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Ensuring food security and the long-term resilience of EU agriculture

European Parliament resolution of 14 June 2023 on ensuring food security and long-term resilience of the EU agriculture (2022/2183(INI))

(C/2024/483)

The European Parliament,

- having regard to Article 39 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU), which lists assuring the availability of supplies, stabilising markets and ensuring that supplies reach consumers at reasonable prices as objectives of the common agricultural policy,
- having regard to its resolution of 15 January 2020 on the European Green Deal ⁽¹⁾,
- having regard to Article 25 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and to Article 11 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, which recognise the right to food as part of the right to an adequate standard of living,
- having regard to the Commission communication of 3 October 2012 entitled ‘The EU approach to resilience: learning from food security crises’ (COM(2012)0586),
- having regard to the Commission communication of 12 November 2021 entitled ‘Contingency plan for ensuring food supply and food security in times of crisis’ (COM(2021)0689),
- having regard to the Commission communication of 23 March 2022 on safeguarding food security and reinforcing the resilience of food systems (COM(2022)0133),
- having regard to its resolution of 24 March 2022 on the need for an urgent EU action plan to ensure food security inside and outside the EU in light of the Russian invasion of Ukraine ⁽²⁾,
- having regard to its resolution of 6 July 2022 on addressing food security in developing countries ⁽³⁾,
- having regard to Directive (EU) 2022/2557 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 December 2022 on the resilience of critical entities and repealing Council Directive 2008/114/EC ⁽⁴⁾, which adds food production, processing and distribution to the list of sectors covered,
- having regard to the State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World Reports, to the Global Report on Food Crises and the Global Nutrition Report, including the 2021 edition thereof, to the Right to Food Guidelines of the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), to the Voluntary Guidelines on Food Systems and Nutrition of the FAO Committee on World Food Security, to the FAO’s ‘10 Elements of Agroecology –Guiding the Transition to Sustainable Food and Agricultural Systems’ and to the 2014 Framework for Action for Food Security and Nutrition in Protracted Crises,
- having regard to the UN General Assembly resolution of 25 September 2015 entitled ‘Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development’,
- having regard to the UN General Assembly resolution of 1 April 2016 entitled ‘United Nations Decade of Action on Nutrition (2016-2025)’, which aims to trigger intensified action to end hunger and eradicate malnutrition worldwide and ensure universal access to healthier and more sustainable diets for all people, wherever they are and wherever they live,
- having regard to the Voluntary Guidelines of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security of 2012 and to the CFS Principles for Responsible Investment in Agriculture and Food Systems of 2015,

⁽¹⁾ OJ C 270, 7.7.2021, p. 2.

⁽²⁾ OJ C 361, 20.9.2022, p. 2.

⁽³⁾ OJ C 47, 7.2.2023, p. 149.

⁽⁴⁾ OJ L 333, 27.12.2022, p. 164.

- having regard to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and to how closely linked and integrated they are, in particular SDG 1 (end poverty in all its forms), and SDG 2 (end hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture),
 - having regard to the UN Report of 30 December 2021 entitled ‘Seeds, right to life and farmers’ rights’ (A/HRC/49/43) by the Special Rapporteur on the right to food,
 - having regard to the Commission communication of 9 November 2022 entitled ‘Ensuring availability and affordability of fertilisers’ (COM(2022)0590),
 - having regard to the report from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament on the development of plant proteins in the European Union of 22 November 2018 (COM(2018)0757),
 - having regard to its resolution of 13 December 2022 on a long-term vision for the EU’s rural areas –Towards stronger, connected, resilient and prosperous rural areas by 2040 ⁽⁵⁾,
 - having regard to the opinion of the European Economic and Social Committee,
 - having regard to the opinion of the Committee of the Regions,
 - having regard to Rules 54 of its Rules of Procedure,
 - having regard to the opinion of the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety and the Committee on Development,
 - having regard to the own initiative report of the Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development (A9-0185/2023),
- A. whereas on 24 February 2022 the Russian Federation illegally invaded Ukraine, which has had disastrous consequences, including a serious threat to global food security, with the most vulnerable countries being most at risk; whereas Russia’s full-scale invasion of Ukraine has seriously aggravated an already difficult and challenging situation in the agri-food sector, which is still recovering from the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic and is suffering from the ongoing climate crisis and rising energy and fertiliser prices;
- B. whereas the effects of the crisis caused by Russian aggression against Ukraine have put food security and the resilience of the global food system at the centre of the political agenda; whereas European food production must therefore be considered a strategic sector and be placed on an equal footing with energy security, defence and the fight against climate change at the EU and international levels;
- C. whereas, according to the FAO, at the beginning of 2022 Ukraine and Russia accounted for nearly 30 % of global wheat and maize exports, while Russia was the world’s top exporter of fertilisers; whereas more than 30 countries, mainly in Africa, the Middle East and Central Asia, depend on Ukraine and Russia for over 30 % of their wheat import needs; whereas Russia’s invasion of Ukraine is exacerbating this global food insecurity and could lead to a further 8 to 13 million people suffering food insecurity, according to FAO simulations;
- D. whereas the common agricultural policy (CAP) has made a positive contribution to strengthening the CAP’s role of European agriculture in the 60 years it has been in place; whereas it should continue to do so in future with budgetary support that is sufficient and extensive enough to guarantee food security and supply in Europe;
- E. whereas the war against Ukraine and the significant increases in prices for inputs such as fertiliser, energy and feed resulting from the conflict, together with food speculation, are leading to significant cumulative distortions and tensions on global agricultural, fisheries and aquaculture markets, in particular for cereals, vegetable oil and livestock; whereas food production and access to food must not be further endangered and must under no circumstances be used as a geopolitical weapon, as this will have an impact on economies worldwide, especially on citizens and the most vulnerable in society;
- F. whereas the first food riots that broke out in Arab countries in 2008 demonstrated how effectively food can be used as a weapon to cause geopolitical instability;

⁽⁵⁾ OJ C 177, 17.5.2023, p. 35.

