YEE!
YOUTH AND ENVIRONMENT EUROPE

UNDERSTANDING the EU OMNIBUS SIMPLIFICATION PACKAGES

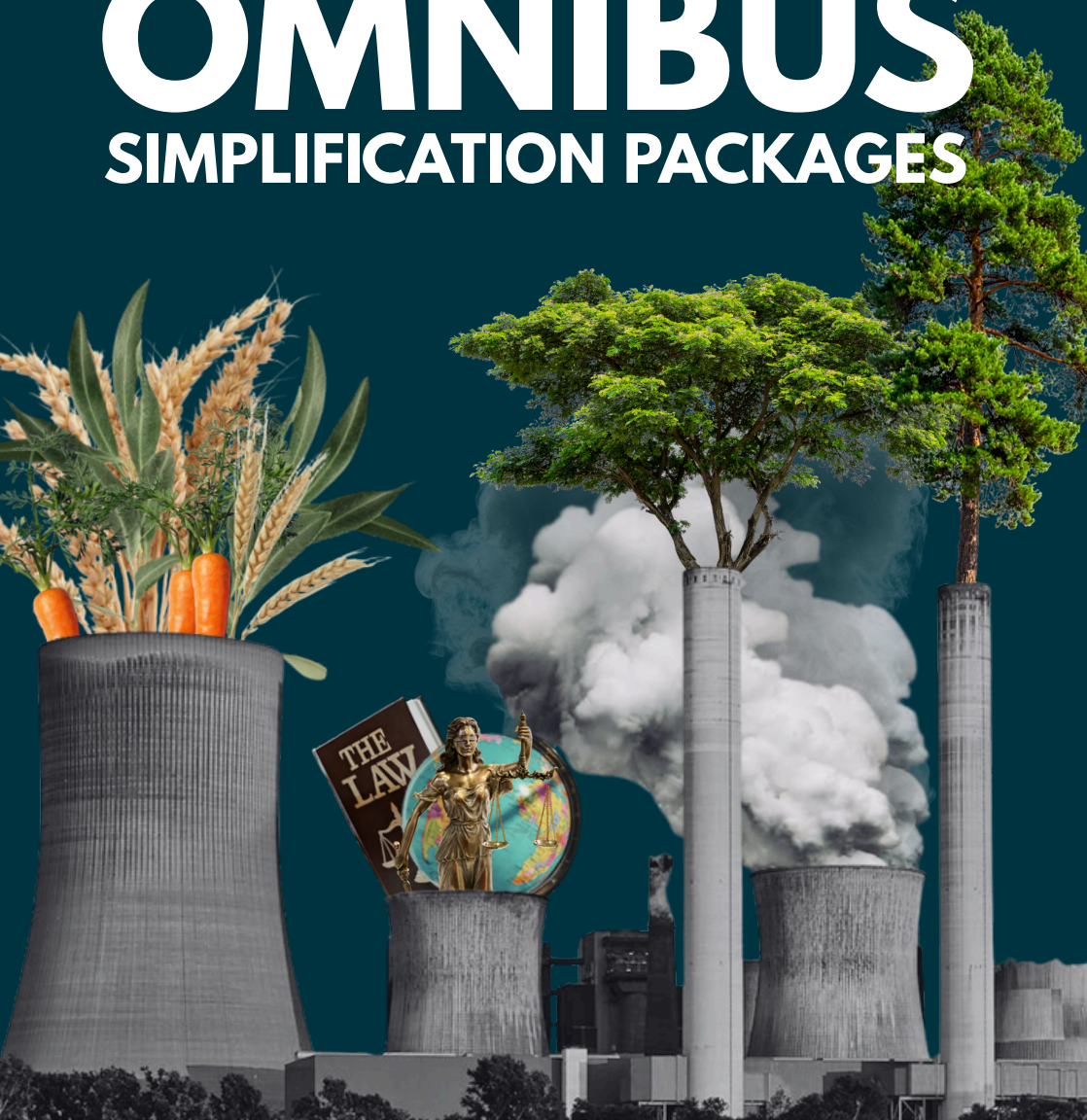


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INTRODUCTION

The European Union is revising key policies through a series of “Omnibus” simplification packages. These reforms aim to reduce administrative burdens and make EU rules easier to apply, but they also raise important questions about transparency, environmental protection and long-term sustainability.

