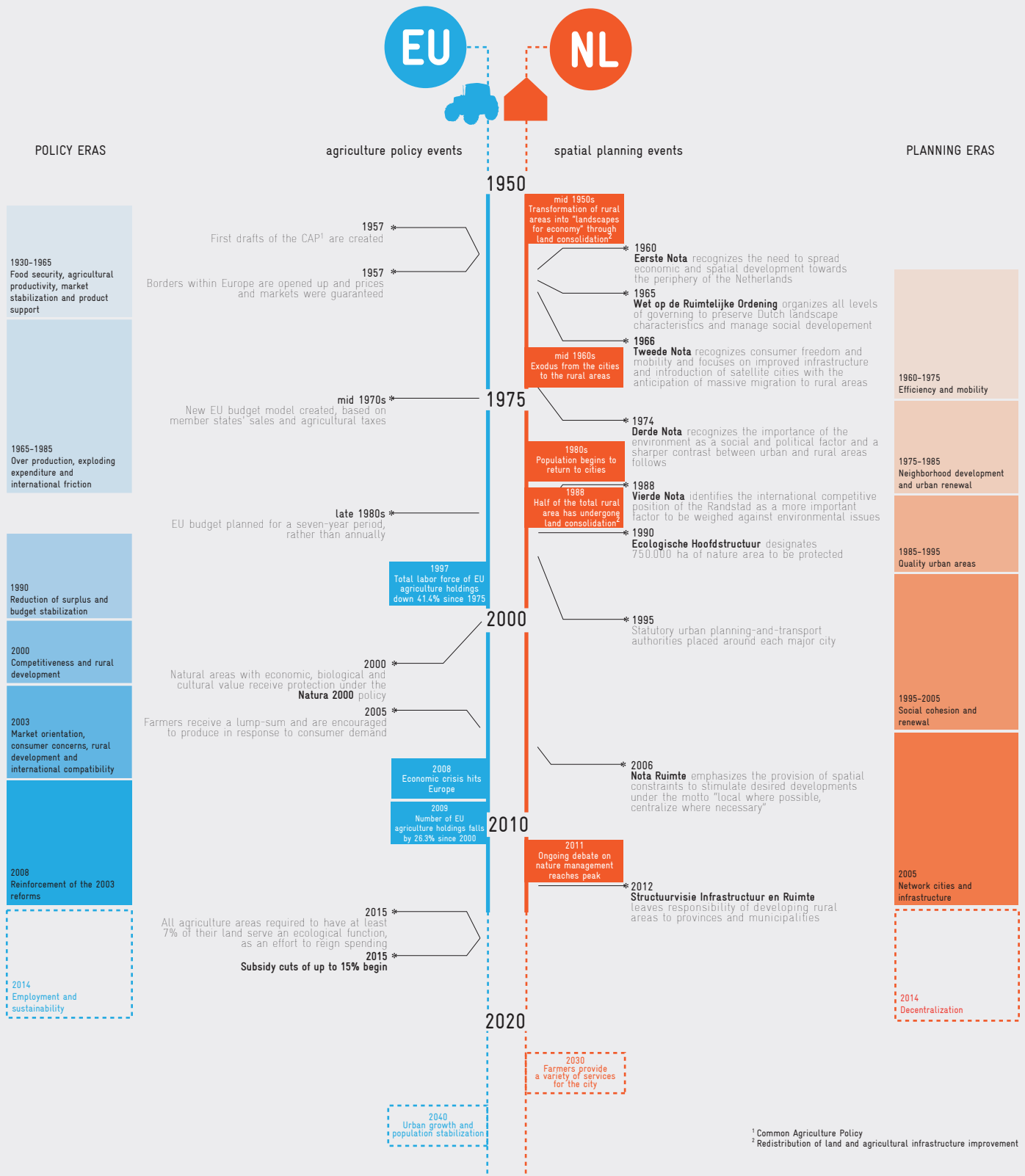
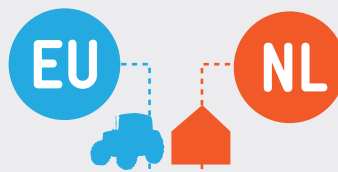


# “FROM PROTECTIVE ECONOMY TO FREE MARKET”

## AGRICULTURE AND SPATIAL PLANNING POLICY 1950-2020



<sup>1</sup> Common Agriculture Policy  
<sup>2</sup> Redistribution of land and agricultural infrastructure improvement

