**Follow-up to the European Parliament non-legislative resolution on ensuring food security and long-term resilience of the EU agriculture**

1. **Rapporteur :** Marlene MORTLER (EPP / DE)
2. **Reference number:** 2022/2183(INI) / A9-0185/2023 / P9\_TA(2023)0238
3. **Date of adoption of the resolution:** 14 June 2023
4. **Competent Parliamentary Committee:** Committee onAgriculture (AGRI)
5. **Brief analysis/ assessment of the resolution and requests made in it:**

The resolution calls for an EU action plan to ensure food security inside and outside the EU considering the Russian invasion of Ukraine. It expresses concern about the impact that the current disruption in agricultural, fisheries and aquaculture processes have on global and EU food security and highlights the effects on prices and inflation. The resolution also repeatedly recalls the increasing pressure on the agricultural sector caused by climate change. It urges the Commission to respond to the resolution with a political plan to ensure food security at all levels.

1. **Response to requests and overview of action taken, or intended to be taken, by the Commission:**

This resolution refers to the current pressure on farmers, the cost-of-living crisis in the EU as well as the concerns about EU and global food security. **The Commission shares the opinion of the Parliament on the critical importance of food security** in the EU, in Ukraine and globally.

In 2021, the Commission adopted a contingency plan to ensure food supply and food security in times of crisis in the EU, under which the EU is now equipped with a dedicated European Food Security Crisis Preparedness and Response Mechanism. In March 2022, the Commission presented a Communication on ‘Safeguarding food security and reinforcing the resilience of food systems’[[1]](#footnote-2), which put forward a range of **short-term and medium-term actions to support producers and consumers in the EU** in light of rising food prices and input costs, such as energy and fertilisers, and **enhance global food security.** The EU and the Member States are delivering together on their comprehensive Team Europe Response to Global Food Insecurity, backed by a commitment of at least EUR 18 billion in grants (for the period 2021-2024). As much as EUR 7 billion in grants were disbursed by the EU and its Member States in 2022, including over EUR 1 billion of EU funds for humanitarian food and nutrition assistance. Africa and the Middle East, the regions most affected by the deterioration of food insecurity, are benefiting from around half of this support. An exceptional market support measure of EUR 500 million (up to EUR 1.2 billion including national top-ups) was adopted to support EU farmers affected by market disturbance due to increased input costs or trade restrictions. In November 2022, the Commission launched the Communication “Ensuring availability and affordability of fertilisers”, which included actions to support farmers to optimise fertiliser use. In January 2023, the Commission presented its analysis of the main drivers of food security. The analysis laid out the challenges that we face both internally and at global level, relating to different drivers of food security (food availability, food access, utilisation (diets) and stability). The analysis concludes that the transition to a sustainable food system should continue to guide the EU’s action with respect to food security in the long term. In 2023, the Commission has provided three financial support packages under the agricultural reserve, to assist those farmers who suffered the most from the impact of the war in Ukraine, as well as the consequences of extreme weather events. The ability to ensure food security in the long-term requires policy interventions that reinforce sustainability and resilience of the food system in view of the pressure on climate or natural resources. A consistent and comprehensive implementation of the Farm to Fork, Biodiversity and other relevant strategies, are expected to help the EU to secure a more sustainable, inclusive and resilient food system within a realistic timeline and with necessary support instruments.

The Common Agricultural Policy provides the necessary legal and financial framework to support farmers, including in the transition towards a sustainable and resilient farming model, which will help ensure food availability and food access for consumers at reasonable prices as enshrined in the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union.

Given that the affordability of food has become a growing concern for an increasing number of low-income households in the EU, the worsening of global food insecurity since 2019, and considering the continued pressure on Europe’s food systems, the Commission takes note of the **Parliament’s call for a comprehensive food security plan**. The Commission’s President von der Leyen announced a Strategic Dialogue on the future of agriculture in her 2023 State of the Union speech. As she said, food security, in harmony with nature, remains an essential task.

Following the State of the European Union speech by the President von der Leyen, the Commission will launch, in the beginning of 2024, a strategic dialogue on the future of agriculture in the EU.