- G. whereas not only consumer food prices but also household incomes are crucial drivers of food security; whereas, when faced with unprecedentedly high food prices, lower-income households, which spend a large share of their budget on food, can be obliged to choose more unhealthy and less diverse foods, making them particularly vulnerable to the risk of non-communicable diseases linked to poor diets;
- H. whereas although food prices are high, they are not offsetting production costs for EU farmers and agri-cooperatives; whereas their production costs have been increasing exponentially over the past year due to soaring energy and packaging prices as well as availability and price issues with fertilisers and machinery;
- I. whereas according to the International Grains Council, Russia and Ukraine accounted for 8,6 % of global grain production, excluding rice, and 24 % of exports in the 2021 harvest year; whereas as a result of the war being waged by Russia against Ukraine, disruptions and bottlenecks in critical infrastructure, in particular transport and storage facilities for agricultural products, are restricting the movement of food, feed and other agricultural products, in particular cereals and oilseeds from the Black Sea; whereas prices on global agricultural markets had already risen prior to the Russian invasion of Ukraine, partly due to climate impacts and the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic;
- J. whereas transport and storage infrastructures are essential for ensuring efficient and secure trade flows, supplies and market stability; whereas any disruption to these may affect previously reasonable consumer price levels; whereas food security goes beyond agriculture and food production and has impacts on several areas, not only on primary producers and consumers, but also on the wider economy, trade, development and humanitarian efforts, and on social and regional cohesion;
- K. whereas the Commission should use all possible means to ensure that the European single market functions well; whereas the Commission should step up its efforts to address all agri-food related barriers in the single market, including the unblocking of transport bottlenecks;
- L. whereas according to the FAO, the concept of food security is not limited to food production, but also includes the dimensions of availability, accessibility and stability, and also encompasses the internationally recognised human right to food and affordable access to healthy and nutritious diets for all; whereas no human right is so frequently breached;
- M. whereas healthy and balanced nutrition makes a positive difference to people's lives and enables the equitable and sustainable development of society; whereas consumers are increasingly opting for healthy and safe food choices, sustainable products, transparency in the supply chain, better traceability of all production and distribution processes on the basis of their right to more information on the origin and production methods of the foodstuffs they consume;
- N. whereas access to safe and healthy food for all is an internationally recognised right; whereas it is essential for society to focus on food availability and affordability for all, given their social, economic, environmental implications and consequences as well their effects on human health;
- O. whereas the right to food is a fundamental human right; whereas Sustainable Development Goal 2 aims to eradicate hunger by 2030; whereas the EU should champion the right to adequate food as a priority for food systems in order to achieve food security and improve nutrition;
- P. whereas according to the UN Report entitled 'Seeds, right to life and farmers' rights' by the Special Rapporteur on the right to food, the right to food is inherently tied to farmers' seed systems and their indivisible right to freely save, use, exchange and sell farm-saved seeds; whereas Team Europe should support programmes that take the needs of farmers' seed systems or informal seed systems into account and support seed banks or seed libraries that allow farmers and gardeners to collect, conserve and share native seeds, landraces and varieties;
- Q. whereas the food crisis respects no borders and no country can overcome it alone; whereas there is an urgent need for joint action and solidarity;

- R. whereas as a result of the global supply crisis, the FAO estimates that international food and feed prices have risen to levels unprecedented since the FAO began carrying out price analyses and above their already high levels, even for products for which no price increase was justified; whereas food price inflation reached 17,26 % in October 2022; whereas many people in the world are at risk of food shortages, hunger and food becoming unaffordable; whereas in order to identify, prevent and eliminate food speculation that contributes to food price volatility, operators along the food supply chain need to be more transparent about their share of value added, which would increase overall market transparency;
- S. whereas global food insecurity is not primarily caused by supply shortages but by conflicts, unequal food distribution, unaffordable food and global supply chain disruptions; whereas increasing food prices mostly affect families on low incomes, who spend the largest proportion of their income on food; whereas it is essential to analyse the factors driving up prices for agricultural inputs and the effect this has on the increase in food prices;
- T. whereas one in three people worldwide still do not have access to adequate, sufficient food and healthy nutrition; whereas 2,3 billion people in the world were moderately or severely food insecure in 2021; whereas many of these people are employed in agriculture; whereas according to the WFP, acute food insecurity affected a record 349 million people in 2022;
- U. whereas hunger and food insecurity are increasing across the world and many countries are significantly off track to meet the zero hunger target by 2030; whereas malnutrition is a lifelong burden for individuals and societies, as it prevents children from reaching their full potential and therefore curtails human and national economic development;
- V. whereas the 1994 Marrakech Agreement and in particular the World Trade Organization (WTO) Agreement on Agriculture have contributed to agricultural regions specialising in the production of specific commodity crops, thereby creating path dependencies in production systems; whereas this situation is not resilient to crises, in particular since it leaves food-importing countries vulnerable to price shocks;
- W. whereas nature and biodiversity interact with agriculture, food and nutrition in a number of key areas by providing a variety of plants and animals from domesticated and wild sources;
- X. whereas crop biodiversity is important as it allows individual farmers to adapt their agricultural planning to climate conditions and makes food systems naturally more resilient to climate change, pests and pathogens; whereas, at the same time, this nature-based approach contributes to enhancing biodiversity; whereas a number of innovative projects have been set up by some non-EU countries, such as the Great Green Wall initiative in Africa, which promotes agro-ecological projects; whereas EU support for sustainable food systems is one of the priorities of the multiannual indicative programmes adopted with around 70 partner countries under the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI) — Global Europe instrument for 2021-2027 period;
- Y. whereas the availability of food varies due to economic shocks, climate, seasonality and disruptions; whereas the EU has to invest in the resilience of the agri-food sector and achieve a transition to more sustainable agriculture, which will strengthen long-term food security and could provide alternative sources of income for farmers; whereas efforts to combat global warming are required to ensure that agriculture is resilient and sustainable in the long term;
- Z. whereas 63 % of people on low incomes worldwide are employed in agriculture and the overwhelming majority of them work on small and medium-sized farms whose economic sustainability is currently threatened;
- AA. whereas according to World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) assessments, competition for the use of agricultural land and forests is increasing at the same pace as the growth in the world's human population, which it is estimated will increase from 8 billion today to 9,5 billion by 2050;
- AB. whereas the present and long-term food security of the European Union is directly linked to the ambitions of the Farm to Fork Strategy and the Biodiversity Strategy; whereas the Farm to Fork Strategy outlined several important initiatives, including an EU contingency plan for ensuring the food supply and food security in times of crisis;

