

## SUMMARY RECORD

PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVES COMMITTEE


12, 13, 14 and 17 March 2025

### COREPER (PART 1)

#### Statements to the “II” items set out in doc. 6913/25

#### Agriculture

66. Regulation on plants obtained by certain new genomic techniques and their food and feed products  
*Mandate for negotiations with the European Parliament*

 6426/25

#### Statement by Belgium

“La Belgique reconnaît la nécessité d'adopter un cadre législatif spécifique pour les plantes obtenues par les nouvelles techniques génomiques (NTG). La Belgique veut assurer que ce cadre évite tout risque environnemental ou sanitaire et garantisse le libre-choix des acteurs et des consommateurs.

Le soutien de la Belgique au mandat de négociations porté par la Présidence Polonaise en vue des trilogues avec le Parlement européen ne préjuge donc pas de la position de la Belgique sur le texte qui résultera de ces négociations. La Belgique ne pourra le soutenir que si l'ensemble des éléments suivants sont retenus :

- Brevets : la Belgique souhaite une interdiction totale de la brevetabilité des plantes issues des NTG, éventuellement au travers d'amendements à la directive sur les biotechnologies.
- Traçabilité et étiquetage : la Belgique souhaite une traçabilité obligatoire sur toute la chaîne de valeur et d'étiquetage (jusqu'au consommateur).
- Produits biologiques et coexistence: la Belgique souhaite une interdiction des NTG dans les produits biologiques. En outre, la Belgique souhaite qu'un système de coexistence explicite soit intégré au texte en liant un paragraphe opérationnel au considérant (24) actuel du préambule.

- Analyse de risque et NTG résistantes aux insectes : en vertu du principe de précaution, la Belgique souhaite que soit réalisée une analyse rigoureuse, au cas par cas, des risques environnementaux et sanitaires avant toute mise sur le marché de NTG. Un suivi post-commercialisation des impacts environnementaux et sanitaires doit également être assuré. Il doit être tenu compte de ce qui précède en termes de catégorisation des produits issus des NTG, catégorisation qui doit également tenir compte de la résistance aux insectes. “

#### Courtesy translation

“Belgium recognizes the need to adopt a specific legislative framework for plants obtained by new genomic techniques (NGT). Belgium wants to ensure that this framework avoids any environmental or health risks and guarantees free choice for stakeholders and consumers. Belgium's support for the negotiations mandate proposed by the Polish Presidency for the trilogues with the European Parliament therefore does not prejudge Belgium's position on the text that will result from these negotiations. Belgium will only be able to support it if all of the following elements are met:

- Patents: Belgium wishes a total ban on the patentability of NGT plants, possibly through amendments to the Biotechnology Directive;
- Traceability and labeling: Belgium wishes mandatory traceability throughout the value and labeling chain (up to the consumer);
- Organic products and coexistence: Belgium wishes a ban on NGT plants in organic products. Furthermore, Belgium wants an explicit coexistence system to be integrated into the text by linking an operational provision to the current recital (24) of the preamble;
- Risk analysis and insect-resistant NTGs: in accordance with the precautionary principle, Belgium wishes to see a rigorous, case-by-case analysis of environmental and health risks before any NGT is placed on the market. Post-market monitoring of environmental and health impacts must also be ensured. The above aspects must be taken into account in terms of the categorization of NTG products, which must also take insect resistance into account. “

#### Statement by Croatia

“Republic of Croatia reiterates its position that, in order to be acceptable, the NGT Regulation should be adequately considered from three main aspects: agricultural, environmental and health. It is also necessary to take into account the public opinion and ensure adequate consumer protection.

Republic of Croatia supports decision-making process based on scientific knowledge and the assessment of potential benefits. At the same time, a high level of protection of human health, animal health and the environment should be preserved, while ensuring sustainable agriculture and food production.

