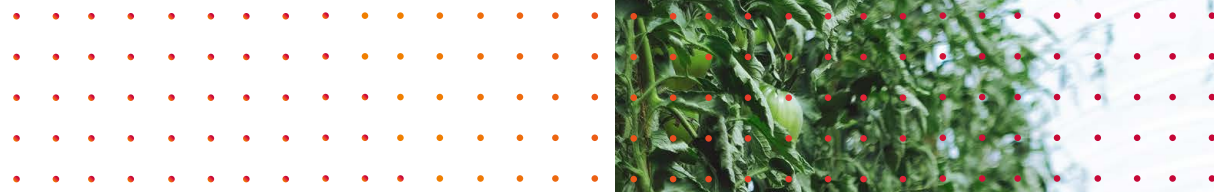


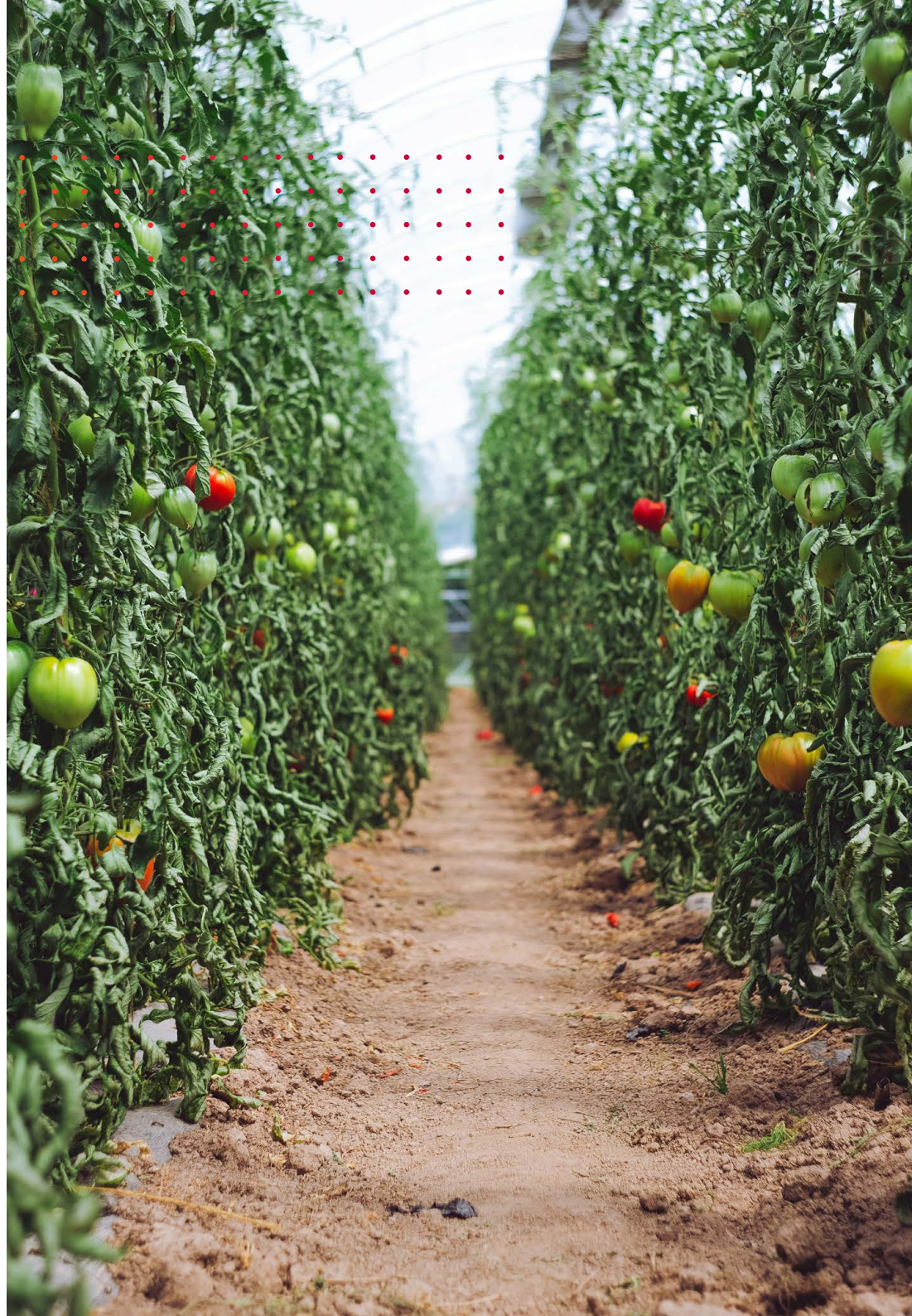
— **Secretary General**  
Copa and Cogeca