- AC. whereas ambitions of the Green Deal could make the EU food system fairer, healthier and more environmentally-friendly, as EU and global food security depends on resilient and sustainable food systems in the short and long term; whereas the cumulative effect of implementing Green Deal-related legislation must be to preserve EU food production capacity, involve a smooth transition as regards both timing and requirements and must not increase dependence on imports from third countries, all of which could jeopardise food security in the EU; whereas it is vital to earmark a sufficient public funding for the crop and livestock sectors so as to protect them against adverse effects and prevent a decline in EU food production;
- AD. whereas the implementation of the Green Deal should ensure a fair transition that guarantees adequate protection for farmers, especially small and medium-sized farmers, and sufficient amounts of safe and affordable farm products for consumers, in line with the EU's long-term resilience and sustainability goals; whereas a sustainable livelihood for primary producers, whose income is still lagging behind, is central to the sustainable management of the current crises on the agricultural markets and to the lasting achievement of Green Deal targets;
- AE. whereas almost 34 % of European farmers were 65 or older in 2016; whereas the fact that many farmers will retire in the near future is a matter of great concern in a number of Member States; whereas generational renewal is one of the biggest challenges for the continued existence of a resilient agricultural sector and resilient food systems in the EU; whereas, while being an EU priority, the efforts made through the CAP have so far proved insufficient to turn the tide and therefore a broader set of policy tools will be necessary;
- AF. whereas young farmers in particular are innovative, especially in the use of new technologies; whereas, if properly remunerated, motivated and empowered, they are willing to make investments that may increase the agricultural sustainability, production capacity and competitiveness; whereas connectivity to high-capacity broadband networks is crucial for the modernisation of farms, increasing productivity and improving efficiency; whereas incentives are needed to promote IT training for farmers;
- AG. whereas the sharp and significant rise in global fertiliser and energy prices together with the sharp rise in other input costs is creating difficulties for farmers and threatening future crop production and thus food security and affordability; whereas in September 2022 the nitrogen fertiliser prices increased by 149 % compared to prices on the EU fertiliser market in the previous year; whereas in light of the current input and energy crisis the Commission must pay close attention to the economic situation of European farmers;
- AH. whereas current geopolitical challenges prove that food security is not a permanent achievement, that European food production should be considered a strategic sector and should be preserved and strengthened in this respect; whereas the correct functioning of the European single market is a precondition for ensuring food security; whereas all tariff and non-tariff barriers in the agri-food sector should be reviewed; whereas stronger, vibrant, resilient and prosperous rural areas and communities are key for Europe's food security and autonomy and the prosperity of the European Union;
- AI. whereas agriculture is of great importance to the economy of the EU's outermost regions, which often face a particularly fragile food security situation; whereas due to the nature of food security, the costs of reacting after the fact are higher than for intervening earlier on;
- AJ. whereas if the EU wants to avert destabilisation, food poverty, famine, social and political unrest in other countries, the Union has to develop a vision for ensuring food and nutrition security in the EU and contributing to food security at the international level;
- AK. whereas an estimated 20 % of all food produced is lost or wasted; whereas, more than 36 million people cannot afford a proper meal every other day; whereas the neediest population is increasing as a result of the current economic crisis;
- AL. whereas food companies involved in logistics and wholesale distribution, large-scale industrial production and processing have been identified as crucial entities whose resilience needs to be strengthened as they provide essential services; whereas wholesale markets are entities of public interest that provide vast regional and inter-regional areas with a service which is essential to the supply and distribution to the final consumer of fresh and perishable agriculture and fisheries products and which guarantees their quality and compliance with health standards; whereas, moreover, wholesale markets have already proved their resilience and the vital role they play by ensuring the continuity of food supply and distribution during the COVID-19 pandemic;

- AM. whereas only 11,9 % of all farm managers in the EU in 2020 were under 40 years of age, while 33,2 % of EU farm managers were aged 65 years and over; whereas the average age of European farmers has increased to 57; whereas in 2020 there were 5,3 million fewer farms in the EU than in 2005, a decrease of 37 %; whereas, the number of farm managers fell by 11,2 % between 2016 and 2020; whereas most EU Member States recorded an overall decline in the number of farm managers;
- AN. whereas women play a vital role in rural areas; whereas, with a view to countering the predicted decline of these areas in the EU, it is vital for women to be granted recognition and visibility for their work on and co-ownership of farms; whereas actions and measures are needed to also close the gender gap in the agri-food sector, and it is imperative to involve women in the decision-making process at all levels when developing plans and policies;

Challenges to EU food security

1. Highlights the resilience of the agri-food sector during the recent crises, its ability to maintain the functioning of food supply chains and ensure food security in very difficult circumstances; notes that the COVID-19 pandemic and the illegal Russian invasion of Ukraine have, nevertheless, exposed structural problems in the European agricultural sector and pose significant risks to Member States' agricultural markets, especially those geographically closest to the war; calls, therefore, on the Council to consider, in the context of revising the multiannual financial framework, speeding up the process of flattening CAP support towards the EU average in order to empower farmers in the Member States where this process has not yet been completed to cope with the present challenges; stresses that immediate action by the European Union is required to protect food security from threats such as climate change and biodiversity loss; underlines that both securing functional ecosystems and mitigating climate change are essential for food availability and affordability, as well as for rural livelihoods;
2. Highlights the need for the EU to strengthen its food security, strategic autonomy and the resilience of its farming sector and entire supply chain by reducing dependence on imports from outside the EU and by diversifying supply of critical production imports such as fertiliser, feed and raw materials; emphasises that supply chains must not become a geopolitical tool to destabilise and jeopardise food security at global level, especially in the most disadvantaged and vulnerable countries; stresses that short and regional supply chains should be improved in a sustainable manner;
3. Welcomes the adoption, due to the exceptional current circumstances, of temporary measures to support EU farmers, which should be maintained if the Russian invasion of Ukraine continues; stresses that these measures will allow farmers to sustainably increase EU agricultural production and guarantee the survival of farms during the 2022-2023 harvest season, which will contribute to safeguarding food security; calls on the Commission to present without delay a holistic strategic plan to ensure food security for the EU, which could include the use of strategic food stocks; highlights the need to enhance stability in the face of unpredictable yields due to climate change and other factors, which can be worsened by speculation;
4. Calls on the Commission to pinpoint the sectors worst affected by the crisis and to take all necessary steps to allow urgent and more substantial support to be provided to them;
5. Stresses that food dependency aggravates the indebtedness of developing countries, thereby jeopardising achievements made in food security; calls on the Commission and the Member States to evaluate all the means available to avoid any defaults in the balance of payments of food importer countries, including debt relief under the auspices of international initiatives, direct funding and debt restructuring; reiterates the importance of grant-based financing, especially for least developed countries;
6. Welcomes the new Temporary Crisis Framework to help European producers cope with the effects of the war in Ukraine, but underlines the necessity of identifying new financial support to ensure European and third country food security; underlines the critical situation of the pig and milk market in some Member States and calls for direct and immediate financial support for these sectors;
7. Recalls the principle of policy coherence for development (PCD) enshrined in Article 208 TFEU, which specifies that 'the Union shall take account of the objectives of development cooperation in the policies that it implements which are likely to affect developing countries', and the importance of ensuring coherence between all EU policies in order to guarantee the effectiveness of development cooperation for the benefit of developing countries and to increase the effectiveness of the EU's commitment to global food security; insists that ensuring PCD for food security is important for contributing to safeguarding basic human rights and preventing humanitarian crises;