Republic of Croatia could not support the proposed Council's position, as a mandate for negotiations with the European parliament due to the following reasons:

1. Risk assessment for both categories of NGT plants is not introduced in the legal text
2. The precautionary principle, in order to ensure consumer protection, labelling and the traceability of all NGT products, is not respected
3. Criteria of equivalence of NGT plants to conventional plants, as stipulated in Annex I, is not adequately clarified

4. The proper analytical methods to detect and quantify NGT products are not available yet. Therefore, the issue of technical difficulties with the aim to identify genetic modification traits and their traceability of NGT products, their food and feed remains open
5. The measures to prevent possible NGT plant contamination of the environment and to define compensation mechanism in the case of damages, especially in relation to organic production, are not established
6. Based on the subsidiarity principle, Member States should have the possibility to decide on the limitation or ban of NGT plants to be cultivated on their territory.  
As the final text of the Presidency, approved by COREPER as the Council's position, does not adequately address the concerns mentioned above, the Republic of Croatia cannot support the mandate in its proposed form..”

#### Statement by Slovenia

“Slovenia recognizes the need for innovation in agriculture, including the use of new genomic techniques (NGTs), which have the potential to address key challenges such as climate change, food security, and sustainability. Given the novelty and importance of this proposal, we recognize the importance of establishing a clear and robust legal framework at EU level to ensure legal certainty, safety and transparency in the use of these techniques.

Throughout the discussion, Slovenia has consistently advocated for the inclusion of key elements in the regulatory framework, namely:

- A case-by-case approach, ensuring that each NGT plant undergoes a scientific risk assessment prior to authorization (e.g. for NGT1 at least a laboratory environmental risk assessment);
- Mandatory labeling of all products derived from NGTs to guarantee traceability, detection, and consumer rights for informed choices;
- The exclusion of NGT plants from organic farming, regardless of category, due to insufficient knowledge regarding their impact on human and animal health as well as biodiversity.

Furthermore, Slovenia does not support the regulation of patent content in agricultural legislation. We believe that such matters — if they are regulated at all — should be dealt with under patent legislation and not through sector-specific regulations and that small breeders should also be protected.

As the final text of the Presidency, approved by Coreper as the Council's position, does not adequately address these fundamental concerns, Slovenia cannot support the mandate in its proposed form.“

## COREPER (PART 2)

### Statement to the “II” items set out in doc. 6931/1/25 REV 1 + 6931/25 ADD 1+ REV 1 ADD 1 + REV 1 ADD 1 COR 1

#### Foreign Affairs

14. Regulation on the modification of customs duties on certain agriculture goods and fertilisers from Russia and Belarus 🗳️📄 6638/25  
*Mandate for negotiations with the European Parliament*

#### Statement by the Commission

“The Union’s food security depends on the continuous existence of the autonomous Union’s nitrogen-based fertiliser production industry that can supply the EU market. The present level of imports from the Russian Federation, competing unfairly in the EU market due to gas price difference, is undermining the EU industry. At the same time, it is essential to ensure that Union farmers have predictable, sufficient and affordable access to nitrogen-based fertilisers as this is indispensable to the stabilisation of EU agricultural markets.

Article 2 of the Regulation provides that the Commission shall monitor prices applicable in the Union of the goods listed in Annex II (nitrogen-based fertilisers) during four years from the application of this Regulation. The Commission recalls that it already publishes regularly data reflecting price evolution of fertilisers. Trends shown by this dataset are discussed during the EU Fertilisers Market Observatory meetings. On this base, the Commission will continue the monitoring of the prices of nitrogen-based fertilisers subject to this Regulation and will make the information about the results of this monitoring available to the Member States on a regular, monthly basis through a consolidated document published on the website of the Commission.

The Commission notes that the Regulation provides for the suspension of tariffs for concerned fertiliser products imported from origins other than the Russian Federation and the Republic of Belarus as one of the potential appropriate actions in case of a substantial surge of fertilisers’ prices. The Commission commits to take such action if this case arises. Already in 2022, the Commission had proposed, and the Council accepted, a temporary suspension of common custom tariffs on some nitrogen-based fertilisers from countries other than Russia and Belarus, due to significant price increases in the Union market. Furthermore, the Commission recalls that since the start of Russia’s war of aggression against Ukraine, it adopted measures to support European farmers in all Member States whenever it was considered necessary.’

The Commission recognises the need to take fully into account the competitiveness of the EU fertilisers industry in the future actions implementing the Clean Industrial Deal.”

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- 🗳️ First reading  
📄 Item based on a Commission proposal
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