**Challenges to EU food security (paragraphs 1-7)**

**Food security is currently not at stake in the EU**, since the continent is self-sufficient for many agricultural products and net exporter. However, the agri-food sector continues to be dependent on the import of key products and inputs, which may contribute to increase the vulnerabilities of the EU food supply chain and cause potential production challenges for farmers and risks driving up food prices. The need to reduce dependencies on fossil fuels of our agriculture and agri-food supply chain is clear from recent experience.

The affordability of food continues to be affected by high food inflation at a record level of 19.6% in March 2023, despite slowing down in some Member States. This high level of food inflation is mainly driven by price increases in the food processing and retail stages of the food production chain, after commodity prices have dropped below pre-war levels. Overall, food consumer prices are only to a limited extent driven by commodities prices. To improve affordability of food, Member States may implement **reduced rates of Value Added Tax** and encourage economic operators to contain retail prices. Member States can also draw from EU funds such as the **Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived** (FEAD), which supports EU countries' actions to provide food and/or basic material assistance to the most vulnerable. In general, a better functioning agrifood supply chain, with effective competition mechanisms allows price transmission to occur more swiftly.

The European Food Security Crisis Preparedness and Response Mechanism will carry out a thorough **mapping of risks and vulnerabilities of the EU food supply chain**, followed by recommendations and proposals for appropriate mitigation measures.

The Commission has also adopted a new, self-standing **Temporary Crisis Framework that also covers farmers, fertiliser producers and the fishery and aquaculture sector**. In March 2023, this state-aid framework was replaced by the Temporary Crisis and Transition Framework, aimed at promoting support measures in sectors that play a crucial role in the transition to a net-zero economy, in alignment with the Green Deal Industrial Plan. This allows to provide State aid to farmers and fishers affected by significant increases in input costs. Under the Temporary Crisis Framework and the Temporary Crisis and Transition Framework, the Commission approved 64 schemes dedicated to agriculture in 23 Member States between March 2022 and June 2023. The total approved budget for those schemes amounts to more than EUR 8.2 billion, which is about 1.8% of the total average value of the EU agricultural production over the period 2020-2022 (EUR 450 billion). Fertiliser prices and supplies for farmers will be monitored to ensure that the prospects for EU harvests are not jeopardised.

On 20 May 2022, the Commission adopted a **proposal amending Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013 as regards a specific measure to provide exceptional temporary support under the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD)** in response to the impact of Russia’s invasion of Ukraine.

The Commission also reinforced market transparency (i.e. monthly data on private stocks of essential commodities for food and feed; launch of a fertiliser market observatory) to have an even more timely and accurate overview of food security parameters in the EU.

**Sustainable and resilient agriculture (paragraphs 8-24)**

The Commission would like to recall that climate change, biodiversity loss and ecosystem collapse are among the biggest threats for food security. The foundations of our economy are threatened, and the costs of inaction hugely outweigh the costs related to the transition. **A transition as set out in the Farm to Fork and Biodiversity Strategies will safeguard food security in the long-term and avoid irreversible impacts globally**. The common agricultural policy (CAP) provides support to farmers to engage in sustainable practices needed to strengthen the resilience of agricultural ecosystems. Such CAP support needs to be used efficiently and effectively to further stimulate the transition through compensation and incentives to farmers, while keeping European agriculture economically viable. Economic viable farms will invest into good environmental measures, as well as in sustainable production methods. The proposed **certification framework for carbon removals** will also create an additional revenue stream for farmers in the context of promoting carbon farming practices.

In view of the need to address the food security concerns related to global food availability and affordability dimensions, by maintaining the Union food production potential, the Commission adopted implementing acts to **exceptionally and temporarily allow Member States to derogate from certain requirements for greening payments in 2022 and from certain elements of the new standards for Good Agricultural and Environmental Conditions in 2023**. This does not hinder longer-term objectives of the Green Deal, as outlined in the Farm to Fork and Biodiversity Strategies.

