Veille citoyenne d'information sur les OGM et les semences

GMOs, seeds, pesticides, transparency… European law under attack!

Par

Publié le 22/01/2026, modifié le 09/03/2026

In less than two weeks, between 10 and 19 December, 2025 ended with a rather unprecedented offensive by the European Union authorities against several European texts protecting the environment, health and citizens' rights. GMOs, pesticides, seeds, corporate responsibility... everything is being called into question in order to "*simplify*" life for businesses in Europe. Faced with this frenetic pace, *Inf'OGM* continues its watchdog work, which is essential for public debate, the proper functioning of democracy and the protection of life, by providing accurate, rigorous and reliable information.

At a time when the search for and extraction of raw materials are taking precedence over all other considerations, greenhouse gas emissions are set to increase. Most of the "*solutions*" proposed are high-tech, energy-intensive and capital-intensive. In agriculture and the living world, these solutions are being sought in biotechnology, in line with the desire to artificialise and appropriate living organisms so that patents held by companies ultimately apply to all terrestrial and marine biodiversity.

The end of 2025 was particularly trying for all those who are mobilising, either from a journalistic point of view or through their commitment to issues related to the environment, health, corporate responsibility, food sovereignty, transparency and the rights of farmers and consumers, or even the transparency of European decisions. Between 10 and 19 December 2025, the European legislator continued or began the revision of no less than seven legislative texts aimed at reducing the regulation of GM plants, GM microorganisms and pesticides, reducing the rights of farmers and further reducing corporate responsibility. An eighth text on "*innovation*" has already been announced for 2026.

In response to this, *Inf'OGM* provides as much information as possible on the objectives pursued by the European Commission and those who whisper in its ear: to be able to market GMOs, pesticides and medicines without hindrance, with as little risk assessment, information for citizens and accountability as possible, and with no time limit on the authorisations issued.

Chronology of an "*urgent*" end-of-year timetable

"*Seeds*" file

On 10 December, the Council of the European Union entered into trilogue with the European Commission and the European Parliament to discuss a possible future "*seeds*" regulation which, if adopted, would strip farmers of their rights to select and produce their own seeds and accelerate the erosion of cultivated biodiversity[1].

"*Pharma*" file

On 11 December, representatives of the Commission, Parliament and Council agreed on a proposal for a directive, known as *the* "*Pharma*" directive, claiming *to* "*improve the competitiveness* " of the EU sector by reducing and simplifying the regulatory framework for new medicines, including gene therapies, which modify the genome of certain human somatic cells[2].

Corporate "*responsibility*" file

On 16 December, MEPs adopted the Omnibus 1 Directive, proposed by the Commission in February 2025. This directive drastically reduces the obligations on companies to be vigilant and responsible for the environmental, health and social impacts of their activities and those of their subcontractors. Similarly, the obligation to produce reports demonstrating the sustainability of their activities and their "*ecological transition*" is consequently reduced[3].

"*Biotechnology*" and "*Innovation*" files

On 16 December, the European Commission proposed the "*Biotech Act*" regulation[4], which aims to simplify European rules governing research, production and use of biotechnology in order to free multinationals from rules deemed too restrictive. An additional legislative proposal, known as " *Innovation*", has already been announced by the Commission for 2026, which will be developed on the same basis of "*simplification*"[5].

Pesticides file

Also on 16 December, the European Commission proposed the "*Omnibus X*" directive on food. This aims to make marketing authorisations for a large number of pesticides unlimited in time. It

also stipulates that in the event of a future ban on an active substance, the period during which a company may continue to market it shall be 18 months... extendable to 36 months if it is considered that no other reasonable means of control are available to replace products containing the banned substance[6].

GMO micro-organisms file

The same "*Omnibus X"* directive also aims to legalise the marketing of food products that still contain traces of genetically modified micro-organism DNA, or even complete micro-organisms (declared non-viable)[7].

On the same day, 16 December, the Commission proposed a directive to ease restrictions on the release into the environment of genetically modified yeasts, bacteria and even viruses, with the rules for such releases to be decided by the European Commission alone[8].