copa \* cogeca  
european farmers    european agri-cooperatives

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- 03** About Copa and Cogeca
- 05** What You'll Do
- 07** Recruitment Process



# About Copa and Cogeca

**Reports to:**

Praesidia of Copa and Cogeca

**Manages:**

49 staff in Brussels

**Location:**

Brussels, Belgium (with frequent travel within the EU)

**Type of contract:**

Permanent Full Time Belgian Employment Contract

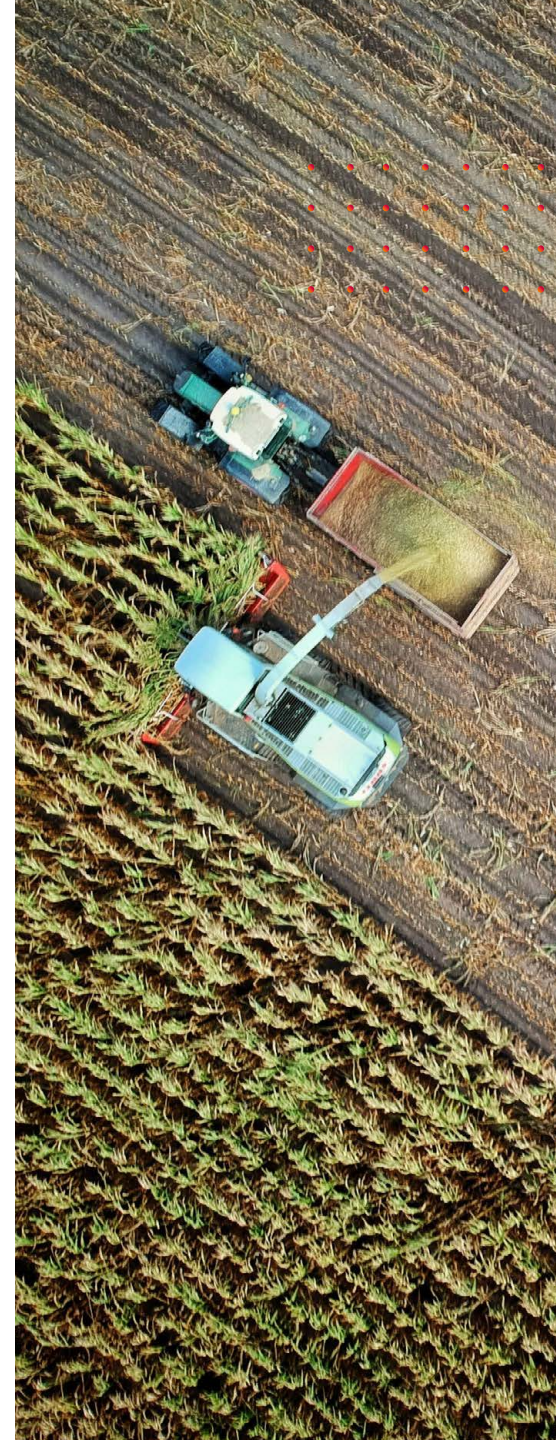
Copa and Cogeca are the united voice of farmers and agri-cooperatives in the EU, based in Brussels. Together, they ensure that EU agriculture is sustainable, innovative, and competitive, while guaranteeing food security for 500 million people throughout Europe.

