



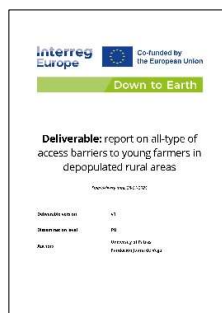
Co-funded by
the European Union

Down to Earth

Publication of second Thematic Report and outcomes of the second year of the project

2 April 2025

Down to Earth second Joint Thematic Report presents an analysis of the main access barriers faced by young farmers in depopulated rural areas across Europe, it finds common challenges and proposes a set of common solutions and recommendations to tackle them, emphasising the need for comprehensive policies that are both context-specific and cross-cutting.



Following on the fourth **Down to Earth visit** in the Slovenian region of Gorenjska, we officially release Down to Earth **second Joint Thematic Report**, which provides a comprehensive analysis of the topic of **Year 2: “Access barriers to young farmers in depopulated areas”** in Down to Earth regions, identifying common challenges and drawing a set of recommendations.

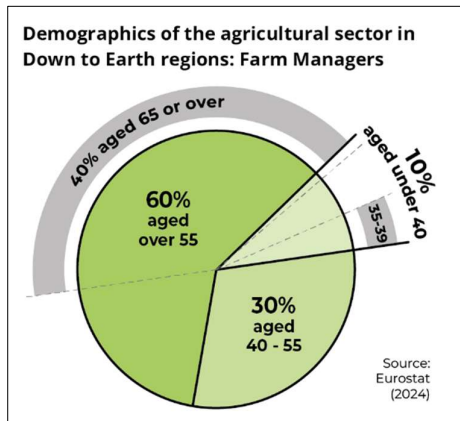


Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the Interreg Europe Secretariat. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.

The Thematic Report was officially presented in Down to Earth's **second Thematic Conference**, held in Naklo, Slovenia, on February 4th 2025. The event featured local, regional and national stakeholders.

Generational renewal and sustainable rural development

Rural regions in Europe affected by depopulation and land abandonment are particularly vulnerable to the growing impacts of climate change. Retaining the existing population



and promoting the installation of newcomers appear as essential strategies to foster rural development and prevent further abandonment of rural lands. Equally important is the adoption of environmentally sustainable practices to help mitigate environmental degradation. As rural populations continue to age, **generational renewal** becomes a key challenge to address, yet

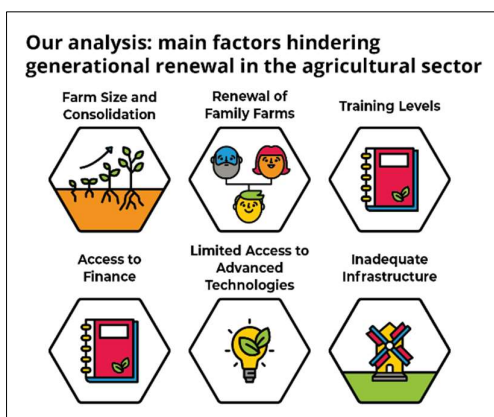
young farmers face multiple barriers to access and remain in the agricultural sector.

A bottom-up, comparative analysis

Down to Earth's second Joint Thematic Report includes a comprehensive analysis of the main **barriers faced by young farmers** in depopulated rural areas around Europe. It was presented during the project's [second Thematic Conference](#) on

the *Interdependency between Climate Change, Agriculture and Rural Development with a Focus on the Youth*, by Ms. Tania Gesto Casás (Fundación Juana de Vega) and Dr. Konstantinos Antonopoulos (University of Patras). Our partners provided a detailed overview of the methodology behind the report's analysis, as well as its main outcomes.