Sustainable and resilient agriculture

8. Points out the central importance of the agricultural and food sectors in the economy and in providing decent and sustainable job opportunities with safe working conditions in rural areas; notes that the rising costs of farm inputs adds to already high production costs and endanger farmers' revenues; calls on the Commission to take the necessary measures to provide production planning security for farmers, as well as adequate financial resources and guarantees, making it possible to maintain and, if necessary, increase food production, strengthen sustainable farming systems, increase the diversity of EU food crops and increase product quality, while rejecting artificial, industrial imitations;

9. Calls on the Commission to ensure that farmland remains available primarily for sustainable the production of food and feed since this land contributes to biodiversity conservation while also contributing to food security and can also help reduce EU energy dependence; emphasises that this must be taken into account in all relevant legislative proposals, which must take into account both the need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and reverse biodiversity loss, in line with the Farm to Fork and Biodiversity Strategies, and the need to ensure long-term food security and be in line with the CAP objectives; calls therefore on the Commission to ensure, in the implementation of the Green Deal, the diversity of agricultural models across the EU and to ensure that agricultural entrepreneurship and activity is maintained across the Union from a strategic point of view in terms of food security;

10. Calls on the Commission to take particular account of highly efficient farming models in areas with fertile agricultural land where food is produced sustainably; emphasises the need for specific implementation conditions for agriculture in urbanised areas where family farms face higher costs and other challenges;

11. Notes that due to increasing urbanisation and global population growth there has been an enormous reduction in the land available for agriculture, and that it is possible to produce significantly more on less land by means of sustainable intensification or urban farming;

12. Highlights the potential of vertical farming for food production which is independent of the weather and seasons, and which could attain higher yields with less water and pesticide use; calls for greater recognition of this practice in EU policy, as well as for initiatives to increase investments in research and development (R&D) in vertical farming;

13. Recalls that legislation in support of low-carbon agriculture must be easy to implement by the stakeholders who could help improve Europe's food security by ensuring farmers receive better pay while enabling the agricultural sector to play an important role in reducing greenhouse gas emissions; expresses regret, nonetheless, at the fact that the Commission's proposal did not take account of emissions reduction on farms and only included sequestration;

14. Stresses the importance of the protection and promotion of local communities' right to food security; deplores, in this context, the fact that land grabbing is rife in many countries, which undermines food sovereignty; calls for the EU to strongly support the prevention of land grabbing; stresses the importance of launching an inclusive process with the aim of guaranteeing the effective participation of civil society organisations and local communities in the development, implementation and monitoring of policies and actions related to land grabbing; calls for calls for the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure (VGGT) to be implemented in all projects that promote the protection of land rights, including in trade, and also for measures to ensure that projects do not endanger the land rights of small-scale farmers;

15. Calls on the Commission to ensure that the future EU framework law on sustainable food systems promotes social considerations and favourable food environments where healthy and sustainable food options are the most available, affordable, advertised and attractive, and that it promotes short supply chains and the consumption of local and seasonal products;

16. Points out that farm income in the EU is still less than half of gross wages and salaries in the EU and that therefore economic stability should be moved up the agenda in view of inflationary trends;

17. Underlines that the value of food must also be understood as far more than a mere commodity but as a right for people that must be upheld, and that economic, social and environmental impacts and externalities must be better assessed, mitigated or leveraged as required;

18. Notes that the European Green Deal could be a milestone in the EU transition to a greener, more sustainable and resilient economy and agriculture; points out, however, that some of the proposed measures might have unintended effects, which have not yet been properly assessed and identified at farm level, in particular on the need to ensure food security in the long term and the viability of farms, especially small and medium-sized farms; calls on the Commission, therefore, to carry out a comprehensive assessment of the cumulative impact of Green Deal legislative proposals on the EU farming sector in a holistic and systematic manner covering all dimensions of sustainability, in particular environmental, economic and social, with a view to ensuring food and nutrition security, the viability of farms and agricultural production in the Union; calls on the Commission to avoid a situation where European farmers face unfair competition from imports that do not meet our standards;

19. Insists on the need for proportionate measures, a just transition, a suitable timeframe for adaptation and a fair remuneration mechanism with a view to maintaining the competitiveness, productivity and social resilience of the EU agri-food sector;

20. Underlines that agri-environmental-climate practices, such as agroecology, agroforestry, integrated pest management (IPM), organic farming, precision and carbon farming, have the potential to address climate, biodiversity, environmental, economic and social challenges; stresses the importance of making efficient and well-targeted investments in mitigation, as well as in adaptation measures, in order to reduce risks and avoid significant costs in the long term;

21. Calls on the Commission to provide farmers with better tools that allow them to make an increasing contribution to the green transition currently under way; points out, against this background, that farmers need to be able to contribute (beyond self-consumption) to the production of energy, particularly renewable energy, in the EU, so as to give real impetus to the development of the circular economy and clean energy practice; believes, furthermore, that it is necessary to actually involve farmers and their representative organisations in designating suitable areas;

22. Stresses that food security also includes food safety and nutrition, and that it should be seen in a short-, medium- and long-term perspective;

23. Calls for account to be taken of the link between public health and biodiversity, in line with the 'One Health' approach;

24. Calls for the strict application of the One Health principle, which links human health, animal health and environmental issues, in all policies that affect the availability and accessibility of food; stresses that food safety must never be jeopardised and emphasises the importance of steering policies in a just and socio-economically fair way towards promoting nutritional, affordable food produced in a way that is sustainable for the long term, in line with biodiversity conservation and agro-ecological solutions; stresses the importance of proper and transparent labelling which facilitates healthy choices for consumers;

Generational renewal

25. Expresses its great concern over the decline in numbers of farms and farm managers in combination with the increased average age of European farmers; emphasises that in the long term, the key priority for ensuring European food security is generational renewal;

26. Calls on the Commission to develop an ambitious, comprehensive EU strategy on generational renewal in the agricultural sector, aiming to increase the number of young farmers, improve their competences and skills, in particular for fully harnessing the opportunities offered by smart farming and artificial intelligence; calls on the Commission and to include a 'socioeconomic young farmers check' in all upcoming agricultural, climate or environmental legislation;

27. Points out that a lack of access to land, insufficient remuneration which does not allow a decent living, better non-farm employment opportunities and an increasing regulatory burden are key factors explaining why more and more farmers feel compelled to leave the sector and why fewer people are inclined to take up farming; highlights the importance of ensuring that farmers have a predictable source of income and can make a living from their activity;

28. Draws attention to the need to boost investment, including digitalisation; calls on the Commission, in this context, to draw up in close cooperation with the Member States guidelines aiming to facilitate synergies between CAP funding strands and those of cohesion policy;

29. Calls on the Commission to communicate actions related to food security consistently and in coordinated manner; reminds the Commission to evaluate impacts on procedures and food security in its legislative proposal;