GMO plants

On 19 December, the Council of the European Union reached a qualified majority to deregulate a large number of GMOs so that they can be marketed without assessment of the risks to health, the environment and agricultural systems, without labelling, without traceability and without environmental monitoring[9]. The European Parliament is now due to vote on this text in early 2026.

A "*poorly managed*" process

The European Commission's haste meant that most of the texts concerned were not translated into national languages. In addition, the European Union Ombudsman denounced cases of administrative mismanagement due to this haste. At the end of November 2025, she highlighted procedural shortcomings, such as the lack of comprehensive justification for the urgency of making legislative proposals to citizens "*and documenting the reasons why it deviated from its internal rules on law-making*". Other problems were highlighted, such as the publication of documents supporting a proposed directive or regulation "*after*" its adoption, or the lack of clear internal records of an assessment of consistency with climate action.

Trilogues: legislative discussions that are impossible to follow

All the legislative proposals mentioned above go before the Council of the European Union and the Parliament. These two bodies provide, at different levels, a certain degree of transparency about their work.
The Parliament provides access to texts, amendments tabled, votes by individual MEPs, the agendas of dedicated committees, the minutes of many of its meetings, etc.
The Council of the European Union, for its part, publishes the texts that have been worked on or even adopted, the agendas of meetings, and the discussions and positions defended by Member States can be followed when ministers meet. However, when it comes to meetings involving the permanent representatives of Member States or members of the administration, the positions defended and any votes are less accessible.

This changes completely when the discussion phase between the institutions begins. This three-way discussion phase, known as a trilogue, has no set procedure and there is a complete lack of transparency. While the representatives of each institution attending the meeting may be known, the dates of the meetings, agendas, content of the positions defended and negotiated, and minutes

of the meetings are simply not made public. Only the texts finally adopted by the negotiators end up being made public due to the transparency of the Parliament or, to a lesser extent, the Council.

The role of citizen watchdog of critical information

For citizens and stakeholders who want to follow developments, make their voices heard and/or take action, accurate, rigorous and reliable information is one of the keys to entering the debate. *Inf'OGM*, a citizen watchdog group for critical information on GMOs since 1999, was created for this purpose.

Today, we find ourselves in the middle of a minefield where only the Commission and certain insiders wish to hold the map and the language to read it. Working for transparency and establishing information that is as factual and rigorous as possible has therefore never seemed so relevant and important from a democratic point of view. It is becoming almost an act of resistance in the face of a public authority that is struggling not to give in to the demands of multinationals. This role has already become increasingly difficult to fulfil in recent years, since the debate has been deliberately complicated by the use of erroneous, if not misleading, semantics10. Today, we must also contend with the frenetic pace set by the European Commission, which, while reflecting a certain nervousness on the part of those in charge, nevertheless requires us to keep up with this pace in our journalistic work. At the start of 2026, *Inf'OGM* is strengthened in its determination and conviction that transparency and rigour in information are and will remain the basis for public debate, which is more necessary than ever.

- + European Parliament, Legislative Observatory, "Production and marketing of plant reproductive material in the Union".
- + European Parliament, Legislative Observatory, "Legislative procedure 2023/0132(COD) – Medicinal products for human use".
- + European Parliament, Legislative Observatory, "Legislative procedure 2025/0045(COD) – Corporate sustainability reporting and due diligence requirements".
- + European Parliament, Legislative Observatory, "Legislative procedure 2025/0406(COD) – European Biotech Act".
- + European Commission, "European Innovation Act".
- + European Parliament, Legislative Observatory, "Legislative procedure 2025/0410(COD) – Simplification and strengthening of food and feed safety requirements".
- + *Ibid.*
- + European Parliament, Legislative Observatory, "Legislative procedure 2025/0405(COD) – Placing on the market of genetically modified micro-organisms and the processing of organs".
- + European Parliament, Legislative Observatory, "Legislative procedure 2023/0226(COD) – Plants obtained by certain new genomic techniques and their food and feed".
- + Eric Meunier, series of articles on "Semantics", *Inf'OGM*, 2025.

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