The Commission has prepared detailed impact assessments for all substantial legislative Green Deal and Farm to Fork initiatives in accordance with Better Regulation principles.

**Generational renewal (paragraphs 25-29)**

The European Parliament and Council Regulations on the CAP 2023-2027 provide considerable support to generational renewal in agriculture. Young and new farmers can bring new skills and energy, thereby ensuring sound management in the farming sector. They are often savvy users of innovation and investments in agriculture, providing a tangible contribution to sustainable farming and the vitality of rural areas in the EU. The CAP Strategic Plan Regulation obliges Member States to dedicate at least a minimum amount to this objective (representing 3% of their initial envelope for direct payments before any transfers) with leeway to decide how to use the funding: as complementary income support, start-up aid for new young farmers or investment support. The plans reflect the different approaches of Member States in providing support to stimulate generational renewal, based on specific needs. 22 Member States allocate more than the minimum required amount to support for young farmers.

**EU protein strategy (paragraphs 30-31)**

The European Commission is analysing how to harness the potential of EU plant protein production, reviewing in a holistic way the production and sourcing of proteins for the agri-food sector and in particular the EU import dependency. A report is expected to be published in 2024.

Several Member States are stepping up their efforts to reduce the EU’s import dependency in the protein crops and legumes sector, which are nitrogen-fixing crops and do not require N-fertilisers. Twelve Member States’ CAP Strategic Plans (CSPs) increase the financial contribution to coupled support for protein crops and legumes, whilst four introduce new coupled support for these crops. This results in an extension of supported hectares as from 2023. Besides, six CSPs also expect an annual increase in the supported areas between 2023 and 2027. On balance, the supported area is expected to grow from 4.2 million hectares in 2022 to 6.4 million in 2023 and to almost 7.1 million hectares in 2027.

**New cultivation methods (paragraphs 32-42)**

On 5 July 2023, the Commission has presented two legislative proposals in relation to plant varieties.

The first proposal will set a modernised legal framework for the production and marketing of plant reproductive material that will ensure that plant varieties placed on the EU market contribute to addressing sustainability challenges, for example varieties with better resistance to plant pests and to abiotic stresses. This proposal also includes provisions aiming to facilitate the availability of organic varieties, heterogeneous material, conservation, and locally adapted varieties. These provisions respond to the needs of organic production and low-input farming systems and contribute to the conservation and sustainable use of plant genetic resources.

The second proposal will establish a proportionate and simplified legal framework for plants produced with the use of new genomic techniques (NGTs) which will ensure that farmers can benefit from the potential of these techniques. NGTs offer the potential of developing improved plant varieties that are climate resilient, pest resistant, require less fertilisers and pesticides and can ensure higher yields, helping to cut the use and risk of chemical pesticides, and to reduce the EUs dependency on agricultural imports The proposal also includes specific transparency provisions, including labelling to preserve farmers’ freedom of choice and the integrity of organic production.

With respect to intellectual property issues, the Commission has committed to assess the impact that the patenting of plants and related licensing and transparency practices may have on innovation in plant breeding, on breeders’ access to genetic material and techniques and on availability of seeds to farmers.

**Artificial intelligence and precision crop management (paragraphs 43-45)**

The European Commission is supporting through Horizon 2020 and Horizon Europe research projects on artificial intelligence and precision crop management. The Horizon 2020 DEMETER project, which is about smart farming and Internet of Things won the .eu Web Awards. Many [EIP-AGRI (European Innovation Partnership for agricultural productivity and sustainability) projects](https://ec.europa.eu/eip/agriculture/en/digitising-agriculture/developing-digital-technologies/precision-farming-0.html#:~:text=Precision%20farming%20is%20a%20management%20approach%20that%20focuses,costs%2C%20including%20labour%20costs%2C%20and%20optimise%20process%20inputs.) focus on precision farming.

Seven out of the 28 CSPs plan to establish a dedicated eco-scheme to incentivize farmers to use precision farming technologies.

**Logistics (paragraphs 46-47)**

Both the **EU-Ukraine Solidarity Lanes** (since May 2022) and the **Black Sea Grain Initiative** (BSGI, since July 2022) were established to keep Ukrainian grain flowing to global markets, and to bring food and cereals prices down to pre-war levels.

