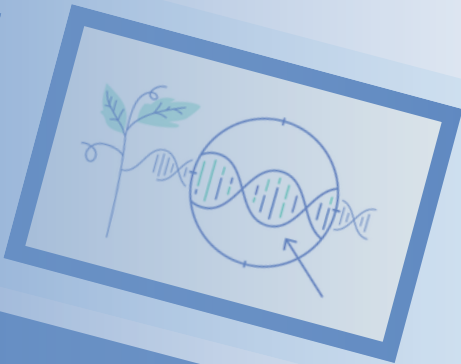




**EU'S COUNCIL COREPER
VOTES TO MOVE FORWARD
NGT LEGISLATIVE PROPOSAL**

NOW WHAT?



LET'S RECAP FOR A MOMENT...



The past 14th of March, the EU Council member state's representatives (COREPER) reached a qualified majority to move forward with the New Genomic Techniques (NGTs) legislative proposal.




In this meeting, the Council supported the main elements of the NGTs proposal which was published by the European Commission.

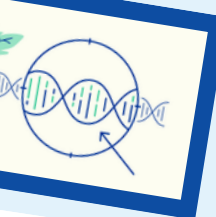
However, the Council suggested a number of changes to the text.

THE BASICS OF THE PROPOSAL

The proposal creates two distinct paths for NGT developed plants:



Category 1 NGT plants: Could occur naturally or through conventional breeding methods, and therefore considered as safe as conventionally bred plants. They would be exempt from the rules currently set out in the GMO legislation and would not be labelled; however, seeds produced through those techniques would have to be labelled.



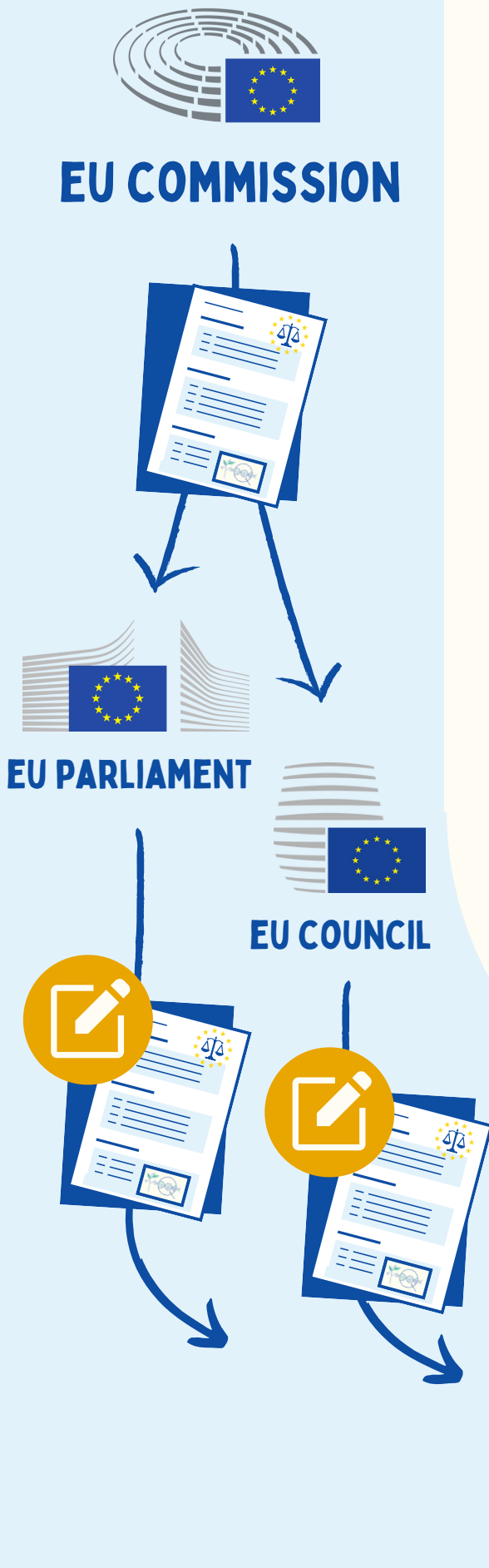
Category 2 NGT plants: All other NGT plants; most rules under GMO legislation would apply (including a risk assessment and authorisation before they are placed on the market); they would be labelled as such.

as well as, excluding the use of NGTs in organic production.

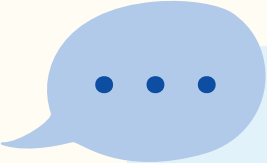
DIFFERING VIEWS BETWEEN THE EU BODIES

The EU Commission initially drafted the proposal, which was then reviewed separately by the European Parliament and the Council, each adopting its own amendments.

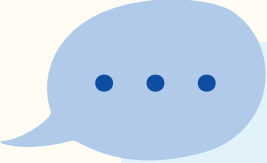
While the two institutions have introduced different amendments to the original proposal, these variations will now be the focus of discussions during the upcoming trilogues!



SO WHAT ARE SOME OF THE DISCUSSION POINTS AHEAD?

