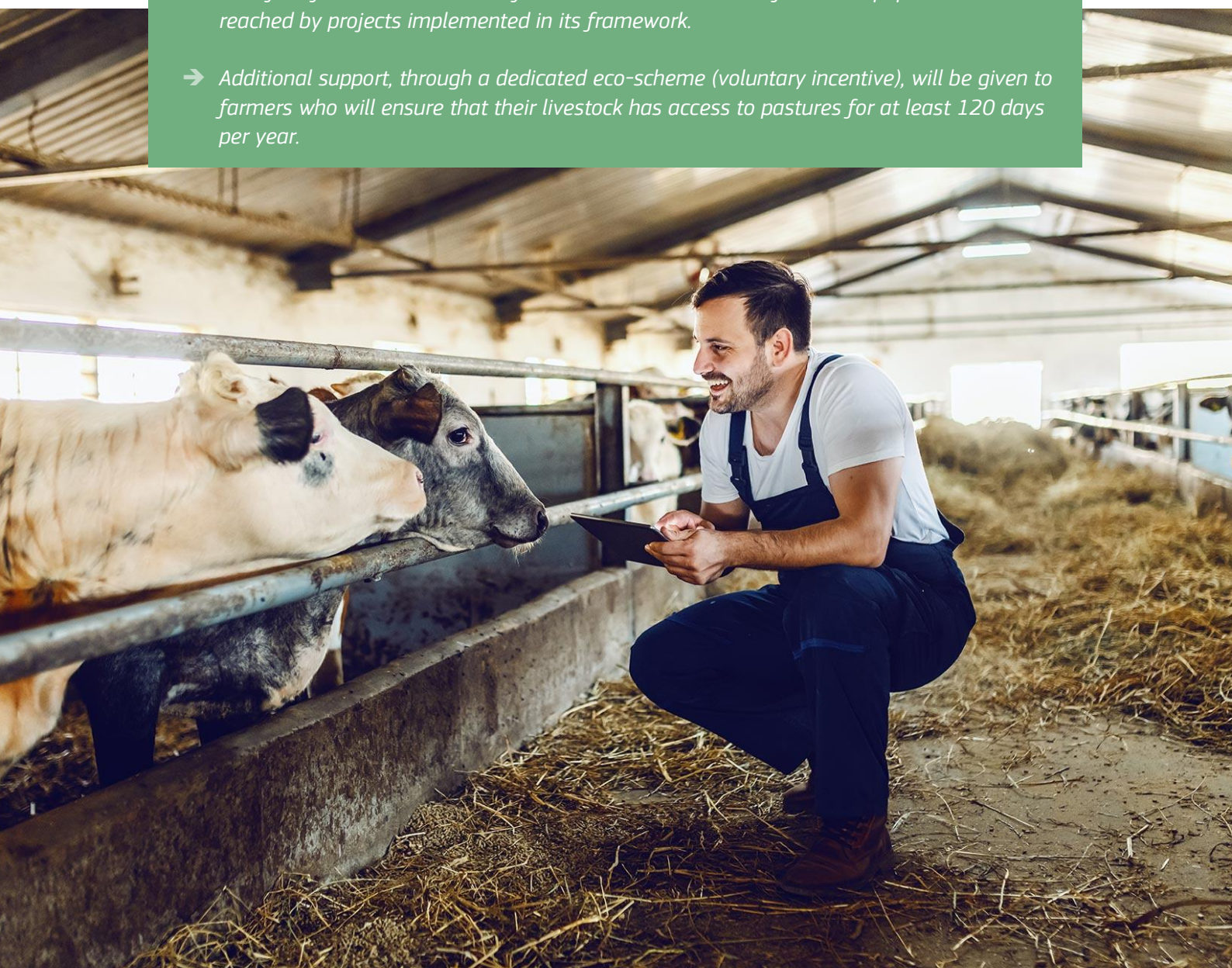
2.3 SOCIALLY SUSTAINABLE CAP

Slovakia's rural areas are facing major challenges in remaining an attractive place to live as the gap in the standard of living between rural and urban areas is high. To tackle this gap, the Slovak Plan will **support job creation in rural areas with an aim of creating 1 500 jobs and supporting additional 430 rural businesses.**

Community-led local development, implemented through the LEADER approach, will help tackle the challenges faced by rural areas through supporting cooperation between farmers and producers, the development of municipalities, local infrastructure and basic services, and by promoting entrepreneurial activities.