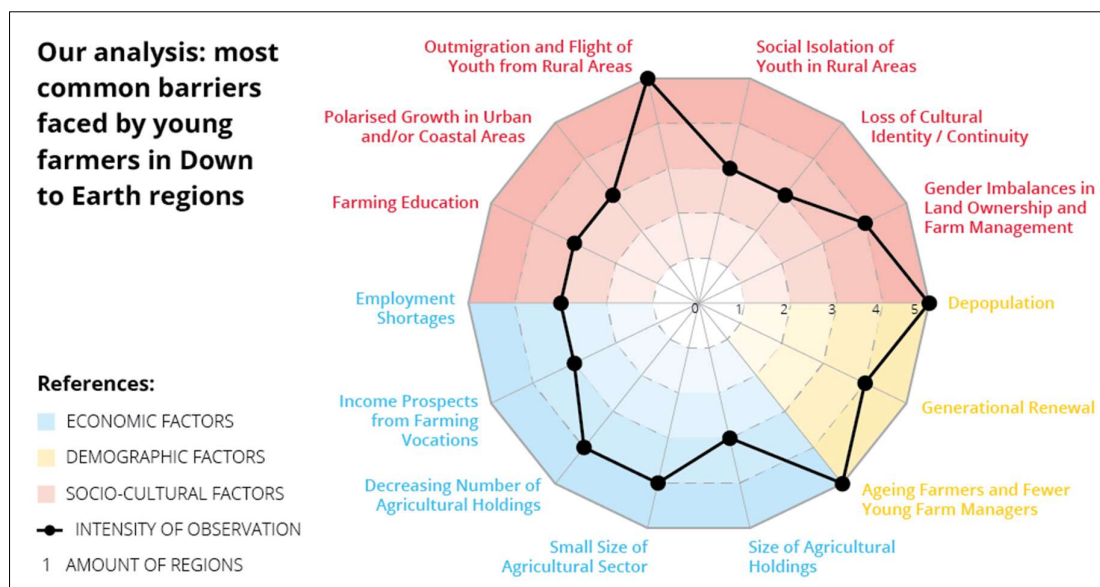




The report draws on the local thematic analysis carried out in the Down to Earth regions by the project partners and local stakeholders. The analysis included studies of demographic, economic, socio-cultural, institutional and territorial aspects, as well as a thorough SWOT analysis. The joint report was then informed by the **identification of context-specific**

challenges, as well as the expert report developed by Amatererra for the Down to Earth project, and the examination of both **local and regional policies**. It provides a comprehensive overview of the regions and the most common challenges faced by young farmers, structured along three thematic categories:

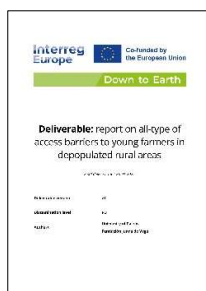
- Economic factors
- Socio-cultural factors
- Demographic factors



Recommendations

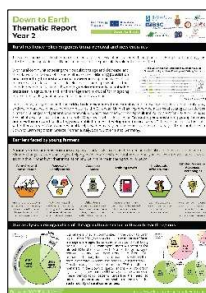
The analysis extracted lessons learnt and resulted in **eight key proposals for policy improvements**. They consist of:

- Facilitating long-term access to land,
- offering financial support mechanisms,
- implementing training programmes and setting up advisory networks,
- promoting gender equity and social inclusion,
- investing in rural infrastructure and enhancing urban-rural linkages,
- developing innovative models and farm testing programmes,
- supporting the use of advanced agricultural technologies,
- strengthening the role of local authorities.



Head to Down to Earth webpage to discover the second Thematic Report on All-type of access barriers to young farmers in depopulated rural areas!

Follow [this link](#).



A factsheet featuring the Report's main take-aways and infographics is also available in multiple languages on our webpage!

Follow [this link](#).

Stay tuned for updates from the project on our webpage and be sure to give us a follow on our social media accounts!

- **Webpage:** <https://www.interregeurope.eu/down-to-earth>
- **LinkedIn:** [https:// www.linkedin.com/company/down-to-earth-eu](https://www.linkedin.com/company/down-to-earth-eu)
- **Twitter:** https://twitter.com/Down2Earth_IRE

About Down To Earth

Down to Earth brings together a group of organizations from diverse European regions, each contributing their expertise in disaster risk reduction and rural development. Collectively, we firmly believe that retaining population and encouraging sustainable practices in key sectors are paramount to halting environmental deterioration and effectively mitigating risks.

Funded by **Interreg Europe**, our partnership will work in unison to identify and promote **win-win solutions**. Our primary focus lies in managing, maintaining, and enhancing practices, tools, instruments and strategies to reduce the risk and impact of environmental disasters. In doing so, we seek to create economic and social opportunities that will attract populations to rural areas.

Central to our approach is **mutual learning** through interregional exchange of experiences. By facilitating knowledge sharing among regional and local authorities, as well as relevant stakeholders from participating rural areas, we can enhance their capacity to address the challenges linked with **climate change** and **sustainable rural development!**

Down to Earth partners

