

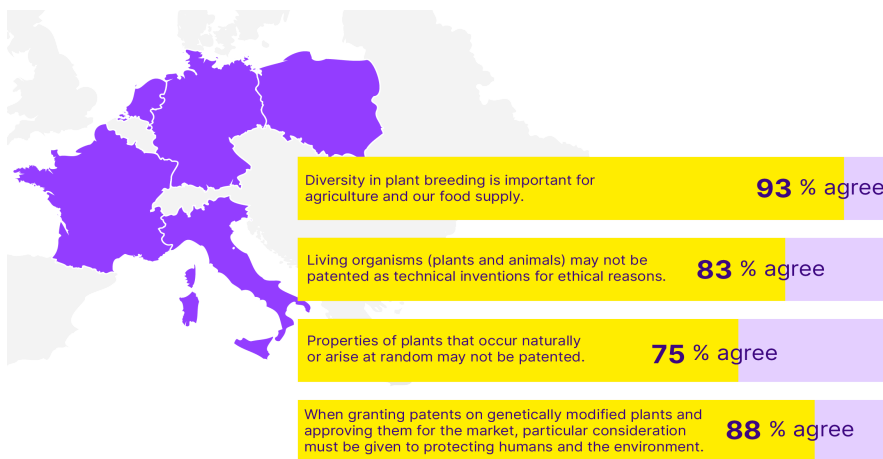


80 percent of European citizens say NO to patents on seeds

Representative survey in five EU member states

14 April 2026 / *No Patents on Seeds!* today published a representative survey conducted in five EU member states, i.e. France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands and Poland. The results clearly show that around 80 percent of EU citizens reject the idea of granting patents on living organisms, e.g. patents on plants or animals. More than 70 percent said no to patents on naturally occurring genes. The highest number of rejections were seen in Poland and Germany, followed by France and Italy. The international Coalition of *No Patents on Seeds!* is now demanding that the EU takes its responsibility to prohibit patents on plants and animals.

Even more (more than 90 percent) responded with yes to the statements that diversity in plant breeding and food supply is crucial, and that environmental protection is particularly important when it comes to patents on genetically engineered plants and their market approval. The highest numbers in this respect were observed in Poland and Italy, followed by Germany and France.



“The picture is consistent in all five countries: the public rejects patents on seeds. A majority of EU citizens are very critical of patents on natural traits and want to see a precautionary approach when it comes to patents on genetically engineered plants

and their environmental release,” says Nout van der Vaart from Oxfam Novib. “It is time for political decision-makers to take their responsibilities seriously and stop patents on seeds in the EU. They must also place more importance on securing diversity in plant breeding and the protection of the public goods.”

The survey was conducted by the opinion research institute Civey. One of the main reasons for conducting the representative survey was that EU member states and the European

Parliament will soon be voting on a new law that would exempt food plants obtained from new genetic engineering (or new genomic techniques, NGTs) from existing risk assessment and labelling regulations. Depending on the outcome, this could vastly increase the number of seeds that are patented. The EU Parliament originally demanded that patents on plants and genetic resources were either prohibited or restricted. However, the compromise text that the Council and EU parliament will soon vote on allows all NGT plants to be patented, including naturally occurring genes. Most NGT plants could be released without undergoing environmental risk assessment.

“All genetically engineered crops, including NGTs, are patented, but seed corporations like Bayer, BASF and Syngenta even claim patents on conventional crops. In this way they drive other seed companies out of business so they can dominate the market even more”, Nina Holland from Corporate Europe Observatory warns “The patents block access for plant breeders to a wide variety of seeds, necessary for a resilient food system. In fact, we all will get dependent on the decisions of this handful of companies and the prices they set. That is why citizens clearly reject such patents.”

No Patents on Seeds! is an international coalition of organisations actively protecting conventional plant breeders and farmers against the threat of increasing concentration in the seed markets. Therefore, *No Patents on Seeds!* supports the EU member states and members of the EU Parliament that are in favour of prohibiting patents on plants.

“It is apparent that the perspective of the public was not sufficiently taken into account in preparing the current proposal for the future regulation of NGT plants. This needs to be corrected. We demand that the text is amended to stop patents on seeds, or that these are completely rejected,” says Martha Mertens from Friends of the Earth.

The results from the survey:

<https://www.no-patents-on-seeds.org/en/survey>

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<https://www.no-patents-on-seeds.org/en/report-2025>