Between May 2022 and August 2023, the Solidarity Lanes enabled Ukraine to export about 53 million tonnes of agricultural produce. They contributed to the **increase of the EU’s wheat exports to Least Developed Countries**. In 2022, those exports grew by around 50%, as compared to 2021 (4.5 million tonnes in total).

As part of the EU's response to the Russian aggression against Ukraine, the Commission launched the Solidarity Lanes Action Plan in May 2022 to establish alternative logistics routes via rail, road and inland waterways. The Solidarity Lanes are essential corridors for Ukraine's agricultural exports, as well as the export and import of other goods. To ensure their full functioning and keep increasing their capacity, in May 2023 the Commission’s President von der Leyen and President Zelenskyy of Ukraine set up a Joint Coordination Platform. The Solidarity Lanes have received considerable funding beyond the initial pledge of EUR 1 billion made in November 2022 by the Commission, the European Investment Bank (EIB), the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) and the World Bank. Additional EUR 890 million are available under the Connecting Europe Facility programme and potentially under the Cohesion Policy. Work will continue on further improving the capacity of Solidarity Lanes and removing the remaining bottlenecks, while fostering cooperation among EU Member States on the one hand, and Moldova and Ukraine on the other

As one of the world's largest grain producers, Ukraine normally supplied around 45 million tonnes of grain to the global market every year. However, in its brutal war against Ukraine, Russia deliberately targets agricultural production and exports, blocking safe passage to and from Ukrainian Black Sea ports and building up stocks in grain silos. This has boosted food insecurity globally and put at risk the livelihoods of millions of people who rely on those grains.

The **Black Sea Grain Initiative,** which has been unilaterally stopped by Russia unlocked the export of over 32.9 million tonnes of Ukrainian grain and other food products. Two thirds of the wheat and half of grain for human consumption have been exported to developing countries. This includes almost **625 000 tonnes of grain chartered by the World Food Programme (WFP)** in support of its humanitarian operations in Afghanistan, Ethiopia, Kenya, Sudan, Somalia and Yemen[[2]](#footnote-3). In 2022, Ukraine supplied more than half of the WFP’s global wheat grain procurement, as was the case in 2021.

**Pesticides (paragraphs 48-54)**

The Commission proposals related to the sustainable use of pesticides are part of a package of measures to reduce the environmental footprint of the EU’s food system.

Regarding the proposal for a Regulation on the Sustainable Use of Pesticides (SUR), the analysis shows that, while chemical pesticides can contribute to stabilising yields in the short-term, their use and risk need to be progressively and smartly reduced to avoid detrimental effects on the utilisation and stability dimension of food security in the mid- to long-term, preventing further environmental degradation and thus promoting resilient food systems.

The Commission is listening carefully to the concerns being expressed by Member States, the Members of the European Parliament and stakeholders, and is seeking compromises and workable solutions. The Commission tabled therefore a non-paper on the use of pesticides in sensitive areas and published its response to the request of the Council for additional data on the economic impact of sustainable use of plant protection products.

**Training and knowledge sharing (paragraph 55)**

The Commission agrees that knowledge and innovation have a key role to play in helping farmers and rural communities meet the challenges of today and tomorrow. Policy makers, farmers, researchers, advisors, associations and media need to step up their efforts to develop new knowledge and innovative solutions Moreover, a conducive environment across the EU for quicker innovation and better valorisation of existing knowledge to achieve the CAP objectives and deliver on international commitments needs to be fostered. EIP-AGRI is a unique policy framework to support interactive innovation projects at local and transnational level. It is essential to build stronger Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation Systems (AKIS) to boost initiation and development of innovation projects, to disseminate their results and to use them as widely as possible.

**Food supply chain (paragraphs 56-57)**

The [EU Directive 2019/633](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32019L0633) on unfair trading practices (UTPs) in the agricultural and food supply chain was adopted by the European Parliament and Council on 17 April 2019. All Member States have now transposed this directive into national law.