This brochure breaks down key Omnibus proposals across different sectors, explaining what is changing, why it matters and what it means for young people in Europe.



OMNIBUS I:
EU SUSTAINABILITY RULES MADE SIMPLE

SIMPLER RULES, MEANS SLOWER ACTION?



WHAT IS OMNIBUS I?

The simplification Omnibus Package I is a proposal by the European Commission to change some EU sustainability rules. It focuses on four main areas:

1. **CSRD (Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive):** Requires companies to report detailed information about their environmental and social impacts.

2. **CSDDD (Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive):** Requires companies to report on human rights and environmental risks in their supply chain.

3. **EU Taxonomy:** It's a classification system that defines which economic activities can be considered environmentally sustainable.

4. **CBAM (Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism):** A system ensuring that products imported into the EU also pay for their carbon pollution, helping fight climate change and keep competition fair.



WHY DID THE EU INTRODUCE THIS SIMPLIFICATION?

The EU introduced this simplification to reduce reporting burdens and compliance costs and to strengthen competitiveness. Many stakeholders argued that the rules were too complex and created high administrative costs. In a difficult economic and geopolitical context, the EU wants a clearer and simpler regulatory framework. At the same time, it aims to keep the goals of the European Green Deal and the Sustainable Finance Action Plan, while avoiding unnecessary costs for companies.

WHAT CHANGED IN PRACTICE?

In practice, the proposal gives companies more time before they have to report on sustainability. The deadlines are pushed back by one year for the CSDDD rules and by **two years** for the CSRD rules. Reporting will also only be mandatory for large companies with more than **1,000 employees**.

This means fewer businesses will have to report, and the rules themselves will be simpler, with less paperwork and lower costs. Overall, the goal is to make the system more flexible and give companies more time to prepare to report on how their activities affect the environment and society.

WHY THIS MATTERS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

In times of ongoing climate change, geopolitical fragmentation and the advent of AI, not to mention insecure job prospects for many young Europeans, the outlook on some of the original Green Deal policies has changed. There was initial pushback from member states, industry and external partners. However, the real underlying question is: how can we protect our planet as Europeans without sacrificing our own economy?
The Omnibus package is a course correction by the European Commission on its previous policies. Whether this course correction is justified is up for debate. Ultimately, it is us young people who will bear the full brunt of climate change and the underinvestment in the European economy.

OPPORTUNITIES VS RISKS

Omnibus I could bring both opportunities and risks. On one hand, simpler rules could help European companies stay competitive and protect jobs. On the other hand, delaying or weakening sustainability rules could slow down climate action and reduce transparency about companies' real impact on people and the planet.

ONE KEY TAKEAWAY

Omnibus I is about simplifying EU sustainability rules for companies while still trying to keep Europe on track to protect the planet and its economy.

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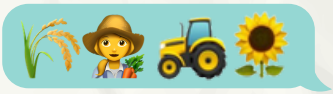
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#OMNIBUS III:

SIMPLIFICATION OF THE COMMON AGRICULTURAL POLICY (CAP)

HELPING FARMERS OR WEAKENING ENVIRONMENTAL RULES?



WHAT IS OMNIBUS III?

Omnibus III is the EU's 2025 simplification package targeting the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), the EU's massive plan for agriculture and rural economies kickstarted in 1962 as a partnership between farmers and society. It has received the final approval from the Council in December 2025. Officially, it "boosts the competitiveness of the European agriculture by cutting red tape, supporting farmers [...], encouraging innovation and boosting productivity" (Council of the EU, 2025), with the Commission projecting ambitious savings up to €1.6 billion for farmers by reducing their administrative burdens.

