What is the latest CAP reform tells us about Commission entrepreneurship

Stefan Beutler

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The European Commission’s role in EU policy making is an ever-ongoing topic of debate. Stefan Beutler shows how insights on the Commission’s ability to act as a policy entrepreneur from the most recent negotiations on the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) offer fresh insights.

The European Commission is one of the most powerful executive institutions beyond the seating state. It has considerable competences in budgetary and administrative matters. For the interests of the Commission in the world of agricultural policy, it is essential to look at a policy entrepreneur that, according to JohnMarginson, invested political capital to push for a specific agricultural policy proposal.

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For many, the CAP negotiations of the last year are the perfect example of a Commission entrepreneur encountering a dead-lock in the Council and a Commission that is willing to lose the fight (at least in the short term). This is precisely what is happening in the CAP negotiations.

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Lessons from the CAP reform

First, the CAP reform underlines the importance of the Commission’s role in the negotiations. The proposals for the new Strategic Plan for the CAP was initially rejected by the Council, and the CAP negotiations are still ongoing.

Second, the CAP negotiations show the importance of the Commission’s role in shaping the CAP. The Commission has proposed a number of changes to the CAP, such as the role of food in the CAP and the role of science in the CAP.

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Implications for future research

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For more information, see the author’s accompanying paper in the Journal of Common Market Studies.

About the author

Stefan Beutler is a Researcher at the University of Innsbruck, Austria.

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