A large majority of the Member States went beyond the minimum protection level established by the directive. The designated authorities enforcing the national transposition laws meet regularly to discuss best practices and exchange on challenges they face in the enforcement. The first evaluation of the Directive at the EU level and a report on the main findings of that evaluation will be presented by 1 November 2025. This is part of a wider governance agenda, which aims to achieve a more efficient and fairer food supply chain, and includes [producer cooperation](https://agriculture.ec.europa.eu/common-agricultural-policy/agri-food-supply-chain/producer-and-interbranch-organisations_en) and measures to enhance [market transparency](https://agriculture.ec.europa.eu/common-agricultural-policy/agri-food-supply-chain/market-transparency_en).

**Women in rural areas (paragraphs 58-59)**

Women play a crucial role for the development and economic growth of EU rural communities. Yet such a role is too often, not recognised in a visible way, and rural women continue to face greater difficulties, compared to men, in accessing and maintaining stable employment and taking part in decision-making processes. Traditional gender roles often amplify gender inequalities.

The Commission is committed to improving the situation, notably through the [EU Rural Action Plan](https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/priorities-2019-2024/new-push-european-democracy/long-term-vision-rural-areas_en#eururalactionplan), by supporting the uptake of female entrepreneurship, women’s participation in decision-making and the provision of adequate services in rural areas. The CAP will continue supporting gender equality in rural areas through the CAP Strategic Plans particularly under Specific Objective 8 on, promoting employment, growth, gender equality, including the participation of women in farming, social inclusion and local development.

**Fertiliser Strategy (paragraphs 60-64)**

As mentioned in the follow-up to the Parliament’s resolution of 16 February 2023 on the Commission communication on “Ensuring the availability and affordability of fertilisers” (2022/2982 (RSP), several measures and initiatives have been put in place to promote sustainable nutrient management and to address soil degradation, as well as for the development of clean technologies and a net zero approach for EU industries to maintain a sustainable EU fertilisers’ production, the mitigation of short-term economic difficulties through financial support to farmers and the fertilisers industry, and the reduction of dependencies by ensuring more diverse access to the necessary raw materials. The Commission considers that the focus should rather be concentrated on delivering on these measures instead of proposing another strategy. The Commission has also established the Market Observatory for fertilisers which has already commenced its work to improve market transparency.

**Combatting food losses and waste (paragraphs 65-68)**

Reducing food loss and waste is an integral part of the Farm to Fork strategy’s Action Plan. On 5 July, the Commission has proposed legally binding national targets to reduce food waste across the EU defined against the 2020 baseline for national food waste levels set following the first EU-wide monitoring of food waste levels.

The Commission will also further integrate food loss and waste prevention in other EU policies, investigate and explore ways of preventing food losses at the production stage, and continue to mobilise all players by encouraging implementation of the [recommendations for action](https://food.ec.europa.eu/document/download/7143f94e-600f-4df5-acef-5b332e7e44ec_en?filename=fs_eu-actions_action_platform_key-rcmnd_en.pdf) of the EU Platform on Food Losses and Food Waste.

**Biofuel (paragraphs 69-70)**

No changes to the policy on biofuels have been envisioned so far in relation to food security. The [revised Renewable Energy Directive (EU) 2018/2001](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=uriserv:OJ.L_.2018.328.01.0082.01.ENG) (RED II) establishes a stable overarching policy for the promotion and use of energy from renewable sources in the EU. It also reinforces the sustainability criteria of bioenergy through different provisions, including the negative direct impact that the production of biofuels may have due to indirect land use change (ILUC). In the Biomethane Action Plan, published together with the REPowerEU plan, the Commission proposed to address the main barriers to increased sustainable biomethane production and use.

The Commission adopted in 2019 an accompanying [report on the status of production expansion of relevant food and feed crops worldwide](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?qid=1558977620744&uri=CELEX:52019DC0142), based on the best available scientific data. It provides information that EU countries can use jointly with the criteria set out in the delegated act to identify high ILUC-risk fuels and certify low ILUC-risk fuels.