However, organizations like the European Environmental Bureau (EEB) and NGOs such as WWF warn that the reform may be less about simplification and more about weakening the CAP's remaining environmental safeguards, putting nature and climate-vulnerable farmers at risk.

WHY DID THE EU INTRODUCE THIS SIMPLIFICATION?

According to the EU, simplification was needed to cut costly and overly complicated rules, make EU laws easier to apply in practice, and reduce excessive requirements. The aim is also to ensure that small- and medium-sized farms, which often struggle the most with administrative paperwork, receive more flexibility and targeted support. That way, the EU believes farmers will have more room to innovate and adopt sustainable practices. Instead of using the same rules for everyone, Omnibus III aims to promote more tailored approaches and greater use of digital tools to make reporting easier.

WHAT CHANGED IN PRACTICE?

The Omnibus III concerns especially the Good Agricultural and Environmental Conditions (GAEC), which guide how farmers protect and support ecosystems while producing food. One big change is the “once-only” principle: farmers should now face just one on-the-spot inspection per year, reducing bureaucracy. There’s also more flexibility for countries to decide how farms, especially partially organic ones, meet environmental standards, while fully organic farms are automatically considered compliant.

While the package also entails financial support measures, for example, through annual payments for small farmers, business development grants, and emergency funds for those affected by extreme weather, the amendments to the GAEC would also weaken the protection of traditional landscapesd as grasslands, peatlands and wetlands (EEB, 2025). The Omnibus III may essentially cut off ties between the CAP and environmental and climate laws at a time when farmers around Europe are already feeling the effects of pollution and climate change, contrary to the EU treaty's mandate to include sustainability into all policies.

WHY THIS MATTERS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

Omnibus III matters for young people because it addresses challenges faced by new and young farmers in the EU. It recognizes that the EU farming workforce is ageing, creating a need to attract young people to agriculture. Starting a farm is financially challenging for young farmers, especially when investments are needed to comply with Union starts. To support young people, Omnibus III extends the eligibility period for investments, making it easier for young farmers to set up their businesses for the first time.

In other words, Omnibus III is not just about simplifying bureaucracy, it is also about giving young farmers a realistic chance to succeed in agriculture and contribute to a sustainable future for Europe's farming sector.

For youth concerned with rural futures, this debate matters as, while the "simpler" rules promise to empower young generations of farmers and startups, they risk undermining the environmental conditions necessary for sustainable farming and the livelihoods of those dependent on it.Moreover, the package was pushed through with minimal public consultation with consequences for its democratic accountability. Young farmers may gain procedural flexibility, but this comes at the potential cost of reduced transparency and citizen participation in shaping the rules that govern their sector and the future of food production in Europe.

OPPORTUNITIES VS RISKS

The Omnibus III regulation addresses longstanding structural pressures within the agricultural sector by reducing administrative burdens and redirecting support toward smaller farming operations. The easing of GAEC rules for organic farms and the reduction of on-site inspections to one per year removes compliance friction that disproportionately affected smaller producers, potentially making sustainable farming models more economically viable.

The introduction of capped annual aid and a dedicated business development payment for small farms reflects a more targeted approach to agricultural support and one that acknowledges the financial fragility of smaller operations and their importance to rural economies. Projected annual savings for farmers indicate that the regulation carries substantive economic weight, and if channelled effectively, this additional capacity could support investment in adaptation and longer-term farm resilience.

However, the relaxation of environmental rules presents distinct long-term risks regarding ecosystem resilience and climate targets. The modification allowing land to retain its arable status without traditional tilling or reseeding, alongside eased GAEC rules for organic farms, may lead to a degradation of soil health if not monitored closely. There is a risk that reducing the frequency of inspections and simplifying reporting could diminish the quality of environmental data, making it harder to track the EUs progress toward biodiversity goals. If the reduction in bureaucracy leads to a lack of accountability, the sector may face renewed public scrutiny regarding the transparency of taxpayer-funded agricultural subsidies.