EU protein strategy

30. Calls on the Commission to present a comprehensive EU protein and feed strategy that must include effective measures to increase European production in the short, medium and long term; believes that this strategy should focus on domestic production in order to fully harness its potential and reduce dependence on imports from third countries; believes equally that the strategy must safeguard, or increase the farmers' incomes from sustainable production;

31. Considers that the Commission should assess the potential of maximising the synergies with EU renewable energy production to increase the availability of high protein content feed; underlines that a high dependency on food and feed imports exposes populations to global market volatilities; stresses the need, due to the disruptions to global production chains and increased price volatility, to develop open strategic autonomy for the EU with the aim of ensuring access to key markets and reducing dependency on imports of critical goods such as plant-based protein sources and feed;

New cultivation methods

32. Recognises the importance of making crops more resilient to climate change and new pathogens, and of increasing and maintaining yields in the short and long term, in particular in view of the droughts and water shortages that are afflicting an increasing number of EU Member States; stresses that this hinges on the restoration and conservation of biodiversity, soil health, the use of agro-ecological and organic methods, and underlines the importance of seed security and diversity; stresses that breeders and farmers need to have guaranteed access to quality seeds of plant varieties adapted to the pressures of climate change and low-input farming systems, including traditional and locally adapted varieties and heterogeneous material; stresses their need to have guaranteed access to the genetic resources needed for further breeding;

33. Points out that innovative and resource efficient cultivation practices in controlled, enclosed environments require a secure supply of growing media raw materials; believes that EU production and supply of these materials should be guaranteed;

34. Calls on the Commission to advocate for the targeted use and further development of new breeding techniques in agriculture; calls for the EU to speed up the adoption of legislation on the use of new breeding techniques in partnership with the Member States, while complying with the precautionary principle in order to sustainably increase yields and make crops more resilient to climate change and new pathogens, particularly in view of harmful organisms, droughts, floods, water shortages and other extreme weather conditions that are afflicting an increasing number of EU Member States; points out that new breeding techniques can promote sustainable agriculture, which is not possible without innovation;

35. Emphasises the importance of ensuring that the results of research are brought into farming practices as this would play an important part in achieving the goals of the European Green Deal, by developing a more sustainable agriculture, including by giving European farmers alternatives for reducing the use of synthetic fertilisers and pesticides;

36. Emphasises the importance of granting equal access to technological and scientific innovations that can improve the resistance of varieties and foster the diversity of genetic resources and food production systems, in compliance with EU food safety regulations;

37. Calls on the Commission to properly and better assess the effects of genetically modified organisms on health, biodiversity and social inclusion, and on farmers' and consumers' freedom of choice;

38. Calls for a comprehensive analysis of the socioeconomic and environmental effects on the food system of patents on breeding processes, plant propagation material and parts thereof, including their potential to increase market concentration and monopolisation in the food chain, as well as their impact on the affordability and availability of food;

39. Believes that the targeted application of new genomic techniques and the approval of seeds using these techniques in the EU are important measures for making agriculture sustainable in the context of the European Green Deal and the Farm to Fork Strategy;

40. Calls on the Commission to promote a Europe-wide dialogue on the opportunities offered by new breeding methods for tackling climate change and to educate the public about the differences between transgenic plants and new breeding methods;

41. Underlines the importance of seed security, diversity and in particular of promoting EU-grown plant proteins for producing locally-sourced food and feed with high nutritional value, while granting farmers access to quality seeds for plant varieties adapted to the pressures of climate change and low-input farming systems, including traditional and locally adapted varieties and heterogeneous material;

42. Calls for the EU and its Member States not to grant patents on biological material; calls for them to safeguard the freedom to operate and breeders' exemption for varieties;

Artificial intelligence and precision crop management

43. Emphasises that digital technologies and precision crop management can provide forward-looking solutions to key challenges as they can allow the monitoring of deforestation, reduce the use of pesticides, fertilisers and water consumption in agriculture, increase yields and improve economic and environmental performance; points out that these technologies often involve high initial investment costs and that suitable solutions and additional funding for farmers are therefore needed to make them affordable and accessible for family and small-scale farms; highlights that these technologies should be accessible to small-scale farmers and that farmers always retain the rights on their data;

44. Calls on the Commission to step up the use of sustainable digital innovation to modernise EU agriculture, enabling farmers to achieve their full production potential and safeguard their incomes in the context of the green transition, including through optimised nutrient cycling, while also ensuring digital inclusion; stresses that these new technologies can also provide alternative solutions for European farmers which help them meet new requirements, particularly on pesticide and input reduction;

45. Highlights that space data and artificial intelligence technologies can be a source of valuable information for agriculture and the whole food chain, with technology enabling the movement of information from the producer to the consumer and vice versa, improving the operation of the entire value chain, reducing wastage and lowering logistics costs; points out, however, that currently it can still only be put to very limited use, as in most cases it is not freely available or is too complex to be used by farms or local authorities; calls for the increased use and availability of such data and technologies in order to help farmers through the green and digital transitions and ensure the resilience of EU agriculture; calls for the development of a secure and trusted data space to allow the farming sector to share and access data, which would improve economic and environmental performance in the field;

Logistics

46. Calls on the EU to recognise the strategic importance of logistics centres, in particular wholesale markets, as an integral and complementary part of primary agricultural production, without which farmers and transport companies would be unable to ensure consistent supply that meets the needs of consumers;

47. Calls for investment in infrastructure for more sustainable transport and storage facilities for fresh or other farm products, which also helps to reduce food waste and the sector's environmental footprint; calls, in this context, on the EU to recognise regional differences, to stimulate local food production and to take into account sparsely populated areas and their needs;

Pesticides

48. Acknowledges the fact that new rules to reduce the risk and use of pesticides in the EU with the aim of having a fairer, healthier and more environmentally sound food system in line with the European Green Deal is an important societal demand;

49. Underlines that pollinator numbers have been declining throughout Europe and highlights the urgent need to protect bees and pollinators, in particular by promoting biological pest control and reducing the use and risk of pesticides; highlights, however, the fact that the Commission presented a legislative proposal with binding reduction targets for pesticides, including a ban on their use in so-called sensitive areas, without first offering farmers affordable and sufficiently effective pest control alternatives or taking into account the impact that the lack of tools to protect plants from harmful organisms might have on EU food security, its dependence on imports from third countries and ability to maintain proper plant health; highlights that this proposal does not take into account the regional specificities of European agriculture and does not include an overall impact assessment with quantified impacts on food production, the competitiveness of EU farming, the potential impact on farmers, dependencies on food imports, food prices and the spread of harmful organisms; reminds that restricting the use of pesticides in sensitive areas is already regulated in some Member States' legislation;

50. Stresses the key role of IPM in reducing pesticide dependency and urges the Member States to ensure its proper application; calls on the Commission to ensure that farmers are supported financially and by other means in shifting towards these practices;