In July 2021, the Commission proposed another revision of the directive, raising the 2030 target. On 30 March 2023, a provisional agreement was reached for a binding target of at least 42.5% by 2030 but aiming for 45%. Once this process is completed, the new legislation will be formally adopted and enter into force.

**Livestock (paragraph 71)**

Reducing the negative impact of livestock and maximising its positive impacts can be achieved through improved efficiency and exploiting synergies and extensification. As set out in the Farm-to-Fork strategy the goal is to foster low carbon, resource efficient agri-food system with improved animal welfare that provides a wide range of environmental goods and services (such as healthy soils, biodiversity, improved resource efficiency and an attractive landscape). The work programmes for the promotion of EU food products of 2022 and 2023 include a reference to the environmental and climate ambition of the CAP and mention the objective to encourage the shift to more plant-based diets.

**Natural resources (paragraphs 72-79)**

Over 60% of European soils are unhealthy and scientific evidence shows that this is getting even worse. The cost of soil degradation is estimated over EUR 50 billion per year due to the loss of essential services they provide. Desertification is drastically increasing and about 50% of the pollinator dependent crops face pollination deficits in Europe. Nearly 30% of our groundwater is under pressure. All this comes at a cost to farmers and affects the capacity to produce healthy and nutritious food. Reversing the trend is urgent to prevent and better respond to natural disasters and droughts, to achieve EU agreed goals on climate and biodiversity, to ensure food security and safety, and to protect the health of citizens. To address this, the green architecture of the CAP has been strengthened and the European Commission has put forward several Green Deal initiatives. The Commission has also supported the EU Mission “Soil Deal for Europe,” which aims at reversing these trends.

The CAP Strategic Plans address the following three specific objectives: to contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation, including by reducing greenhouse gas emissions and enhancing sequestration, as well as to promote sustainable energy; to foster sustainable development and efficient management of natural resources such as water, soil and air, including by reducing chemical dependency; to contribute to halting and reversing biodiversity loss, enhance ecosystem services and preserve habitats and landscapes.

As regards water management, the CAP provides a varied set of tools to improve water resilience in the face of a climate change and to adapt to a new reality of increased water scarcity and droughts. This includes support for agricultural practices to achieve a sustainable use of water.

Support is offered for irrigation; 16 Member States support investment in the improvement of existing irrigation infrastructure and/or on-farm irrigation installations to reduce losses and increase efficiency. 14 Member States also support investments in new irrigation installations and infrastructure, as well as reservoirs. Such investments must be in line with the objectives of the Water Framework Directive[[3]](#footnote-4) of achieving, or preserving, good status of water bodies, Support is also available for non-productive investments in natural water retention measures to increase water storage in the rural landscape (e.g. restoration of wetlands, peatlands and floodplains). Although not often used, Member States may also support switching to less water intensive crops and varieties. Several Member States also invest in the use of reclaimed (recycled) water for irrigation as an alternative water supply, to substitute surface and groundwater abstraction where water bodies are depleted, as well as in the use of rainwater for irrigation.

Moreover, on occasion of the State of the European Union speech, Commission’s President Von der Leyen announced new initiatives in relation to water resilience and 2040 climate target to address in particular the impacts of the extreme weather events. **CAP and future of farmers (paragraphs 80-86)**.

The latest agricultural census shows that the number of farms declined by 25% during the last ten years with a continued increase in the average size of the remaining farms. Structural change and concentration in farming is a general trend across the world, linked to increasing mechanisation, market pressure, reduced attraction of farming for new generations and demographic changes. There are also different trends across Member States, reflecting the heterogeneity of European agriculture and its historical development.

It is however important to note that despite this reduction in number of farms, the share of supported agricultural areas is expected to slightly rise reaching 89% of the EU farmland. The EU increased its agricultural production in the last ten years and exported record amounts of agri-food products. New data also show a strong increase in the number of organic farms and area cultivated organically, reaching 13 million hectares compared with 8.5 million ten years ago. Policy actions under the Green Deal will further support the expansion of organic farming in the EU.