The agri-food sector is one of the most integrated sectors at European level and lies at the heart of many European institutional initiatives, Copa and Cogeca's core objective is to holistically defend the interests of European farmers, forestry owners and agri-cooperatives.

Copa (the Committee of Professional Agricultural Organisations) brings together lead national farming unions representing millions of farmers and forestry owners across Europe, in a combined effort with its members to promote the best interests of the agricultural sector among the EU institutions and other relevant stakeholders.

Cogeca (the General Confederation of Agricultural Cooperatives) members represent the interests of thousands of European agri-cooperative enterprises with operations at different stages of the agri-food and forestry value chains towards the EU Institutions and other socio-economic organisations contributing to European decision making.

Together, Copa and Cogeca, bring together 51 major national farmers associations and 37 cooperative associations in all EU Member States. Copa and Cogeca also have partner memberships with non-EU organisations from the UK, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine, Georgia, the Republic of North Macedonia and Montenegro.



# About Copa and Cogeca

Since the 1960s, Copa and Cogeca has been working tirelessly to protect the interests of European farmers and their cooperatives, feeding the future of the European Union by providing safe, nutritious food, defending the climate, and leading the way in the development of a sustainable bio and circular economy.

## Together they:

- Ensure a fair standard of living for EU farmers while maintaining our family farming model.
- Support biodiversity and ecosystem services while feeding half a billion people.
- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions while increasing carbon storage and sequestration.
- Increase productivity and put in place climate change adaptation and mitigation actions ensuring the uptake of digital, technological, biological, and social, innovation in the sector.
- Make EU farmers, forest owners and their cooperatives central players of the circular and bioeconomy.
- Increase productivity in the context of climate change adaptation and mitigation.
- Ensure that EU farming remains at the forefront when it comes to access to and uptake of digital, technological, biological, and social innovations.

- Keep rural areas vibrant and guarantee the generational renewal needed to avoid an increased rural/urban divide.
- Develop a fair and sustainable trade policy that promotes and supports our continuous investment in high farming standards.
- Address volatility in the agri-food chain and guarantee a fairer, more transparent and more efficient food supply chain.
- Encourage the setting up and development of agri-cooperatives and producer organisations, as one of the key tools to address the challenges the sector faces.

Copa and Cogeca, advocacy activities aim to influence the EU decision-making process by proposing alternative and/or improved policy options designed and agreed upon by EU farmers, forest owners and their cooperative enterprises.

## About the Secretariat:

Copa and Cogeca, first set up a joint Secretariat in 1962. Since then the members have relied on the Secretary General and the 49-person strong Secretariat team to deliver their joint mission.

The Secretariat ensures that both organisations function smoothly and efficiently and that decisions taken by the Copa and Cogeca Praesidia are implemented.

The Copa-Cogeca Secretariat also provides national member organisations with information, analysis, policy options, communication activities and sectorial/horizontal expertise.



## Description of the Secretary General role

Copa and Cogeca is looking to recruit a new Secretary General to lead its Brussels Secretariat. The Secretary General provides strategic guidance to Copa and Cogeca members and has a strong focus on strengthening member engagement. They will also proactively seek opportunities to advance the Copa and Cogeca political mission in Brussels as well as in member states across the EU. They will be active in developing new platforms for communicating Copa and Cogeca mission across Europe.

The successful candidate will be an inspirational leader with deep expertise in agri-food and forestry value chains, agricultural, food and forestry and related policies, competitiveness and sustainability of the sectors and farming as well as cooperatives organisations. They will be politically savvy and a convincing diplomat with the ability to engage with diverse stakeholder groups internally as well as externally.

The Secretary General understands how to empower people and motivate teams to deliver outstanding results. They will be a good listener, a strategic thinker and politically astute professional, who has an ability to build communities, as well as enhance and consolidate networks of different stakeholder. Qualities essential for this role include being open, engaging and committed to the values and mission of Copa and Cogeca.

