

XVIII EAAE Congress

Bonn, Germany, August 26th – 29th 2025

Food system transformation in challenging times

Call for Contributions

Themes

Food system transformation is one of humanity's key contemporary priorities. It involves a fundamental rethinking of current food production, distribution, and consumption patterns to create a more sustainable, equitable, and resilient food system. These changes are occurring at a time when agricultural and food supply chains, as well as rural areas, are confronting numerous challenges. The climate, environmental, and biodiversity crises are exacerbating economic risks, which are further compounded by geopolitical and trade disruptions. These disruptions also contribute to demographic and spatial imbalances.

While advances in digitalisation and artificial intelligence offer significant opportunities, they also present threats due to unequal access to digital technologies, potentially hindering necessary transformations. A shift in consumer preferences towards plant-based diets and sustainable food sources requires adjustments in agricultural production and food supply chains. However, traditional dietary habits and cultural resistance to change can slow the adoption of new food practices and products. Furthermore, the internalization of current social and environmental costs into food production and pricing will likely lead to higher food prices, underscoring the need to address equity concerns.

Food system transformation is a complex, multi-faceted endeavour, which requires collaboration between the international community, governments, the private sector, civil society, and local communities to create lasting and impactful change. It has global, European, national, and local dimensions, requiring a change in regulatory and policy frameworks as well as shifts in the values and behaviours of individuals and communities.

At the European level, this is particularly relevant, as the European Union aims to be a world leader in implementing the Sustainable Development Goals and in advancing broader aspects of food system transformation.

Key aspects of food system transformation include:

Economic Viability: Supporting livelihoods of farmers and workers within the food system, ensuring fair incomes and wages, and fostering economic opportunities and competitiveness of economic entities in the food system.

Equity: Ensuring fair access to nutritious food for all populations, particularly marginalised communities, and addressing disparities in food distribution and affordability.

Resilience: Building systems that can withstand and adapt to climate change and shocks, such as economic fluctuations, wars, and pandemics.

Environmental Sustainability: Implementing agricultural and food processing practices that reduce environmental impacts, such as reducing greenhouse gas emissions, conserving soil and water, and preserving biodiversity.

Social sustainability: Respecting and integrating diverse food cultures and their contribution towards social inclusion, supporting traditional knowledge, local/place-based food systems and food sovereignty, wellbeing of individuals and communities both in the agricultural community and in wider rural areas.

Health and Nutrition: Promoting diets that are healthy and nutritionally balanced, reducing the prevalence of diet-related diseases.

Innovation and Technology: Leveraging advancements in technology to improve efficiency, traceability, and sustainability in food production and distribution.

Policy and Governance: Developing and implementing policies that support sustainable practices, protect natural resources, and ensure food security.

Agricultural economists play a pivotal role in facilitating and guiding the transformation of food systems. Their expertise and insights are critical in addressing the multifaceted challenges that arise during such transitions. That is why the EAAE has chosen this theme to be central to the Congress celebrating the Association's 50th anniversary. We anticipate that the Congress will bring forth new perspectives, scientific results, theories, and methods that can contribute to the transformation of the food system and strengthen the role of agricultural economics as a leading scientific discipline in this context.

The theme of the Congress will be underpinned by plenary speakers who will highlight global scientific dimensions and perspectives related to the transition of the food system and the field of agricultural economics, also emphasising the vital role of transdisciplinary research in addressing these complex challenges.

The key purpose of the Congress is to invite researchers from across Europe and the wider international community to engage in this important discussion.

This call for contributions is primarily addressed to you, as your contribution can broaden the profession's horizon and contribute to the understanding and tackling of the main topic.

Contributions can be divided into the following main topical areas:

1. *Agricultural Commodity Markets & Prices*
2. *Production Economics & Productivity*
3. *Consumer & Household Behaviour*
4. *Risk, Uncertainty & Risk Management*
5. *Behavioural & Experimental Economics*
6. *Environmental, Climate & Natural Resource Economics*
7. *Health & Nutrition Economics*
8. *Land Use Economics & Policy*
9. *International Development & Trade*
10. *Agricultural & Food Policies*
11. *Industrial Organization & Supply Chain Management*
12. *Regional Economics & Rural Development*
13. *Institutional Economics & Political economy*
14. *Multi-disciplinary Research & New Scientific Horizons*
15. *Novel Methodological Aspects*