

**Question for written answer E-004017/2018
to the Commission**

Rule 130

Miguel Viegas (GUE/NGL)

Subject: Organic production and approval of plant protection products

In mainland Portugal, almost 240 000 hectares of land are being used for organic farming. The figures have been increasing steadily in every region in the country since 2009.

Organic farming favours the use of preventive measures, such as crop rotations, green manures and composting, to stop the advance of pests and diseases. However, when crops cannot be protected, plant protection products may be used once they have been properly approved and authorised for use. In such cases, producers must justify in their cultivation register why they need to use those substances.

One of the problems affecting the competitiveness and economic size of Portuguese organic farming is the lack of access to plant protection products, some of which have already been approved in Member States with similar climates to Portugal but have not been approved in Portugal itself.

What view does the Commission take of this situation in which, although they are competing on the same market, producers from different countries are working in unequal conditions? How will it mitigate or resolve this issue?