

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002893/25
to the Commission
Daniel Buda (PPE)
(15 July 2025)

Subject: Possibility of GAEC 7 and GAEC 8 requirements being dropped

In the context of the multiple crises affecting European agriculture — including geopolitical instability, climate change, economic pressures and increasing global demand for food — it is essential that European policies offer flexibility, pragmatism and real support for farmers.

In this respect, the temporary derogations applied in 2023 and 2024 to the GAEC 7 (crop rotation) and GAEC 8 (maintaining a minimum share of non-productive areas or features) requirements have proved to be effective, leading to a significant increase in agricultural production. According to the available data, these derogations made it possible to obtain approximately 6 million additional tonnes of agricultural produce in 2023 alone — a vital contribution in a period of food uncertainty and market volatility.

At the same time, many farmers' organisations and national authorities reported major difficulties in implementing these requirements, especially in regions where soil and weather conditions, land fragmentation or economic pressures make effective implementation impossible without substantial losses of income.

In view of the positive concrete impact of the derogations from GAEC 7 and GAEC 8 on food security, and the repeated requests from farmers and several Member States, is the Commission considering the possibility of dropping these requirements permanently, or at least revising them?

Submitted: 15.7.2025

Answer given by Mr Hansen on behalf of the European Commission
(11 September 2025)

The Commission proposed significant simplifications and flexibilities in 2024 as regards Good agricultural and environmental conditions (GAEC) to address the farmers' concerns taking into account the increasing challenges, the unpredictability of the weather and economic uncertainties.

Indeed, according to Regulation (EU) 2024/1468 of 14 May 2024 ⁽¹⁾, concerning GAEC 8, the obligation to devote a certain share of arable land to non-productive area has been removed from 2024 or 2025 depending on Member States' decisions and their possibilities to introduce a targeted eco-scheme for the maintenance and establishment of landscape features.

Concerning GAEC 7, an option to implement crop diversification including minimum requirements has been introduced to better accommodate specific situations in certain regions.

Despite this substantial flexibility and the potential to reduce farmers' administrative burden, the GAEC objectives have been preserved for this programming period, considering the need to maintain a level of protection as regards soil quality and biodiversity, as well as to ensure a minimum playing field among Member States.

In the same vein, the proposal for the future Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) has also retained such objectives related to the protection of soil health and biodiversity but streamlined rules allowing Member States to better adjust the conditions to their specific circumstances

Indeed, a set of protective practices — encompassing crop rotation or crop diversification and protection of landscape features — are part of the proposals for the post-2027 CAP ⁽²⁾, presented by the Commission on 16 July 2025. Such protective practices would be designed and included in the national Plans by Member States.

⁽¹⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/1468/oj/eng>.

⁽²⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TEXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52025PC0560&qid=1753798247771>.