



Northern Ireland
Assembly

Research and Information Service Briefing Note

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Windsor Framework Democratic Scrutiny Committee

Quarterly Status Update

Proposal for a DECISION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL (COM/2024/52) amending Council Decision 2003/17/EC as regards the equivalence of field inspections carried out in the Republic of Moldova on fodder plant seed-producing crops and on the equivalence of fodder plant seed produced in the Republic of Moldova, and as regards the equivalence of field inspections carried out in Ukraine on beet seed-producing crops and oil plant seed-producing crops and on the equivalence of beet seed and oil plant seed produced in Ukraine.

RaISe

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1 Status Update

At its meeting on Thursday 11 April 2024, the DSC made a decision to monitor [Proposal for a DECISION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL \(COM/2024/52\) amending Council Decision 2003/17/EC as regards the equivalence of field inspections carried out in the Republic of Moldova on fodder plant seed-producing crops and on the equivalence of fodder plant seed produced in the Republic of Moldova, and as regards the equivalence of field inspections carried out in Ukraine on beet seed-producing crops and oil plant seed-producing crops and on the equivalence of beet seed and oil plant seed produced in Ukraine.](#)

The proposal is progressing through the “ordinary legislative procedure” established under the Lisbon Treaty.

Having adopted its negotiating position in early April, the Parliament is scheduled to adopt its first reading position in plenary on 22 May 2025.

In correspondence, the Council stated that if the Parliament adopts its negotiating position at first reading without further amendments, the Council will approve the Parliament's stance, leading to publication in the EU Official Journal in the MEPs' agreed wording.

Therefore, no trilogues are expected to be held since both co-legislators agreed on the Parliament's position.

Following its adoption in plenary, the text will be sent to the Council for approval, first by the Permanent Representatives Committee (COREPER) and then by a subsequent Configuration for final adoption.

2 Rapporteur's Summary

The proposal, which aims to update Council Decision 2003/17/EC that grants equivalence to certain non-EU countries as regards field inspections and production of seed of certain species that are carried out in accordance with

Council Directives 66/401/EEC, 66/402/EEC, 2002/54/EC, 2002/55/EC and 2002/57/EC was welcomed by the Rapporteur to the Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development (AGRI), Veronika Vrecionová.

The Rapporteur's summary indicates that the legal basis for this act is Article 43(2) of the TFEU, and that the equivalence system plays a vital role in ensuring the continuous availability of high-quality seed within the Union.

Since 2018, the Republic of Moldova has been included in the list of non-EU countries recognised under this system. Ukraine was similarly added to the list in 2020 for seeds of various agricultural crops.

The countries requesting inclusion have seed laboratories accredited by the International Seed Testing Association, which reinforces confidence in the quality of both the inspections and the seeds produced, as well as their alignment with Union legislation.

Additionally, both Ukraine and Moldova have been accepted into the OECD Seed Schemes for the Varietal Certification of Seed in International Trade for the agricultural crops in question.

Furthermore, the Commission has reviewed Ukraine's and Moldova's relevant legal frameworks, conducted audits of their official control systems and seed certification processes, and concluded that they are compatible with EU legislation.

Consequently, the Rapporteur endorses the Commission's proposal and recommends its adoption, along with two technical amendments concerning inspections. These amendments are intended to ensure long-term compliance of products entering the single market with EU production standards.

As outlined in the Commission's proposal, all necessary conditions for granting equivalence to Ukraine and Moldova have been fulfilled. In light of the changing demands of the agricultural sector, the dynamics of international trade in high-

quality seed, and the significance of promoting global cooperation, the proposal is expected to support the trade of seeds that conform to Union regulations.

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