

**Question for written answer E-001176/2022
to the Commission**

Rule 138

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Subject: Commission position regarding the requirement to leave 4% of farmland in the Member States uncultivated and the need to ensure sufficient farm produce should imports fall

In a recent public statement (16 March 2023), Romanian Minister for Agriculture Adrian Chesnoiu indicated that 'the European Union requires Romania and other Member States to leave 4% of farmland uncultivated as part of a programme to run from 1 January 2023, so as to conserve biodiversity and the landscape.'¹

What is the official position of the Commission regarding the requirement to leave 4% of farmland in the Member States uncultivated? What economic and environmental factors and supporting impact assessments are guiding the proposed Commission strategy referred to by the Romanian Minister for Agriculture?

Against the alarming background of escalating armed conflict in Ukraine and the related economic consequences, there is a risk of a decline in the substantial level of Ukrainian agricultural exports (maize and other cereals, sunflower oil and seeds, etc.²) to the EU Member States.

In view of this, what is the Commission's present thinking regarding the possibility of reducing the area of cultivated farmland in the Member States? Is this measure still necessary? How does the Commission plan to cover any shortfall in essential agricultural products that have to date been purchased from Ukraine, should the latter find itself compelled to end these exports or significantly reduce the volume thereof?

¹ <https://gov.ro/ro/media/video/briefing-de-presa-sustinut-de-ministrul-transporturilor-sorin-grindeanu-de-ministrul-finantelor-adrian-caciu-de-ministrul-agriculturii-adrian-chesnoiu-i-de-ministrul-muncii-marius-budai&page=3>

² <https://www.statista.com/statistics/876118/ukraine-agricultural-exports-o-the-eu/>