However, less bureaucracy also serves as a pretext to weaken fundamental environmental, health, and social safeguards that took years to establish. Simplification, or better deregulation, in this context often prioritizes the interests of industry and short-term economic gains over long-term sustainability.

By framing accountability and oversight as burdensome, the EU risks undermining protections for soil, water, biodiversity, food safety, and farm workers' rights; and what is presented as flexibility and modernization may, in practice, reduce transparency, diminish democratic participation, and leave citizens and ecosystems more vulnerable.

ONE KEY TAKEAWAY

Support for those who produce our food and for young generations hoping for sustainable rural futures cannot come from top-down measures like Omnibus CAP alone but should be rooted in democratic consultation and careful stewardship of the land and ecosystems we depend on.



OMNIBUS VI:
CHEMICALS SIMPLIFICATION

HAZARDOUS OR HARMONIZED?
WHAT THE OMNIBUS VI MEANS
FOR EU SAFETY



WHAT IS OMNIBUS VI?

Omnibus VI is an EU proposal that aims to simplify the rules for managing chemicals across Europe. It mainly focuses on making it easier for companies and authorities to comply with existing regulations, while still keeping a high level of protection for human health and the environment.

The package introduces changes to how chemicals are:

- Classified and labelled
- Registered and reported
- Approved or restricted

Instead of changing what chemicals are allowed, Omnibus VI mostly changes how the system works, making procedures faster, more consistent, and less burdensome.



WHY DID THE EU INTRODUCE THIS SIMPLIFICATION?

The EU created this update because the old way of banning dangerous chemicals was way too slow. Scientists are always finding out new things about the ingredients in our products, and sometimes they discover that a chemical we thought was fine is actually linked to serious illnesses like cancer. In the past, it took years of paperwork to ban just one of these. This "simplification" allows the EU to update a huge list of these bad ingredients all at once. It's basically a shortcut to make sure that as soon as science proves a chemical is harmful, it is blocked from being sold. This keeps our laws up-to-date and makes sure companies can't keep using old, risky ingredients while waiting for the government to catch up.

WHAT CHANGED IN PRACTICE?

Before this simplification, companies often had to deal with multiple overlapping procedures, repeated reporting, and long administrative timelines. For example, the same chemical might need to be assessed under different frameworks, requiring similar data to be submitted multiple times, which created delays, confusion, and higher costs, without necessarily improving safety outcomes.

With Omnibus VI, the EU aims to make these processes more streamlined and coordinated.

For companies, this means:

- Fewer duplicate reporting requirements across different regulations
- More standardised formats for submitting data
- Clearer and faster procedures for classification and labelling

For regulators and authorities, it means:

- Better alignment between different chemicals laws (like REACH and CLP)
- Faster processing of applications and updates
- More efficient use of scientific data

One important procedural change is the introduction of mechanisms like “stop-the-clock” in authorisation processes. This allows regulators to pause deadlines while waiting for missing information, instead of rejecting applications outright or rushing decisions. In theory, this improves decision quality — but it can also extend timelines.

WHY THIS MATTERS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

This update is really about protecting our future and our bodies. Many of the chemicals that Omnibus VI deals with are called CMRs. This is a short way of saying they are ingredients that can cause cancer, change our DNA, or make it hard for people to have children in the future. Because we are young, our bodies are still developing, and we have many years ahead of us. This means that even small amounts of these toxins today could cause health problems much later in life. By banning these chemicals now, the EU is making sure we don't have to deal with those risks as we get older.

It is also important because of the things we buy. Many of these risky chemicals are found in products specifically made for our generation, like trendy makeup, cheap "fast fashion" clothes, and new electronic gadgets. Before these rules were simplified, it was easier for companies to find "loopholes", tricks to keep using these ingredients because the laws were too confusing. Now that the rules are simpler and faster, it is much harder for companies to take risks with our health. This also helps the planet, because making cleaner products usually means less toxic waste is dumped into our water and soil.