Slovakia puts a strong emphasis on better living conditions for livestock with the implementation of strengthened animal welfare rules. The Plan addresses the needs identified in the husbandry of cattle, pigs, poultry, sheep and goats. More than **EUR 193 million of EU funds are allocated to reduce the use of antibiotics and support higher animal welfare standards**, such as larger stables and improved animal hygiene. In total, 64% of livestock units will be covered by actions to support and improve animal welfare.

- ➔ *1 000 young farmers up to 40 years old will benefit from support to start their activities.*
- ➔ *8% of EU funds are earmarked for LEADER and over 41% of the rural population will be reached by projects implemented in its framework.*
- ➔ *Additional support, through a dedicated eco-scheme (voluntary incentive), will be given to farmers who will ensure that their livestock has access to pastures for at least 120 days per year.*



3. KNOWLEDGE SHARING, INNOVATION AND DIGITALISATION

The Plan will support training, knowledge sharing and advisory services for farmers. These activities are implemented through the Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation System (AKIS), which will be strengthened under the Plan and centralized. Slovakia aims to **decrease the administrative burden** and improve the existing cooperation between advisors, scientists and the CAP Network, along with the support of the digital technologies in agriculture and rural areas. Over **10 000 persons will benefit from advice, training or knowledge exchange** or from participating in European Innovation Partnership (EIP) operational groups. The Plan will support around 56 EIP projects with a total budget of EUR 14 million.

Digitalisation offers many possibilities for farmers to address challenges of a sustainable agricultural production. It needs to be accompanied by appropriate digital skills and digital infrastructure. Farmers will further benefit from investment support in areas such as precision farming, robotisation, digitalisation and innovative technologies. Furthermore, the education activities, advisory services and transfer of knowledge will also contribute to digitalisation.

Fast broadband is a key enabler for job and business creation, as well as for improving the quality of life, in rural areas. It will be addressed by the Partnership Agreement and by private operators.

- ➔ *Advisory services and training, supported in particular under the sectoral interventions for fruit and vegetables, apiculture (beekeeping), milk and potatoes, also contribute to innovation through closer cooperation between farmers, research and technology.*
- ➔ *For the milk and potatoes sector, Slovakia will finance advisory services related to the development of energy efficient plans, plans to improve waste management as well as the preparation of energy audits.*





4. FINANCIAL ANNEX

	EU budget (€)	National funding (€)	Total (€)
Direct payments	2 023 161 390	n/a	2 023 161 390
Sectoral support	34 894 008	4 619 365	39 513 373
Rural development	1 316 911 545	738 176 834	2 055 088 379
Total	3 374 966 943	742 796 199	4 117 763 142

National funding does not include additional national financing referred to in Article 146 of Regulation (EU) 2021/2115. Direct Payments include allocations for cotton set out in Annex VIII of Regulation (EU) 2021/2115 and reflect possible transfers between pillars. Payments for support under Regulation (EU) No 1308/2013 are not included in the CSP. National funding for sectoral support only relates to apiculture. Rural Development reflect possible transfers between pillars and include technical assistance.

EU FUNDING RESERVED FOR	In EUR
Young farmers (generational renewal)	67 198 142
Environmental and climate objectives under rural development	614 468 008
Eco-schemes under direct payments	559 159 866
LEADER	105 291 866
Complementary redistributive income support	204 946 249

The minimum financial allocations for support for young farmers can be reserved either under Direct Payments and/or Rural Development. Eco-schemes under Direct Payments may be lower than 25% if the possibility to use the rebate mechanism from Rural Development is used, in line with Article 97 of Regulation (EU) 2021/2115.

More financial information can be found in section 6 and in Annex V of Slovakia's CAP Strategic Plan.

