

## **Joint Declaration by Estonia, Finland, Latvia and Lithuania**

### **on the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) 2028–2034 and the Future of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP)**

Tartu, 8 October 2025

We, the representatives of Finnish, Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian agricultural organisations, stress our joint commitment to a strong, coherent, and adequately financed CAP as a common strategic policy that safeguards not only Europe's food security, sustainability and rural vitality but also its overall stability and security.

#### **1. Agriculture and food security are important part of the EU's collective security and resilience**

Finland, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania share a direct land border with the aggressor country, exposing our territories to more direct severe political, economic, and hybrid threats than any other European Union countries. This situation places unique responsibilities on our farmers, rural communities and governments.

Operating and investing in these border regions entails higher risks and costs. Investments in farms, processing facilities, and infrastructure are more expensive due to increased uncertainty, higher insurance premiums, higher interest rates and limited access to private capital. These factors threaten the long-term viability of agriculture and rural livelihoods, even though these areas are of strategic importance to the Union's security.

Our rural areas along the Eastern border are not only regions of production but frontlines of resilience and defence. Ensuring that they remain inhabited, economically viable and capable of producing food is therefore a strategic security objective for the entire Union.

#### **2. These countries require a Dedicated Eastern Border Rural Resilience Envelope**

In light of the heightened risks and vulnerabilities resulting from sharing the border with the aggressor country, we call for the establishment of a dedicated Eastern Border Rural Resilience Envelope within the CAP.

Given that our Member States must allocate an increasing share of their national budgets to defence and security, EU-level support for agriculture and rural development in countries bordering aggressor states is not only justified but essential.

Presence of strong rural communities and bioeconomy along the EU's external border is a strategic investment in Europe's peace, stability and autonomy.

#### **3. The CAP must be strong, independent and well-financed**

Europe's strategic autonomy depends on its capacity to produce, process, and distribute food within its borders. Therefore, we call for the CAP to remain a distinct EU policy, governed by agricultural ministers, with a dedicated regulation and independent budget line ensuring both income stability and long-term investments for food-producers.

We also urge that the MFF provide increased resources and clearly earmarked budgets for the development of agriculture, food processing and bioeconomy value chains within all relevant funds. These sectors are not ordinary industries and therefore should not compete with other sectors but be recognized as essential pillars of the EU's security and resilience.

The challenges of smaller Member States must also be considered. EU-level instruments must be accessible, proportionate and inclusive, ensuring that all countries can fully benefit from EU level funds.

#### 4. The CAP must be fair

We reiterate that equal obligations must correspond to equal support. Despite facing the highest geopolitical risks and security-related costs, farmers in the Baltic States continue to receive lower direct payments than the EU average. This situation is unjust and must be corrected through full external convergence of direct payments in the next MFF.

The CAP must consider the diversity of agricultural structures and specific challenges across Member States. Uniform measures such as mandatory capping or degressivity fail to consider these differences Member States must therefore retain flexibility to decide on the necessity and degree of capping, taking into account their established production structures, labour costs and socio-economic conditions.

Finland, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania stand at the European Union's external border with the aggressor country. Our farmers and rural communities are not only producers of food, they are in the frontline of Europe's stability, resilience, and sovereignty.

The next MFF and CAP must recognise this unique role and ensure that agriculture and food production along the Union's Eastern border remain strong, viable and secure. A fair, well-financed, and strategically oriented CAP is not just an agricultural necessity and a guarantor of food security but one of the cornerstones of Europe's collective security.

