



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

*Brussels, 14.6.2022  
C(2022) 4144 final*

*Dear President,*

*The Commission would like to thank the Camera Deputaților for its Opinion on the Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on the Contingency plan for ensuring food supply and food security in times of crisis {COM(2021) 689 final}. This Communication forms part of the Farm to Fork Strategy under the European Green Deal and aims to ensure a sufficient and varied supply of safe, nutritious, affordable and sustainable food to Union citizens at all times.*

*The Commission welcomes the general support to the Commission initiative and acknowledges the recommendations of the Camera Deputaților.*

*The Commission welcomes that the Camera Deputaților acknowledges the importance of the link between the health and the availability of nutritious food. The Commission works closely with Member States to foster a fair, healthy and environmentally friendly food system and facilitate a shift to a more plant-based diet with more fruit and vegetables and less red and processed meat.*

*This communication is coherent with other policy initiatives which give a central role to rural areas. Through sustainable production of food, preservation of biodiversity and the fight against climate change, they play a key role in achieving the European Union's objectives. With the Communication on the long-term vision for EU's rural areas {COM(2021)345 final}, the Commission has set out the vision towards stronger, connected, resilient and prosperous rural areas by 2040.*

*Mr Ion-Marcel CIOLACU  
President of the Camera Deputaților  
Palace of the Parliament  
Str. Izvor nr. 2-4, sector 5  
RO – 050563 BUCHAREST*

*In line with the objectives of the Farm to Fork Strategy and Europe's Beating Cancer Plan, the Commission launched in 2020 the Best ReMaP joint action<sup>1</sup>. This joint action includes several initiatives focusing on food reformulation, reducing aggressive marketing to children of foods high in fat, salt and sugar and development of procurement tools, which will help public institutions draft better and healthier catering contracts. These initiatives encompass the EUREMO project<sup>2</sup> on the creation of a food reformulation database, which will inform authorities, consumers and companies about the nutritional quality of food products sold in EU supermarkets in 16 EU countries.*

*In addition, the Commission is working on the reform of the Common Agricultural Policy with a view to responding to societal demands on food and health, including high quality, safe, and nutritious food produced in a sustainable way.*

*The setting up of the Expert Group on the European Food Security Crisis preparedness and response Mechanism (EFSCM) has provided for a permanent forum to exchange on and monitor the European Union's preparedness for food security threats. Recently established sub-groups will in particular work on (i) reviewing ways to improve the diversity of sources of supply between shorter and longer food supply chains, (ii) developing guidelines for crisis communication on food supply and food security and (iii) developing a dashboard for the monitoring of food supply and food security.*

*Moreover, a study on mapping the risks and vulnerabilities, including structural issues of the EU food supply chain and its critical infrastructures, as well as a study on the role of information technologies to improve market transparency, in particular in times of crisis, will be carried out in respectively 2023 and 2024. While the latter will contribute to stepping up the EU efforts to seizing the opportunities offered by the data-driven economy to identify food security risks in times of crisis, the study on mapping risks and vulnerabilities will cover the territorial dimensions, including that of the outermost regions, rural areas, remote or mountainous areas, islands and island states. Accordingly, the recommendations (2024) that will follow the study will address if needed the main results also for outermost regions.*

*With regard to the coordination between the EFSCM and other contingency plans, in particular those dealing with preparedness for natural disasters, the Commission confirms the close collaboration with the European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations as well as with other Commission services dealing with contingency planning. The Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) as well as the Single Market have proven extremely efficient so far in ensuring food supply and food security in the EU. Should harmonisation of policies become necessary in that context, it would certainly be raised as a relevant point in the aforementioned European Food Security Crisis preparedness and response Mechanism.*

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<sup>1</sup> [Best-ReMaP – Healthy Food for a Healthy Future \(bestremap.eu\)](https://bestremap.eu)

<sup>2</sup> [WP5: Food monitoring and reformulation – Best-ReMaP \(bestremap.eu\)](https://bestremap.eu)

*Through its participation in the Expert Group on the EFSCM with two representatives of its national authorities, Romania has the opportunity to actively contribute to shaping the outcome of this Mechanism and take up recommendations put forward in the Opinion transmitted.*

*Moreover, the Commission recognises the essential role played by producers to supply high quality products linked to their geographical origin and provides them with targeted support through the Common Agricultural Policy Strategic Plans and other forms of incentives. Most notably, the role of producer groups is reinforced in the Commission's proposal on strengthening the geographical indications (GI) system for agricultural products. In this proposal, the Commission clarifies the role they can play in addressing the societal concerns on sustainability, by encouraging producers to valorise existing sustainability practices in their GI products and facilitating the introduction, on a voluntary basis, of additional sustainability standards. At the same time, the GI producer groups are invested with more powers to develop, manage and enforce the protection of their GIs against unfair practices and counterfeiting, including with regards to sales of goods on online platforms.*

*Access to knowledge and innovation can help European farmers, foresters and rural communities to meet current and future challenges including to ensure consumers' continued access to high quality food. The European Commission supports EU farmers to strengthen knowledge flows and innovation ecosystems from different funding instruments, notably the CAP and Horizon programmes. Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation Systems (AKIS) are encouraged under CAP strategic plans, with activities supporting the establishment of farm advisors networks, trainings and capacity building for farmers. Under the EIP-AGRI partnership, knowledge sharing is ensured via Focus Groups and dedicated workshops in addition to different communication material such as factsheets, newsletters, and press releases. Under Horizon Europe programmes, several research and innovation topics call for multi-actor approach projects, where farmers take a central role in research projects to ensure knowledge uptake. These projects deliver the publication 'Practice Abstract' which is knowledge developed via research for practice. Finally, Horizon Thematic Networks are projects on a specific theme bringing people from science and practice together to ensure knowledge sharing for practical outputs.*

*On the subject of education, the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (Article 165) makes it clear that supporting the development of quality education must fully respect 'the responsibility of the Member States for the content of teaching and the organisation of education systems and their cultural and linguistic diversity'. To support Member States in their own efforts and encourage the development of sustainability competences, the Commission published GreenComp, the European Sustainability Competence Framework, which sets out the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed by learners of all ages to live, work and act in a sustainable manner, including in relation to food.*

*The Commission hopes that the clarifications provided in this reply address the points raised by the Camera Deputaților and looks forward to continuing the political dialogue in the future.*

*Yours faithfully,*

*Maroš Šefčovič  
Vice-President*

*Janusz Wojciechowski  
Member of the Commission*