51. Expresses concern at the Commission's ambiguous definition of 'sensitive areas' and the way in which plant protection products are to be used in these areas, which may in practice lead to a decrease in agricultural production and hence to a drop in farmers' incomes and, in the medium to long term, the disappearance of small and medium-sized crop farms, a heightened risk of farms being abandoned, an increase in unfair competition, a rise in food prices and a growth in imports from third countries, all of which directly affect food security;

52. Calls on the Commission to ensure the availability of sufficient effective plant protection products by speeding up authorisation and avoiding delays, to allow for an adequate toolbox against pests and diseases, and to ensure a science-based and harmonised approach to access to plant protection products throughout the EU;

53. Highlights that sufficient effective plant protection products will remain indispensable to protecting crops from new pests and diseases in order to avoid food production losses; expresses concern that further restrictions on the availability of plant protection products could undermine efforts made to implement the holistic approach of IPM;

54. Condemns the EU's double standards on pesticides, which enable the export from the EU of hazardous substances which are themselves banned in the EU; calls on the Commission to ensure reciprocity in international trade agreements, particularly for agriculture and agricultural products, and to lead by example by ensuring that hazardous pesticides banned in the EU are not exported to partner countries, thus preventing residues of banned pesticides from being tolerated in food on the EU market and strengthening the enforcement mechanism of the trade and sustainable development (TSD) chapters;

Training and knowledge sharing

55. Calls on the Commission to note the importance of active lifelong training of farmers and of support for new mitigation and agricultural practices in order to increase the attractiveness of the agricultural sector and rural areas; stresses that peer-to-peer knowledge sharing and transfer on issues such as land management, climate change adaptation and mitigation, agro-ecological practices and fair and resilient value chains could be a key factor in fostering more sustainable agri-food production while safeguarding agricultural productivity;

Food supply chain

56. Emphasises that the Commission must take additional measures to develop a more resilient, transparent and fairer food chain, in particular by strengthening the position of primary producers in the whole food supply chain; calls on the Member States and the Commission to ensure the effective enforcement of the Unfair Trading Practices Directive and to consider measures to combat food speculation; considers that producer organisations, which can include cooperatives, can help to strengthen the role of farmers as business owners in the food chain, adding value through innovative measures and optimising production costs by pooling services and purchases;

57. Stresses the need for full use of school schemes in order to ensure deprived children have access to food; highlights, furthermore, that public procurement programmes are useful for fostering public support for purchasing from smallholders and local producers when sourcing nutritious food for distribution, which can prevent food insecurity;

Women in rural areas

58. Stresses the importance of closing the gender gap in the agri-food sector by investing in women and promoting measures to attract more women to the sector; points to the need to support women's entrepreneurship, employment and political representation; stresses the need to secure the inclusion of a gender perspective in the management of food security and ensure the participation of women in the decision-making processes on this;

59. Stresses that sustainability means balancing economic development, environmental impacts and social equality, including gender justice; highlights the adverse gender impacts of rising food insecurity, as women tend to cut back on their food consumption in times of food shortages and women and girls account for 60 % of the undernourished; notes that 60 % of women living in Sub-Saharan Africa work in the agricultural sector and are highly vulnerable to the effects of a changing climate on their food and water security;

Fertiliser strategy

60. Emphasises that the fertilisers sector is essential to guaranteeing food security globally; welcomes the inclusion in the Commission communication on ensuring the availability and affordability of fertilisers (COM(2022)0590) of a strategy to help farmers cope with exceptionally high costs; considers, however, that while it contains certain valid medium and long-term policy recommendations, the communication fails to include measures to reduce dependency on increasingly costly external inputs, to set out concrete steps and to propose adequate immediate measures to support farmers in the current crisis, which could have very serious implications for food security; stresses in this regard the importance of the upcoming revision of the multiannual financial framework (MFF);

61. Calls on the Commission to set out a long-term vision for achieving strategic autonomy in fertilisers in order to incentivise the industry to reorient to more sustainable production methods; stresses that farming practices and alternative sources of nutrients can improve nutrient cycles and reduce dependence on chemical fertilisers, thereby reducing dependence on fertiliser imports; stresses in this context the need to further support research and innovation at EU level; emphasises that to ensure food production in the long term, resources that are readily available and produced within the EU, such as organic fertilisers, should be utilised and developed to the fullest;

62. Calls on the Commission to raise the limits for the use of nitrogen fertilisers derived from animal manure, e.g. RENURE (REcovered Nitrogen from manURE), digestate from bio-waste and any other effective and verified source; calls on the Commission, in the meantime, to allow a temporary derogation in order to bring down the cost of fertilisers, while seeking the introduction of long-term framework provisions to promote a circular economy on farms and reduce dependence on third country resources; points out that these longer-term measures should include the drawing up of farm intervention strategies, including factors relating to nutrient management plans, soil recovery, precision farming, organic farming and the use of leguminous crops in crop rotation schemes, and be accompanied by sufficient and fair transition periods;

63. Recognises that the fertiliser industry in the EU must have access to the raw materials needed to produce fertilisers within the EU and to ensure that prospects for EU harvests are not jeopardised;

64. Welcomes the Commission's intention to source key nutrients such as phosphate and potash from other origins and calls on it to speed up this process in order to anticipate future shortages;

Combating food losses and waste

65. Reiterates that around one third of all food produced worldwide is lost or wasted at some stage in the food supply chain from farm to fork; draws attention to the fact that food losses and food waste can be avoided if a holistic approach is implemented, including measures on the use of sustainable and recyclable packaging, and if animal diseases are prevented and managed; believes that food loss and waste can also be minimised if measures are taken to reduce the presence of pathogens in food, for example by ensuring proper hygiene and using improved technologies along the entire value chain;

66. Underlines the positive effects that supporting local production and the consumption of seasonal, local products from short and genuine food supply chains can have in reducing food waste; stresses the positive effects in this regard of consumer education on this; recalls that reducing food waste would make a major contribution to food security worldwide; calls on the Commission, therefore, to promote campaigns to raise awareness among producers, consumers and retailers of the importance of avoiding all types of food waste and of the economic, social and environmental repercussions of such waste; calls on the Commission to support the Member States in implementing effective food waste prevention programmes; stresses that Member States should also improve the measurement of food waste volumes and monitor food waste across the supply chain; calls on supermarkets, in particular, to urgently address the issue of preventable food waste through alternative options, for instance working with local community projects, such as food banks, to alleviate local food poverty and insecurity;

67. Considers it urgent for the necessary measures be taken to change the perception of 'imperfect food products' i.e. those with appearances that do not meet market standards even if this does not affect their taste or nutritional value, and for legislation on best before/preferred consumption dates on food labels to be amended;