Signed in Tartu, 8 October 2025

Kerli Ats, Estonian Chamber of Agriculture and Commerce

Timo Varblas, Estonian Farmers Federation

Maira Dzelzkaleja Burmistre, Latvian Farmers Parliament

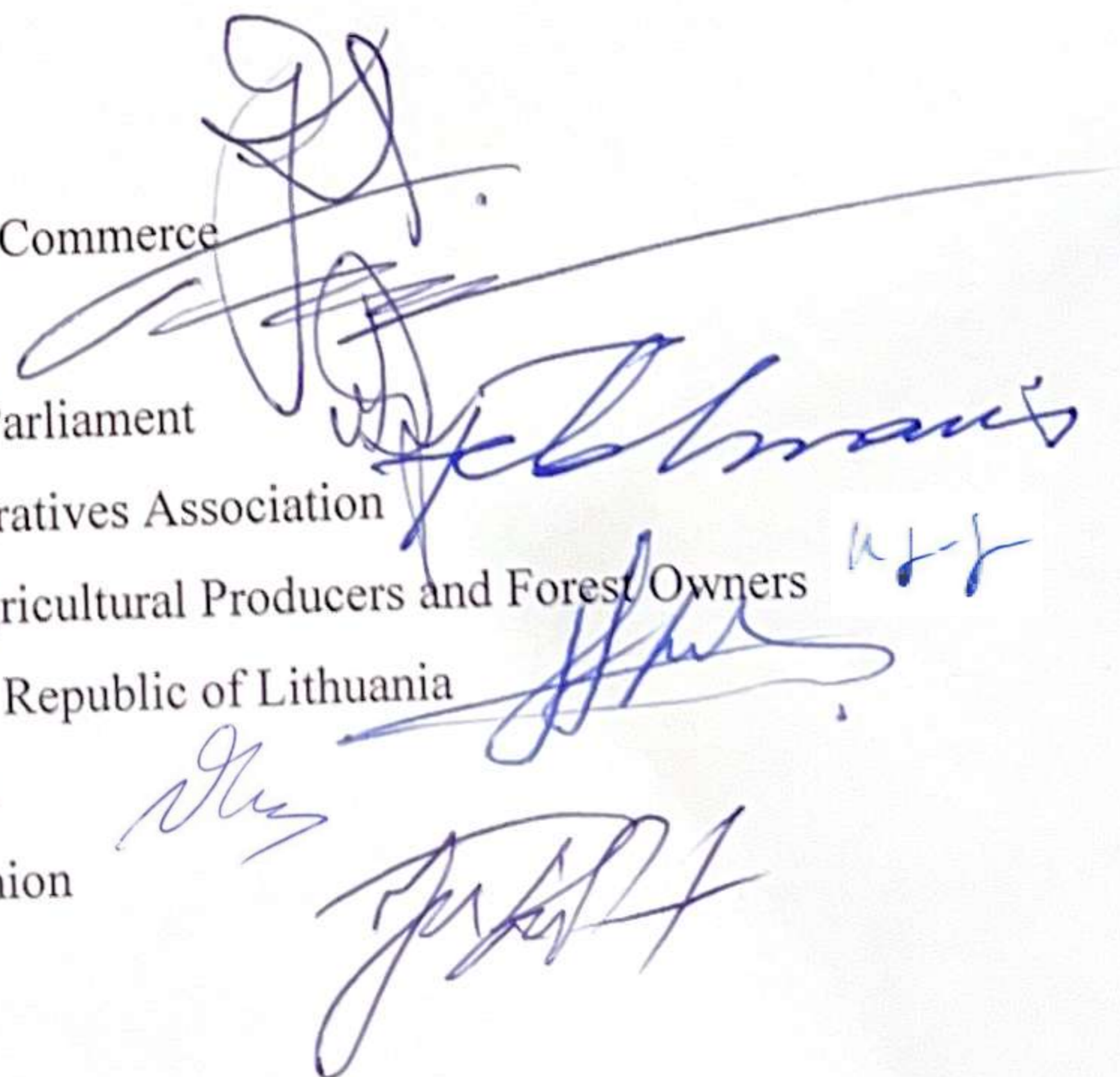
Rolands Feldmanis, Latvian Agricultural Cooperatives Association

Hanna Leiponen-Syrakki, Central Union of Agricultural Producers and Forest Owners

Arūnas Svitojus, Chamber of Agriculture of the Republic of Lithuania

Jonas Vilionis, Lithuanian Agricultural Council

Raimundas Juknevičius, Lithuanian Farmers Union

The image shows several handwritten signatures in blue ink, corresponding to the names listed on the left. The signatures are written over the text of the document. The names of the signatories are Kerli Ats, Timo Varblas, Maira Dzelzkaleja Burmistre, Rolands Feldmanis, Hanna Leiponen-Syrakki, Arūnas Svitojus, Jonas Vilionis, and Raimundas Juknevičius.