Reporting to the Praesidia of Copa and Cogeca, the Secretary General is responsible for developing and executing a suite of activities which serve the members of Copa and Cogeca and ensure that positions within the community are aligned.

The Secretary General manages the Secretariat staff and finances, ensuring that of the Secretariat complies with current Belgian law.

## Reporting line and Organisation

The Secretary General reports to the Praesidia of Copa and Cogeca.

## Organisational Responsibilities

The Secretary General is responsible for the overall general management of the association, including but not limited to the:

- Coordination of all advocacy and policy actions of the associations as well as of all preparatory activities carried out by Copa-Cogeca working parties (WPs).
- Influencing of EU policymaking and shaping a regulatory environment favourable to European Agriculture and forestry sectors.
- Reinforcing and building strong relationship with high representatives of the EU institutions and other stakeholder organisations.
- Ensuring that internal and external communication is effective and punctual.
- Management of the Copa-Cogeca budget, human resources and Secretariat administration.

## External Role

The position requires a strong networker able to build solid relationships with:

- The European Commissions, Members of the European Parliament, and representatives from EU Member States.
- Other agri-food and forestry sectors organisations based in Brussels and NGOs who have an interest in Agriculture and forestry sectors.

The Secretary General understands the potential impact of upcoming regulation and translates it towards Copa and Cogeca members into concrete opportunities, challenges, or threats and respective timetables.

The Secretary General also launches initiatives to improve the environment for Copa and Cogeca members through political undertakings.

## Internal role

Within the association and towards Copa and Cogeca members, the Secretary General

- Leads the implementation of policy decisions taken by governance bodies.
- Leads, maintains, and develops the Secretariat team to support the association in its daily tasks.
- Coordinates the activities and positions of the Copa-Cogeca working parties to ensure alignment of positions and messaging to audiences.
- Listens and understands issues and matters of concern to Copa and Cogeca members, barriers, or difficulties within the sector; and considers these when elaborating the Secretariat's work focus and priorities.
- Acts as an adviser to Copa and Cogeca members early indications on upcoming regulations and directives, regulatory and non-regulatory initiatives, which will affect them.

The successful candidate will be politically savvy and a convincing diplomat who is capable negotiating compromises, that reflect a good balance between the interests of Copa and Cogeca's diverse membership base.

## Skills, Knowledge, and Capabilities

Copa-Cogeca Secretary General is acknowledged by internal and external stakeholders as an unequivocal leader and ambassador for the European agricultural, food, forestry and farming sectors who imbues the highest standards of personal integrity, and professionalism.

The successful candidate is recognised by EU policymakers and associated stakeholders as a reliable adviser on all matters concerning the agriculture and forestry sectors.

They have:

- A convincing policy influencer with a minimum of 15 years of experience in lobbying and public affairs at national, European, or international level (i.e. public authorities, trade associations) who is also capable of proposing implementable and innovative advocacy strategies.
- Proven strategic leadership experience with excellent organisational skills, outstanding diplomatic and negotiator with political acumen.
- Exceptional communication abilities, encompassing public speaking and presentations at conferences and seminars. Fluency in English and good command of, at least one other European language, with a strong preference for French.
- A university degree to Masters level, ideally in agriculture, economics, law, social or political sciences.

## Personal Attributes

- A strategic thinker with a solid understanding of the needs, strengths and weaknesses of the Agriculture and forestry sectors.
- A leader with excellent negotiation skills and an ability to set strategic priorities.
- An active networker with a track record of managing relationships at the level of EU institutions.
- A competent, results oriented and solution-driven leader with management experience and direct accountability for results.
- An inspiring leader with competencies in overseeing the organisations' operations and in motivating a team.
- A team leader with the ability to give clear directions, make the best use of everyone's skills and develop them.



# Recruitment Process



If you wish to apply for this exciting position, please send your CV and motivation letter to the Executive Search team at Dober Partners (contacts below).

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