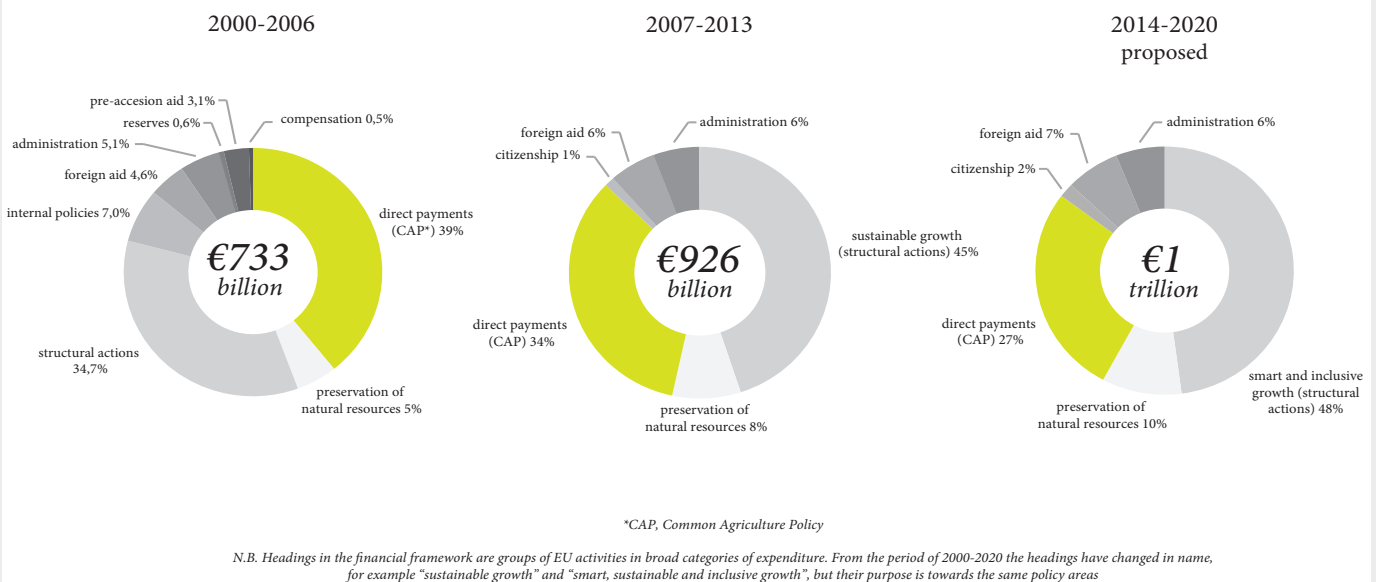
## Future of Dutch landscape stands on the breach between changing economics and shifting policy

Historically, the Netherlands has consistently been a key player in the global market, trading agricultural products for centuries. As such, farmers received economic and spatial protection from both the European Union and the national government. In the 1960s, as result of government intervention, technological innovation and reorganization of agricultural operations, nearly all branches of the agrarian sector witnessed a spectacular increase in production. Spatially, this great increase in productivity resulted in **a new landscape with restructured, optimized agricultural land ownership of farms and provisioning of road infrastructure. Government restrictions on urban development furthered this new structure and strengthened the fine line between urban and rural areas.**

Recently, however, a shift in both the economic and spatial planning model occurred, leaving farmers and their holdings in the wake of a speeding policy boat. After the economic crisis in 2008, EU policies began to propose cuts to agricultural subsidies and reforms to the CAP. The trend will only continue into the coming years, as of June of this year the EU announced less direct funding for agricultural projects, but rather an encouragement for young farmers to become more entrepreneurial. As subsidies decrease, farmers will be forced into a free market, increasing difficulties for small and medium-size farms as large-scale operations currently dominate profits.

National spatial planning policy is also changing. **In contrast to the trend of the previous 50 years, the Dutch government recently announced its withdrawal from spatial planning, leaving spatial development in the hands of the provinces and municipalities.** This new model of decentralization will provide more opportunities for local organizations to take planning

### EU BUDGET FACTS



### FARM DIVERSIFICATION

and landscape management in their own hands.

While the share of subsidies is decreasing, a great part of the EU budget is still spent on agriculture and two thirds of the land area in the Netherlands is still under agricultural use. **The result is not the extinction of farmers and the takeover of urbanization, but rather the end of a top-down, protective economy and the strong distinction between rural and urban areas.**

### SOURCES

European Commission. [ec.europa.eu/budget/index\\_en.cfm](http://ec.europa.eu/budget/index_en.cfm), [http://ec.europa.eu/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/index_en.htm).  
 Faludi, A. and Salet, W. "The Revival of Strategic Spatial Planning," 1999. Natuurbeheer. <http://www.natuurbeheer.nu>  
 Schuyt, K. and Taverne, E. "Dutch Culture in a European Perspective: 1950, Prosperity and Welfare," 2004.  
 Wageningen UR & Louis Bolk Institute. "Reserach on Organic Agriculture in the Netherlands," 2009.

### CONTACT

#### AUTHOR

Katherine VanHoose, researcher at the Deltametropolis Association and the Ministry of Infrastructure and the Environment



Mauritsweg 51a, 3012 JW Rotterdam, The Netherlands  
 PO Box 600, 3000 AP Rotterdam, The Netherlands

+31 (0)10 413 0927 | [www.deltametropool.nl](http://www.deltametropool.nl)  
[landschap@deltametropool.nl](mailto:landschap@deltametropool.nl)