



Young Farmers & Generational Renewal

A Practical Guide for Advisors

Supporting the Next Generation in Agriculture

Developed through the workshop

"Young Farmers and Generational Renewal: Supporting Change"

12th EUFRAS, 65th IALB and 15th SEASN Conference 2026

Radenci, Slovenia

WHY THIS MATTERS

KEY FACTS

- Average age of EU farmers: 57 years
- Only 11% of EU farm managers are under 40 years old.
- Generational renewal is one of the major challenges facing European agriculture. (Source: CEJA, Eurostat.)

OUR AGRICULTURE IS AT A TURNING POINT

Europe's farming population is ageing, while fewer young people are choosing farming as a career. At the same time, many farming families are facing difficult questions about the future of their farms, businesses and rural communities.

Generational renewal is not only about transferring land, assets or ownership. It is also about creating opportunities, building trust and enabling the next generation to imagine a future in agriculture.

Supporting young farmers and generational renewal is essential for the resilience and competitiveness of European agriculture.

YOUNG FARMERS NEED MORE THAN A FARM

They need:

- Support and networks
- Knowledge and skills
- Confidence to innovate
- Opportunities and a future they can build

WHY ADVISORS MATTER

Advisors increasingly support:

- Young people entering farming
- Difficult succession conversations and transition planning
- Connections to opportunities and networks
- Turning uncertainty into practical next steps

**Generational renewal is about creating a future
for the next generation.**

ONE FARM, THREE PERSPECTIVES



UNDERSTANDING GENERATIONAL RENEWAL THROUGH REAL-LIFE EXPERIENCES

Every farm has its own story, but many challenges are shared. Young farmers, advisors and farming families often experience the same situation very differently. To explore these perspectives, the workshop used a simple concept:

WHY USE DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES?

The technical side

- Land and assets
- Succession and planning
- Policies and funding
- Ownership and business

The human side

- People and relationships
- Communication and trust
- Identity and expectations
- Opportunities and future vision

EVERY FARM HAS A DIFFERENT STORY. EVERY PERSPECTIVE BRINGS A DIFFERENT REALITY.

The workshop explored generational renewal through three real-life inspired perspectives. Together, they illustrate the complexity of supporting young farmers and managing change in agriculture.

No single perspective tells the whole story. Behind every transition are different hopes, concerns and expectations.

MEET THE PEOPLE BEHIND THE STORY



THE YOUNG FARMER

'How can I build a future in agriculture while proving myself and finding my place?'

Péter never planned to become a farmer. He returned to the family fruit farm when the future of the business became uncertain. Suddenly stepping into a leadership role, he had to learn, gain trust and find his place while introducing new ideas and ways of working.

Key themes:

Responsibility • Innovation • Identity • Expectations



THE JUNIOR ADVISOR

'How can I support people through difficult conversations and change?'

Tamás works closely with farming families navigating uncertainty and transition. His role goes far beyond technical advice and increasingly involves communication, facilitation and helping people move from difficult conversations to practical action.

Key themes:

Communication • Facilitation • Coordination • Guidance



THE SENIOR ADVISOR

'How can I create optimal conditions for successful generational renewal?'

Tibor brings a broader perspective shaped by years of supporting farming families and advisory systems. He sees generational renewal as more than a legal or economic process; it is a long-term human transition that requires trust, planning and confidence in the future.

Key themes:

Strategy • Systems • Renewal • Planning • Leadership

The same situation can look very different depending on where you stand.



CHALLENGES IN PRACTICE

BEHIND EVERY TRANSITION ARE PRACTICAL AND DEEPLY HUMAN CHALLENGES

These challenges are rarely only technical, legal or financial. They are also about conversations, trust, identity and future vision. Supporting change means understanding both the farm and the people behind it.

CHALLENGES FOR YOUNG FARMERS

- Access to land and finance
- Building trust and credibility
- Balancing innovation and tradition
- Limited networks and mentoring opportunities
- Uncertainty about the future
- Taking on responsibility at a young age

CHALLENGES FOR ADVISORS

- Entering the process too late
- Navigating emotions and family dynamics
- Balancing neutrality and involvement
- Knowing when to refer to other professionals
- Supporting change without imposing solutions
- Managing conflicting expectations

CHALLENGES FOR GENERATIONAL RENEWAL

- Delayed planning and decision-making
- Difficult family conversations
- Different expectations between generations
- Fear of letting go
- Unclear roles and responsibilities
- No shared vision for the future

**The biggest challenge is often not the lack of solutions,
but the lack of conversations.**

STARTING BETTER CONVERSATIONS

QUESTIONS ADVISORS CAN ASK

Good advice often begins with good questions. These questions are designed to help advisors explore challenges, encourage dialogue and identify practical next steps. There is rarely one right answer. The role of the advisor is often to help people reflect, listen to different perspectives and start meaningful conversations.



UNDERSTANDING THE SITUATION

- What's the biggest challenge for the young farmer?
- What never gets discussed?
- Who needs support most?
- What's the first step forward?
- What would success look like in five years?

EXPLORING OPPORTUNITIES

- What is already working well?
- What strengths can we build on?
- What opportunities have not yet been explored?
- Who else should be involved in the conversation?
- What small step could be taken today?

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

- Are all voices being heard?
- Are expectations clear?
- Is there a shared vision for the future?
- What happens if nothing changes?

**Good advice is often less about having the answer,
and more about asking the right questions.**



PRACTICAL ADVISOR ACTIONS

THE ROLE OF THE ADVISOR

Supporting young farmers and generational renewal is not about having all the answers. It is about helping people move forward.

✓ **Facilitate conversations**

Create safe spaces for difficult discussions and ensure that all voices are heard.

✓ **Encourage early planning**

Help families and young farmers think about the future before problems arise.

✓ **Build trust**

Support open communication and realistic expectations.

✓ **Connect people and opportunities**

Signpost training, networks, mentoring, financial support and other services.

✓ **Turn challenges into practical next steps**

Break complex situations into manageable actions.

✓ **Support change processes**

Help people navigate uncertainty and move from ideas to decisions.

ADVISORS CAN

- Facilitate
- Inform
- Connect
- Ask challenging questions
- Coordinate
- Encourage reflection

ADVISORS CANNOT

- Make decisions for families
- Solve every conflict
- Replace specialist support
- Force change
- Guarantee successful outcomes
- Take ownership of decisions

Good advisors do not provide all the answers.
They create the conditions for better conversations.

HOPES FOR THE FUTURE

WHAT GIVES US HOPE ABOUT YOUNG FARMERS AND GENERATIONAL RENEWAL?

- Young people continue to choose farming and bring fresh ideas.
- More families are starting conversations earlier.
- Advisors increasingly support people, not only processes.
- Collaboration and peer learning are becoming more important.
- There is growing recognition that generational renewal is essential for the future of agriculture.

FINAL MESSAGE

Young farmers need more than a farm.

They need opportunities, support, trust and a future they can believe in. Generational renewal is a long-term process. Advisors cannot solve every challenge, but they can create the conditions for better conversations, informed decisions and successful transitions.



ABOUT THIS PUBLICATION

This guide was developed through the workshop "Young Farmers and Generational Renewal: Supporting Change" at the 12th EUFRAS, 65th IALB and 15th SEASN Conference 2026 in Radenci, Slovenia, and reflects the practical experiences and insights shared by participants from across Europe.

We encourage advisors, educators and agricultural organisations to use, share and reproduce this guide for educational and advisory purposes, with appropriate acknowledgement of the original workshop and authors.

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