Support from the CAP has cushioned the rapid decline in small scale farming, while allowing other farmers to transform their small farms into successful family businesses. It continues to play an important role from a social perspective in the European countryside, while also protecting traditional rural landscapes. To be noted is that several measures that could support generational renewal and young farmers fall within national competence: the Commission encourages Member States to take such complementary actions whenever possible. **Resilient and diverse ecosystems as a driver of food security (paragraphs 88-89)**

A **greater use of innovation to increase food system resilience, including nature-based solutions**, such as carbon farming, precision farming, agro-ecology, improved plant breeding through new genomic techniques, improved nutrient management, integrated pest management, biological alternatives to chemical pesticides, can **contribute to increasing yields sustainably**.

**International dimension of food security (paragraphs 90-109)**

The **EU has been at the forefront of global efforts** to address food security in the world and to alleviate the consequences of Russia’s war of aggression against Ukraine.

In June 2022 a **comprehensive Team Europe response** has been adopted, setting the framework for a coordinated approach by the EU and its Member States.

**Russia’s war of aggression against Ukraine put at risk global agricultural production and trade**, triggering an unprecedented peak in international food prices in the first half of 2022 and putting enormous stress on the most vulnerable populations globally. Russia has weaponised food by imposing an illegal blockade of Ukrainian seaports and limiting its own food and fertiliser exports.

With a Team Europe approach, the EU and Member States are delivering on their comprehensive response to global food insecurity, backed by a **commitment of at least EUR 18 billion in grants** (for the period 2021-2024).

As much as **EUR 7 billion in grants were disbursed by the EU and its Member States in 2022**. **Africa and the Middle East**, the regions most affected by the deterioration of food insecurity, are benefiting from around half of this support.

**The Commission is committed to taking all necessary measures** to ensure that the EU, as a net food exporter and top agri-food producer, contributes to global food security, particularly in Ukraine, North Africa and the Middle East, which largely rely on imports of cereals, as well as in Asia and sub-Saharan Africa. The EU is a lead provider of humanitarian and development assistance on food and food systems, including to Ukraine and countries located near the conflict area.

Food security in war-torn Ukraine is of great concern, particularly in besieged cities, with Russia seemingly deliberately targeting and destroying food storage locations.

The Commission is supporting Ukraine in developing and implementing a **short- and medium-term food security strategy** to ensure that inputs reach farms where possible, and that transportation and storage facilities are maintained to enable Ukraine to feed its citizens and reach its traditional export markets. Besides the establishment of Solidarity Lanes, in May 2023 a Regulation was adopted, which renewed the suspension of all customs duties, quotas and trade defence measures on Ukrainian exports to the EU until June 2024.

The Commission will ensure a **regular follow-up and analysis of food prices and food security** and will continue its engagement in international and multilateral bodies (the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the World Trade Organization (WTO), G7 and G20) to coordinate policies. In addition, the EU has been stepping up humanitarian assistance for the regions and population groups most affected by food insecurity.

In the 2021-27 programme for international cooperation, the EU will work on developing the sustainability of food systems with about 70 partner countries. Moreover, at the [Nutrition for Growth Summit in Tokyo](https://nutritionconnect.org/news-events/tokyo-nutrition-growth-summit-2020) in December 2021, the EU and its Member States committed to continue addressing malnutrition with a substantial pledge amounting to EUR 4.3 billion, **including at least EUR 2.5 billion from the EU for international cooperation** with a nutrition objective in the period 2021-2024.

Moreover, the EU will continue to monitor and enforce fair competition conditions in the single market and strongly advocate to **avoid export restrictions** and export bans on food as well as for well-functioning international markets and transparency.

As a follow-up to the 2021 UN Food Systems Summit, the Commission continued its engagement towards the Sustainable Development Goals Agenda and is member in eight coalitions that all aim at food system transformation and resilience.

1. COM(2022) 133 final [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. <https://www.un.org/en/black-sea-grain-initiative/data> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. Directive 2000/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2000 establishing a framework for Community action in the field of water policy [↑](#footnote-ref-4)