

**Question for written answer P-002177/2017
to the Commission**
Rule 130
Matt Carthy (GUE/NGL)

Subject: Subsidiarity and the National Reserve

Article 50(3) of the Direct Payments Regulation 1307/2013 states that additional educational criteria for qualification for young farmer payments are optional for Member States.

As the Commission is aware, Ireland is one of only ten Member States applying educational criteria, in the form of a 'Green Cert'.

In 2015 Irish applicants to the National Reserve could qualify for payments before completion of their course. This year, however, there have been reports that the Commission is requiring all applicants to have already completed their agricultural studies before applying for funds¹.

This means that thousands of farmers currently in the middle of their studies, or who are on waiting lists, will not be able to make an application. This is because of the failure of the Irish Government to put in place adequate resources for this self-adopted criterion.

Can the Commission please confirm or deny that it has imposed this criterion, namely that young farmers must already have completed their studies to avail of National Reserve funds?

In the affirmative, can the Commission explain how it asserts this power when the National Reserve is a national competence and the decision to put in place educational criteria is also a national competence?

¹ <http://www.independent.ie/business/farming/schemes/new-rule-limits-access-to-national-reserve-35526571.html>