

EN

E-004625/2025

Answer given by Mr Várhelyi
on behalf of the European Commission
(27.1.2026)

1. The Commission recognises the potential of plant biotechnology and has proposed a specific regulatory framework¹ for plants obtained by certain new genomic techniques (NGTs) to enable the use of NGTs and to enhance agricultural innovation, while ensuring safety and reducing burdens². Plants obtained with NGTs that could also occur naturally or by conventional breeding ('category 1 NGT plants') would undergo a verification procedure, based on clear criteria and conditions. Such plants would generally be treated like conventional plants and exempted from the requirements of the legislation for genetically modified organisms (GMO). For all other plants obtained by NGTs ('category 2 NGT plants'), the requirements of the current GMO legislation will apply with some adaptations. The European Parliament and the Council reached a provisional political agreement on the proposal on 3 December 2025³.

2. The Common Agricultural Policy Strategic Plan (CSP) for Malta 2023-2027 supports the transition towards a smart, sustainable, competitive, resilient and diversified agricultural sector, ensuring long-term food security. The CSP funds a wide range of interventions addressing the specific needs as identified by Malta. One of these interventions, covering the entire Maltese territory, provides a compensation payment to farmers to address the specific constraints they face in agricultural production. Through Horizon Europe the Commission also funds research and innovation in plant breeding and genetic resources⁴. Latest calls⁵ include actions to support the development of new breeding tools, to enhance the competitiveness of the organic breeding sector and to improve sustainability and resilience of cropping systems.

¹ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex:52023PC0411>.

² https://food.ec.europa.eu/document/download/f1142e86-43df-4791-9df2-563e696c59cf_en?filename=gmo_biotech_ngt_ia_report.pdf.

³ [https://oeil.europarl.europa.eu/oeil/en/procedure-file?reference=2023/0226\(COD\)](https://oeil.europarl.europa.eu/oeil/en/procedure-file?reference=2023/0226(COD)).

⁴ Under cluster 6 'Food, Bioeconomy, Natural Resources, Agriculture and Environment'.

⁵ Horizon Work Programme 2026-2027; https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/document/download/44106caa-ed7a-42bf-ae57-aaab91778602_en.