OPPORTUNITIES VS RISKS

Omnibus VI creates a clear trade-off between efficiency and precaution, which is at the heart of many EU “simplification” efforts.

On the one hand, the changes can bring real improvements. A more streamlined system can reduce unnecessary administrative burden for companies and regulators, and can also help ensure that scientific findings are reflected more quickly in how chemicals are classified and managed.

There is also a potential benefit for innovation. If procedures are clearer and less costly, companies may find it easier to develop and introduce safer alternatives to harmful substances, supporting the transition to more sustainable products and production systems.

However, these benefits come with important risks. Simplifying procedures can sometimes mean removing layers of scrutiny, which may reduce transparency or weaken oversight if not carefully managed.

There is also concern that simplification may shift the balance toward industry convenience over public protection, especially if regulatory authorities are under-resourced. Faster processes do not automatically mean better outcomes — particularly in a field like chemicals, where long-term health and environmental impacts are complex and not always immediately visible.

Another key risk is that a more streamlined system could make it harder for civil society and independent experts to follow and influence decision-making processes, reducing accountability.

In this context, Omnibus VI highlights an important question for young people and future generations:

Can we simplify rules without simplifying away the protections that keep people and the planet safe?

ONE KEY TAKEAWAY

Simplifying chemicals regulation can improve efficiency, but strong safeguards are essential to ensure that health and environmental protection are not compromised.



#OMNIBUS VIII: ENVIRONMENTAL LEGISLATION

FROM SIMPLIFICATION TO INTERGENERATIONAL JUSTICE AND SYSTEMIC CHANGE



WHAT IS OMNIBUS VIII?

The term “Omnibus” within European law refers to a legal package, containing several different changes to legislation bundled into a single vote for the European Parliament. The logic behind this is that these Omnibus packages are more efficient, as all changes are passed at once, and simpler, as all legislative updates are consolidated into a single package.

The Environmental Omnibus package, published on the 20th December 2025, is the 8th (VIII) Omnibus proposal by the European Commission. This package presents numerous changes to legislation aimed at ‘simplifying’ existing environmental legislation. Proposed changes cover multiple topics, broadly including industrial emissions, the circular economy, environmental assessments and geospatial data.



WHY DID THE EU INTRODUCE THIS SIMPLIFICATION?

Omnibus VIII was developed to make environmental legislation clearer and easier to enforce. Emerging in a politically sensitive climate marked by pressure from right-wing and centre parties to balance environmental ambition in light of economic competitiveness concerns, the goal of this simplification is to address existing challenges and accelerate the implementation progress of the European Green Deal.

These challenges include:

1. **Technical and fragmented laws:** Many environmental rules are complicated and difficult to navigate. Omnibus VIII aims to reduce administrative burdens and make these legislations easy to apply and enforce.

2. **Slow procedures and delays:** The package seeks to speed up the implementation processes of the environmental legislation.

3 **Multiple legal sources**: Since environmental rules come from different directives, they can be inconsistent. Omnibus VIII aims to improve coherence among different environmental laws and create a more harmonized framework.

4 **Ensuring fair competitiveness:** Simplification aims to help in creating more equal conditions for parties involved in the green transition process.

WHAT CHANGED IN PRACTICE?

The package proposes several key initiatives aimed at streamlining regulatory requirements and reducing administrative burdens for businesses:

1 **Reducing reporting and procedural obligations,** including simplifying Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) requirements, focusing on batteries, packaging, electronic equipment, single-use plastic and waste.

2 **Replacing the Substances of Concern in Products (SCIP) database** with a Digital Product Passport system to modernize and simplify information management, leading to amendments to the Waste Framework Directive

3 **Introducing a new framework for environmental assessments,** designed to accelerate and simplify the permitting process, especially for projects that lead to decarbonisation or increasing resource efficiency.