68. Points out that the OIE estimates that around 20 % of global production of food is lost due to diseases in farmed animals and that reducing the incidence of these diseases is therefore one of the priorities to be considered in order to feed the world;

Biofuels

69. Calls on the Commission to develop a realistic biofuel production scenario that takes into account the EU's protein strategy, since ceasing biofuel production would also eliminate protein-rich by-products, , thereby significantly exacerbating rather than helping to alleviate the food crisis; calls on the EU to prioritise food production over crop-based biofuel production;

70. Stresses the important role of farmers in the production of renewable energies in the EU and the need to eliminate current limits on self-consumption in order to allow a concrete contribution towards the development of best practices for circular economy and clean energy production;

Livestock

71. Calls on the Commission, Member States and economic actors to think strategically about the place of sustainable livestock farming in all European territories, taking into account, in particular, its role in the nitrogen cycle and the supply of organic amendments to crops, the best use of all types of agricultural soils and the promotion of a diversified and balanced diet; calls on the Commission and Member States to earmark sufficient public funding for all agricultural sectors in order to prevent adverse effects, including a decline in EU food production that could jeopardise food security;

72. Recalls the importance of a high-quality animal welfare system, including in transport and slaughter; welcomes the planned revision of the EU's animal welfare legislation, including updating current animal welfare legislation and the need for the development, implementation and enforcement of strengthened and new, species-specific legislation, as there is an overall lack of effective implementation and enforcement of the current legislation; underlines the importance of taking into account the latest advances in animal welfare science and responding to public, political and market demands for higher animal welfare standards and for the updating of livestock housing systems and production practices;

Natural resources

73. Highlights the contribution to food security of more sustainable and efficient farming that preserves natural resources such as soil, water and forests and takes advantage of the opportunities offered by sustainable bioenergy and sustainable bioeconomy; calls on the Commission and Member States to ensure environmental, economic and social sustainability that strikes a balance and generates synergies when implementing legislation that concerns the agricultural sector;

74. Calls on the Commission to set up a specific programme to support Member States in improving water management in agriculture, water savings and water storage capacity by completing, modernising and optimising existing irrigation facilities and promoting new infrastructure, while complying with applicable environmental rules and improving soil water storage capacity, increasing the resilience of the agricultural production system and guaranteeing water supply; calls on the Commission to support the development, storage and use of treated wastewater for agriculture; calls for an accelerated implementation of cohesion policy and specific infrastructure development measures to combat extreme droughts in Europe;

75. Highlights how conflict, the climate and biodiversity crises and the pandemic have been turning points for world hunger, which had previously been declining, but now affects around 10 % of the world population; emphasises the need for continued efforts to resume and maintain Ukrainian grain exports, which should alleviate pressures in the Global South; calls on the Commission, in this context, to intensify its 'food diplomacy' efforts, also bearing in mind that today the Union is one of the largest global wheat producers and that food supply shortages in the Global South may make these third countries more vulnerable to the influence of authoritarian regimes;

76. Stresses that innovative digital technologies should not create new path dependencies, and emphasises that they should not reinforce farm concentration but should be available and accessible to small-scale farmers;

77. Believes that small-scale on-farm energy production installations have an enormous potential for energy production in rural areas and for increasing on-farm circularity by transforming the waste and residual streams of the farm, among others manure, into heat and electricity; emphasises that all barriers should be removed in order to encourage farmers to invest in these circular farm technologies, such as small-scale biogas plants; calls on the Commission to support the uptake of these innovative installations; stresses the need to make use of the residues of this process, for instance RENURES, which it should be should be categorised and used as chemical fertilisers;

78. Considers that a contribution to food security could be also made through projects financed under the new REPowerEU chapter and encourages the uptake of projects that are beneficial for both energy and agriculture sectors;

79. Stresses the need to continue to support supply management through support for producer organisations and interbranch organisations;

80. Highlights the fact that European farmers meet the most stringent production requirements in the world and stresses that policies must not lead to the relocation of production or an unequal level playing field;

CAP and future of farmers

81. Reiterates that the CAP must continue to ensure food security while improving the response to new societal demands for sustainable food and healthier nutrition; highlights the importance of ensuring that farmers have a predictable source of income and can make a living from their activity; calls, in this context, on the Commission to support the CAP budget in the MFF so as to ensure both food security and green transitions while providing the necessary leverage for investments;

82. Calls on the Commission and Member States to combat the decline in the number of farms in rural areas and stresses the need to focus on support for the continuation of farming and for innovation; highlights the contribution of small farms to the EU's sustainable food autonomy and security, in particular in local food systems, and stresses the importance of ensuring that small-scale producers are properly involved in decision-making processes when they are affected;

83. Calls on the Commission, when it draws up its communication on the future CAP, to consider making it a policy that will integrate food production and food safety in a coherent way, while at the same time ensuring its coherence with trade policy, environmental policy and humanitarian and international development policies;

84. Welcomes and supports the comments made by the Agriculture Commissioner, who has stated that the current CAP budget of less than 0,4 % of EU GDP is insufficient to deliver food security and that it should therefore be raised considerably in the next MFF at the latest; calls for the agricultural crisis reserve to be endowed with additional resources on top of current CAP funds and for the crisis reserve, if spent, to be replenished by other means than budgetary discipline, as this would mean paying farmers EU funds to manage the crisis with one hand while taking them (direct payments) back with the other;

85. Stresses the importance of identifying a more flexible way of applying CAP requirements, through the inclusion of advance payments to producers and by raising the level of these payments;

86. Stresses the need for European aid to reach the most vulnerable populations as quickly as possible and to adapt to the context of multidimensional crises, and the importance of a reinforced humanitarian approach; underlines the fact that in 2022 the Commission allocated over EUR 900 million to humanitarian food assistance, which was 60 % more than in 2021 and nearly 80 % more than in 2020;

87. Calls for the EU to ensure continuity between humanitarian aid, development cooperation and peace actions in order to tackle the deep-rooted causes of food insecurity and address the weaknesses of food systems in developing countries, in line with the nexus approach;

Resilient and diverse ecosystems as a driver of food security

88. Notes that the impact of climate change on agricultural production is becoming more evident, with crops and yields being negatively impacted by the increased frequency of droughts, floods and other extreme weather conditions;

89. Recalls that biodiversity degradation, especially of melliferous species, contributes to poorer agricultural yields, therefore undermining our food security; highlights that agriculture relies on resilient ecosystems, in particular functional soil ecosystems, and sufficient populations of pollinators and pest predators; underlines that increasing the climate resilience of European agriculture will enable the sector to remain competitive on the global market, providing employment and economic growth;

90. Welcomes the Commission's comprehensive analysis of the drivers of food security; underlines its conclusions pointing to the urgency of transitioning to a sustainable food system capable of ensuring food security in both the short and long term;