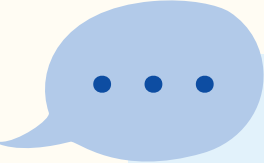


A key point of contention are the criteria to qualify as a Category 1 NGT, meaning, what should be considered a conventional-like NGT. **We insist the criteria should be as inclusive as conventional breeding; otherwise, the benefits of NGTs will be unnecessarily restricted.**



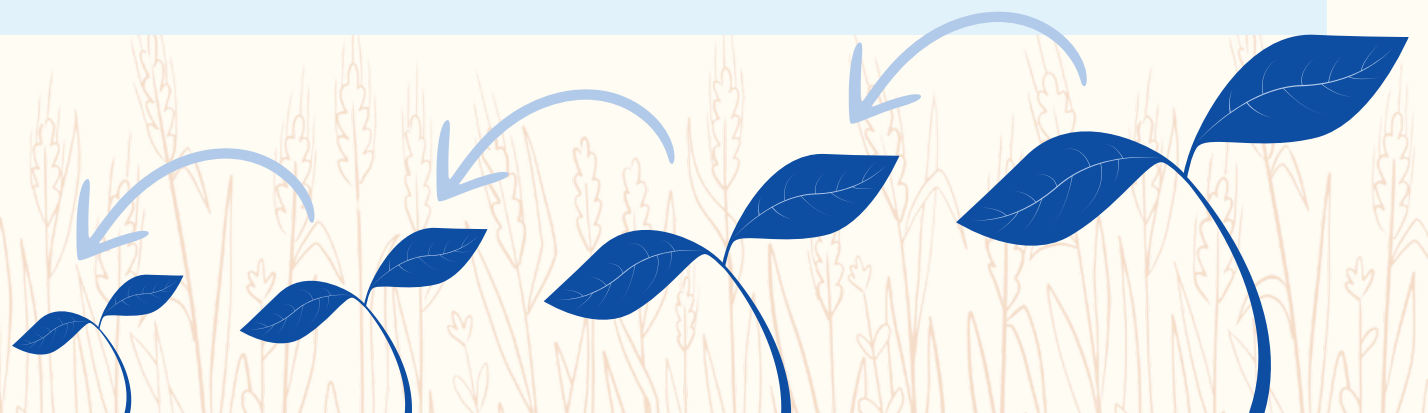
Moreover, the three EU institutions have proposed different limits on the number of genetic modifications allowed in Category 1 NGT plants: 20 modifications per whole genome (most restrictive); 20 modifications per monoploid genome (more flexibility for polyploid crops) or 3 modifications per protein-coding sequence (gene-based approach).

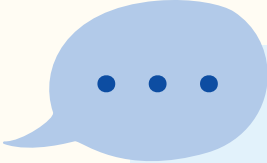
We support the gene-based approach, as it is the least restrictive and closest to conventional breeding. It allows for targeted improvements across multiple genes without imposing an arbitrary cap on the whole genome.



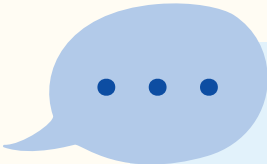
The status of Category 1 NGT progeny is another key point of discussion. Some propose that progeny should only retain Category 1 status if derived through conventional breeding methods, with any additional modifications using NGTs requiring a new verification process. In this case, modifications would be counted cumulatively.

We support the approach that grants Category 1 status to progeny as long as Annex I criteria are met, regardless of the breeding method used. Any additional modifications through NGTs that would require a new verification process, should only consider the additional modifications. This ensures that breeders can continue improving plant varieties while staying aligned with conventional breeding principles. Importantly, it prevents the creation of a regulatory glass ceiling that could limit the use of NGTs over time.

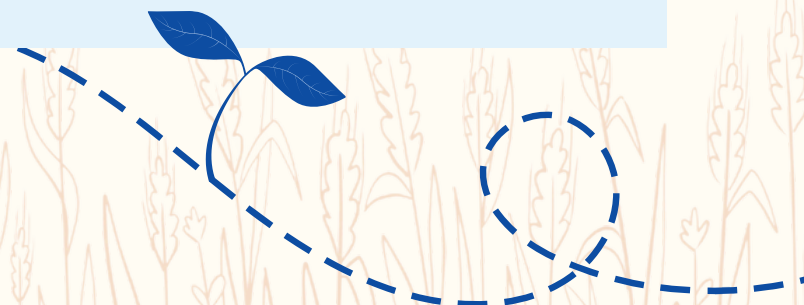




Not allowing the organic sector to use NGTs, although the three bodies are in agreement, they will have to discuss the details of this. We disagree with restricting NGTs in organic farming. **Farmers should have the freedom to choose whether to use NGT plants or not, based on their needs and preferences, especially as many organic farmers have expressed interest in adopting conventional-like NGT plants.**



Traceability and labelling are also points to be discussed. We oppose the proposition of full traceability and labelling along the value chain. **If NGTs are recognised as conventional-like, traceability requirements would be unjustified, costly, and burdensome, making their introduction unlikely.**



SO WHAT'S NEXT?

After the Council's agreement on March 14th, the Polish Presidency is now able to begin negotiations with the European Parliament and EU Commission on the final text of the regulation, during the trilogues. This is expected to start in April!



AND THEN...?

Once the an agreement on a common version of the text has been reached, the Council and Parliament will each need to vote separately on the revised version. If the votes are favourable, the legislative proposal will be adopted, and the European Commission will then start working on creating the secondary legislation - essentially, the Implementation Act for the new regulation.

Once the NGT proposal is passed, it will still be another two years before it is implemented!

**WE'LL KEEP YOU
UPDATED!**