4 **Decreasing the number of mandatory risk assessments** under the Industrial Emissions Directive to reduce compliance complexity

5 **Scaling back reporting requirements under the Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD),** including narrowing the scope of companies covered and removing certain elements such as binding climate transition plan requirements.

6 **Simplifying existing geospatial and environmental data legislation,** including exempting farmers and aquaculture operators from certain reporting requirements, aimed at alleviating administrative burdens**.**

WHY THIS MATTERS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

For youth, these proposed legislative changes are incredibly relevant as they directly impact how the green transition is unfolding in Europe. This raises important questions of intergenerational justice, as decisions taken today will shape the environmental, economic, and social conditions under which future generations will live.

The fast-tracking and red-tape cutting of various amendments to environmental legislation can narrow the window for public consultations. For example, the speeding up of environmental assessments for projects deemed “strategic” may curtail youth involvement and voice in public participation processes.

It is important that these simplifications do not unnecessarily and counterproductively cut corners on the environmental issues, which lie at the heart of the EU’s drive to be both competitive and sustainable, by decreasing youth participation and access to justice.

OPPORTUNITIES VS RISKS

The simplification proposed in Omnibus VIII creates important opportunities, such as faster implementation of environmental legislation by a matter of months, reduced administrative burdens, a more coherent and harmonized framework, and fairer competition across member states.

However, simplification carries risks. In fact, simplified procedures may weaken environmental safeguards and yield less effective outcomes. There is also a concern that this "simplification" becomes a pretext for reducing compliance obligations. Therefore, it is important to ensure that these reforms improve efficiency and do not translate into deregulation.

Stakeholder	Opportunities	Risks
Youth	Clearer pathways for climate progress and opportunities to participate in decision-making	Fear that simplification could delay strong climate action.
Companies	Lower costs Faster approvals smoother cross-border operations.	Uncertainty if poorly designed reforms lead to inconsistent enforcement.
Legislators	More efficient Regulatory workflow (smoother and faster)	Potential policy gaps
Consumers	Quicker environmental benefits	Risk of lower safety, health, and environmental standards.
Political Groups	Ability to promote efficient governance and EU competitiveness.	Increased political tension if reforms appear to weaken safeguards.
NGOs	More predictable frameworks to monitor	Reduced transparency and participation

ONE KEY TAKEAWAY

This legislative package which simplifies environmental legislation in the EU is relevant to youth as changes may inadvertently weaken future environmental safeguards and standards.

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OMNIBUS X:
FOOD & FEED SIMPLIFICATION

UNDERSTANDING EU FOOD
& FEED SIMPLIFICATION



WHAT IS OMNIBUS X?

Omnibus X is a proposal from the European Commission, introduced in December 2020, designed to simplify EU food and feed safety rules. In simple terms, it's a big EU law package that changes many existing food and feed rules easier to understand and less complicated to follow. The idea is to cut down on paperwork and extra costs for farmers, producers, and authorities while still keeping food, animal feed, people, animals, and the environment safe.

It includes three main initiatives:

1. **Giving extra data protection for certain biocides** (a type of chemical used to control harmful organisms) that faced delays during the approval process.

2. **Updating the rules on drones to spray pesticides,** simplifying how farmers record the use of animal medicines, and removing some old plastic-related rules that are no longer needed.

3. **Making the approval process for products used in food and feed production** (like feed additives or certain treatments) faster and simpler.

WHY DID THE EU INTRODUCE THIS SIMPLIFICATION?

The omnibus X exists because EU countries and many stakeholders kept asking for faster and clearer procedures for things like plant protection products, drones in agriculture, biocides, feed additives, and hygiene rules. Current roles were often seen as complicated, overlapping or slow, causing unnecessary delays for approvals and extra administrative work. By simplifying these rules, the EU aims to reduce bureaucratic burdens, free up Member States' resources so authorities can focus more on higher-risk areas instead of routine paperwork and encourage sustainable practices and improve overall efficiency. This should make life more predictable for farmers and other economic operators.

