



Statement on behalf of the European Union and its 27 Member States

50th Committee on World Food Security

(10-13 October 2022)

Item VI: Empowering youth in inclusive and sustainable food systems

Endorsement and uptake of the CFS Policy Recommendations on Promoting Youth Engagement and Employment in Agriculture and Food Systems for Food Security and Nutrition (for decision)

Madam/Mr Chair,

1. I am honoured to speak on behalf of the European Union and its 27 Member States.
2. Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Iceland, Monaco, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Norway, Republic of Moldova, San Marino, Türkiye and Ukraine align themselves with this statement.
3. We welcome the final document negotiated by the Open-Ended Working Group on promoting youth engagement and employment in agriculture and food systems for food security and nutrition.
4. The HLPE report provided a sound basis for these policy recommendations, recognising the diverse situations and conditions of youth and the differing contexts in which they live, their specific needs, their rights and their potential as agents of change. We believe that this document is the best compromise which could be reached under the significant time constraints in place on an issue that is important for our future.
5. We especially welcome the importance given in the document to environmental issues and human rights, as these are key issues for young people to which this document must offer solutions. The use of innovative approaches and tools, combined with intergenerational transmission and sharing of knowledge on food systems, is necessary in order to create a range of new opportunities. Agroecology is one such tool, and we welcome its recognition in the document as an effective way in which to engage young people in sustainable food systems. Young people can also play a key role in linking rural and urban areas.

6. The document also recognises difficult obstacles that need to be addressed, such as the need to enhance access to land and other assets and to vocational training, as well as the need for participation in decision-making processes. Working within and for food systems needs to be attractive and offer opportunities for a good livelihood. Access to natural resources, finance and markets is key to enhancing youth engagement in agriculture and food systems. An enabling environment is therefore essential, as is collaboration with the private sector, as the latter is a crucial actor in job creation. However, it is our responsibility to empower young people and create an appropriate enabling environment in which they can achieve their full potential and in which their voice is heard.
7. We regret that these policy recommendations do not entirely reflect the proposals we made during the negotiation process regarding gender aspects and the diverse situations and conditions of young people. Multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination impact youth significantly, especially young women and girls, in their access to key productive assets and skills, as previously mentioned. This is a reality recognised by the UN, and therefore we would have welcomed more emphasis being put on this in the recommendations.
8. We commend the hard work of all entities on these important recommendations and we welcome the fact that Civil Society and Indigenous Peoples' Mechanism is joining the consensus.
9. Finally, we would like to emphasise that many countries, both within the EU and globally, have identified young people and the inclusion of a youth perspective in policy-making as fundamental elements in the transition to sustainable and resilient food systems. We now call on all countries and actors to implement these policy recommendations.
10. With that, we endorse the policy recommendations on promoting youth engagement and employment in agriculture and food systems.

Thank you, Madam/Mr Chair.