International dimension of food security

91. Stresses the urgent need to bring EU trade policy into line with European standards for sustainable food so as not to the EU's hamper competitiveness; notes that the EU plays a key role in the global trade in agricultural and food products and that it is fundamental for EU trade policy to also be in line with European sustainability goals;

92. Calls for food and agricultural products to be granted a dedicated chapter in bilateral and multilateral trade negotiations and agreements and for them not be considered as mere bargaining chips in these negotiations; expresses concern at the impact that the multiplication of free trade agreements without strong sustainability provisions has had on the European agricultural sector, which often faces unfair competition from third country producers who are subject to far less strict legislation; calls, furthermore, for greater reciprocity between European and third country producers on production standards;

93. Highlights that food security is a complex and multifaceted subject and it requires a coherent and integrated approach, taking account of current challenges from different perspectives: economic, trade, environmental, regional and international development;

94. Emphasises the EU's responsibility not only in ensuring its own food supply, but also in contributing to fighting hunger in other disadvantaged parts of the world; underlines that the EU should support partner countries in setting high environmental objectives, as well as assist and guide them in this transition when needed; highlights that due consideration should be given to partners from developing countries and countries in a fragile food security situation for whom special and differentiated treatment could be required;

95. Considers that in the medium to long term, the EU, as a major global player in the agri-food sector, should advocate for higher global sustainability criteria and engage with international partners to jointly develop the benchmarks and international standards for resilient and sustainable food systems in line with WTO rules;

96. Stresses that humanitarian and development funding, as well as other measures, for addressing hunger and malnutrition in Europe and beyond need to be dramatically scaled up to properly address the global food security crisis, which has been exacerbated by the war in Ukraine;

97. Stresses that the Commission should develop a genuine integrated strategy with partner countries to encourage the development, strengthening and scaling up of local food production capacities, reduce the vulnerabilities due to international dependencies, especially in fertilisers and grains, while strengthening local and regional markets through infrastructure programmes, such as for market infrastructure, cooling systems and roads, and also for online farmers' markets so to enhance in particular smallholder farmers' resilience, in particular through the Global Gateway Initiative;

98. Deplores financial speculation on agricultural and food commodities, which is exacerbating price volatility and inflating wholesale prices; notes with concern that financial speculation on food commodities particularly affects developing countries and the most vulnerable populations, particularly in a context of war; calls on the Commission and European Securities and Markets Authority to evaluate the role and extent of speculation in the setting of commodities prices;

99. Underlines that transparent statistics on grain stocks from both public and private stakeholders are essential; calls on the Commission, Member States and food business operators to intensify their efforts to strengthen transparency rules on global agricultural prices and stocks, particularly by strengthening and extending the Agricultural Market Information System;

100. Points out that developing countries are the most vulnerable to rising global food and agricultural prices, which threaten the affordability of food; calls on the Commission and Member States to work on the FAO proposal aimed at establishing a food import financing facility to help low-income countries that are the most dependent on food imports to access global food markets; stresses, further, the need to develop trade rules, including those in the remit of the WTO, with the objective of helping low income countries to build stronger local food systems;

101. Stresses the need for greater focus on actions in agriculture to safeguard developing countries' right to food security as a priority and enhance their capacity to meet the nutritional requirements of their populations; calls on the Commission to adopt a more systematic approach to determining and assessing the impact of EU policies on PCD objectives;

102. Welcomes the commitment by the EU and its Member States to allocate nearly EUR 8 billion in humanitarian and development aid for global food security in the 2021-2024 period, including a further EUR 600 million to help countries in the Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS) deal with the consequences of Russia's invasion of Ukraine; calls on the Commission to report to Parliament every year until 2024 on the goals, measures and results of this commitment;

103. Calls for the European Union and its Member States to increase development cooperation, humanitarian aid and food assistance, to scale up essential nutrition services and to adopt other short- and long-term sufficient measures in the most vulnerable countries and regions, particularly the 19 'hunger hotspots' identified by the FAO and WFP, which continue to suffer from a lack of humanitarian financing for addressing hunger and malnutrition;

104. Calls on the Commission, Member States and European development financing institutions to create synergies between the NDICI — Global Europe instrument and the new Global Gateway strategy by using the Team Europe approach in order to coordinate investments in food security in partner countries; urges the Commission, in the mid-term review process of the NDICI — Global Europe instrument, to closely examine the amounts and projects associated with food security in partner countries and to fully assess the effectiveness of the measures supported;

105. Welcomes the launch of several multilateral food security initiatives; calls on the Commission and Member States, however, to play a leading role in coordinating the various initiatives to ensure an effective international commitment to global food security; calls on the EU and its Member States to support the establishment of an international food crisis preparedness and response mechanism under the aegis of the FAO and WFP with the aim of identifying risks and vulnerabilities, particularly in critical food infrastructure and supply chains, and improving the coordination of responses during crises; supports, furthermore, the development of strategic food reserves, given the role that stocks can play in buffering the impacts of food crises; calls for the role of the Global Network Against Food Crises to be strengthened;

106. Calls on the Commission to ensure that a significant proportion of the 30 % of NDICI-Global Europe funds assigned to combating climate change is allocated to projects which improve the resilience and adaptation of agriculture to climate change, including through slope stabilisation, land reclamation, reforestation, irrigation, watershed management and support for education efforts on this issue; insists that these investments should be in line with Agenda 2030, the Paris Climate Agreement and the Convention on Biological Diversity and take into account the FAO and CFS VGGT and the FAO and CFS Principles for Responsible Investment in Agriculture and Food Systems;

107. Notes that according to the FAO, women make up 43 % of the global agricultural labour force, playing a vital role in rural areas, and yet face significant discrimination in land and livestock ownership, equal pay, participation in decision-making entities and access to credit and financial services; stresses that children and women are the most vulnerable to food insecurity;

108. Stresses that the global gender gap in food insecurity has widened in recent years, in particular due to prevalent gender inequality and discrimination in the countries concerned; calls, therefore, for actions and measures to be taken to support gender equality in the farming sector and points out that ensuring food security is one way of reducing inequalities between women and men; calls on the Commission and local and regional authorities in partner countries to ensure that women, including women's organisations, are involved in drawing up programmes and implementing projects as well as in the decision-making processes for combating food insecurity;

109. Emphasises that the creation of viable jobs in agriculture is central to ensuring the long-term viability of this sector globally; recalls that investments in the smallholder sector yield the best returns in terms of poverty reduction and growth, enhancing the incomes of smallholder farmers, especially women smallholders;

110. Calls on the Commission to draw up a policy that will integrate food production and food safety in a coherent way, while at the same time ensuring its coherence with trade policy, environmental policy and humanitarian and international development policies;

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111. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council and to the Commission.
