

## Viewpoint: EU's glyphosate herbicide fight reveals limits of Europe-wide governance

Glyphosate, the ubiquitous herbicide, may not really be poison, but it could well be the most politicized substance in Europe. In recent days, a glyphosate controversy has revealed much about the continent's decision-making processes.

Most European countries don't allow the cultivation of genetically-modified crops. But glyphosate, the effective weed killer produced by U.S.-based Monsanto specifically for those kinds of crops, just survived another round of approvals.

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Which countries ban glyphosate and when depends most of all on the strength of farming lobbies. So far, glyphosate has been [hard to replace](#): Other herbicides just aren't as effective or as easy on the soil, and the best of the alternatives are more expensive to boot.

The current fudge — a cautious five-year extension with an easy loophole for unwilling member states — is a typical European compromise involving national political actors, big corporations, farmers, Brussels technocrats and the noisy but insufficiently empowered European Parliament. It's a decision that pleases few people but checks a box and makes an issue go away for a while. In the end, it's up to market players such as Bayer, Monsanto and their competitors to develop a suitable replacement for glyphosate. They should hurry up: Five years isn't a long time, and the debate won't be any less fraught next time around.

**Read full, original post:** [Why Europe Is Literally Stuck in the Weeds](#)