

**Question for written answer E-001518/2016  
to the Commission**  
Rule 130  
**Norbert Erdős (PPE)**

Subject: Application of the principle of equal treatment in the field of organic farming

I would ask the Commission to answer the following two questions precisely and in detail.

1. According to the Commission, if a Member State, on the basis of the relevant EU secondary legislation, has decided that the requirements applicable to 'good agricultural and environmental conditions' should include keeping the land clear of weeds, is it necessary for the legal consequences of non-compliance and the application of penalties to take into account the principle of equal treatment, which is applied in the case-law of the Court of Justice, is laid down in Article 20 of the European Union Charter of Fundamental Rights and is applicable in the Common Agricultural Policy, and which requires equal cases to be treated alike and different cases to be treated differently?
2. If the answer to the above question is affirmative, does the Commission believe that it follows that, when the agencies of the Member States which are responsible for making payments – applying the principle of equal treatment – apply penalties which may be instituted for non-compliance manifested in the form of the presence of weeds, they are required to discriminate between organic farmers and conventional farmers, the latter being permitted (and in some cases compelled) to use chemicals, and to penalise the organic farmers?