

Brussels, 12 November 2020

To

Sandra Gallina, Director-General of DG Health and Food Safety (SANTE)

RE: Access to documents on the Joint Working Group on ‘new genomic techniques’

Dear Director-General Gallina,

we hereby request, in accordance with Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001 regarding public access to documents and Regulation (EC) No 1367/2006 regarding access to environmental information, to obtain the following documents related to the "Joint Working Group of the Standing Committee on Plants, Animals, Food and Feed Section Genetically Modified Food and Feed and Environmental Risk, Regulatory Committee under Directive 2001/18/EC and Regulatory Committee under Directive 2009/41/EC on new genomic techniques":

- Agendas
- Participating organisations
- Minutes

We, the undersigned Members of the European Parliament, are appalled that no information about the existence or work of this Joint Working Group can be found on the Commission’s website. We would expect that the level of information given is at least the same as that of the Standing and Regulatory Committees themselves, which the Group depends on.

The Group’s deliberations are likely to be an important factor influencing the Commission’s study on ‘new genomic techniques’ requested by the Council. Based on this study, the Commission may decide to propose to exclude GMOs engineered with new GM techniques such as CRISPR/Cas from EU GMO law.

We expect the Commission to be fully transparent in its decision-making in this regard. Obscure decision-making behind closed doors totally goes against citizens’ expectations. This is particularly important since the European Court of Justice has ruled that the exclusion of GMOs developed with “new mutagenesis techniques” from the scope of EU GMO law would run counter to the EU’s precautionary principle.

In the light of the above, the documents described above clearly belong in the public domain.

We look forward to a positive consideration of our request.

Kind regards,

Martin HÄUSLING, Greens/EFA, DE
Benoît BITEAU, Greens/EFA, FR
Sven GIEGOLD, Greens/EFA, DE
Claude GRUFFAT, Greens/EFA, FR
Francisco GUERREIRO, Greens/EFA, PT
Katrin LANGENSIEPEN, Greens/EFA, DE
Tilly METZ, Greens/EFA, LUX
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Sarah WIENER, Greens/EFA, AT