WHAT CHANGED IN PRACTICE?

Within the three initiatives, the Omnibus X package streamlines authorisation and renewal processes for pesticides, feed additives, and certain biobased products, allowing products to reach the market faster, giving companies quicker returns and enabling farmers to access new inputs without long delays.

The changes also introduce more digital and technological tools. For instance, farmers can now use drones for precision pesticide spraying under general exemptions rather than seeking individual permission, or digital labelling for feed additives.

A significant shift concerns pesticide approvals. Instead of frequent re-assessments, many active substances would move toward longer or potentially unlimited approvals. This provides more stability and predictability for producers, but it could also allow substances to remain approved longer even if new scientific risks emerge.

Finally, certain import and border procedures are simplified, and reporting requirements in areas like animal welfare are reduced. This speeds up trade, though it may also mean fewer opportunities for authorities to detect non-compliance with animal welfare, feed safety, or disease control standards at an early stage.

WHY THIS MATTERS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

The changes are part of a long-term "Vision for Agriculture and Food" specifically designed to make farming attractive and sustainable for future generations. For young people, these updates matter because they will shape the environment, job opportunities, and food safety standards for decades to come.

On the positive side, the package promotes innovation. This may support greener farming practices and create opportunities for young farmers and agri-startups by reducing bureaucratic barriers and costs. At the same time, if simplification weakens environmental checks, this could impact biodiversity, water quality, and long-term health. Debates over pesticide drift, GMO transparency, and deregulation raise concerns amongst critics about whether economic efficiency is being prioritized over precaution. Young generations will live longest with potential downsides.

OPPORTUNITIES VS RISKS

Through its simplified process of approving plant protection products and animal feed, Omnibus X will speed up the deployment of new, eco-friendly agricultural products in the market. To environmentalists, the faster substitution of the existing, highly toxic chemicals with novel, bio-based ones is one of the positive indicators of sustainable and resilient food systems. The reduction of regulatory controls and compliance processes eases the financial strain of the agricultural stakeholders. This administrative exemption is particularly relevant to small-scale organic farms and young green agribusinesses, who will be capable of redirecting capital to the implementation of regenerative agricultural techniques.

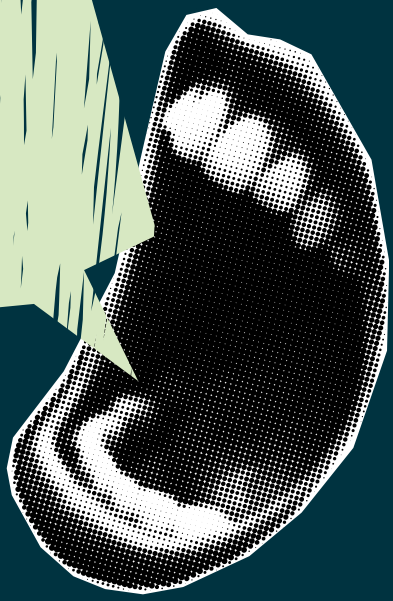
The main issue with Omnibus X is the possibility of weakening the stringent environmental risk evaluations. The accelerated processing and registration of biocidal and plant protection products may lead to an increase in product mismanagement. As a result of chemical oversight, the health of the soil, water, and endangered populations of pollinators are directly exposed, which is the opposite of zero-pollution goals. The new liberalization of the rules related to animal health, farmed livestock welfare and feed safety pose other significant ecological and social health risks, as well as low quality production in industrial agricultural companies.

ONE KEY TAKEAWAY

Omnibus X seeks to simplify EU food and feed rules by accelerating approvals for agricultural inputs, enabling technologies like pesticide-spraying drones, and reducing administrative burdens, but its long-term success will depend on ensuring that faster procedures do not come at the expense of environmental protection, animal welfare, and food safety.



#know what's at stake



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