

European Communities

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Working Documents

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DOCUMENT 1-809/81

REPORT

drawn up on behalf of the Committee on Agriculture

on the proposal from the Commission of the European Communities to the Council (Doc. 1-546/81) for a

directive amending, as regards the special conversion grant and the monetary unit utilized, Directive 78/627/EEC on the programme to accelerate the restructuring and conversion of vineyards in certain Mediterranean regions of France

Rapporteur: Mrs S. MARTIN

PE 75.385/fin.

By letter of 24 September 1981 the Council of the European Communities requested the European Parliament, pursuant to Article 43 of the EEC Treaty, to deliver an opinion on a proposal for a directive amending Directive 78/627/EEC in respect of wine-growing in certain Mediterranean regions of France.

The President of the European Parliament referred this proposal to the Committee on Agriculture as the committee responsible and to the Committee on Budgets for its opinion.

On 20 October 1981 the Committee on Agriculture appointed Mrs S. Martin rapporteur.

It considered this proposal at its meeting of 24 and 25 November 1981.

At the same meeting the committee unanimously adopted the motion for a resolution.

Present: Mr Früh, vice-chairman and acting chairman; Mr Delatte, vice-chairman; Mrs S. Martin, rapporteur (deputizing for Mr Maher); Mr Adamou (deputizing for Mr Papaefstratiou), Mrs Bonino (deputizing for Mr Skovmand), Mr Caillavet, Mr Clinton, Mr Dalsass, Mr Davern, Mrs Desouches (deputizing for Mr Eyraud), Mr Diana, Mr Gatto, Mr Kirk, Mr Ligios, Mr de Lipkowski (deputizing for Mr Fanton), Mr Maffre-Baugé, Mr d'Ormesson, Mrs Péry (deputizing for Mr Thareau), Mr Pranchère, Mr Sutra, Mr Vernimmen and Mr Vgenopoulos.

The opinion of the Committee on Budgets will be published separately.

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A

The Committee on Agriculture hereby submits to the European Parliament the following motion for a resolution together with explanatory statement:

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

embodying the opinion of the European Parliament on the proposal from the Commission of the European Communities to the Council for a directive amending, as regards the special conversion grant and the monetary unit utilized, Directive 78/627/EEC on the programme to accelerate the restructuring and conversion of vineyards in certain Mediterranean regions in France

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the proposal from the Commission of the European Communities to the Council (COM(81) 439 final),¹
- having been consulted by the Council pursuant to Article 43 of the EEC Treaty (Doc. 1-546/81),
- having regard to the report by the Committee on Agriculture and the opinion of the Committee on Budgets (Doc. 1-809/81),
- whereas the abolition of the phased reduction in the special conversion premium originally provided for in Directive No. 78/627/EEC will make it possible to continue under satisfactory conditions the conversion programme undertaken in respect of certain Mediterranean regions in France as defined in the directive,

Approves the Commission's proposal.

¹ OJ No. C 246 of 26.9.1981, p. 2

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

1. Council Directive 78/627/EEC¹ on the programme to accelerate the restructuring and conversion of vineyards in certain Mediterranean regions in France falls within the scope of the guidelines proposed by the Commission to the Council for the development of the Mediterranean regions of the Community².

2. The aim of this directive is to encourage the restructuring and conversion of vineyards in the Languedoc-Roussillon region and in the departments of Ardèche, Bouches-du-Rhône, Var and Vaucluse.

Article 4(1), third indent, therefore provides that expenditure related to the special conversion grant shall be eligible for aid from the Guidance Section of the EAGGF provided that it does not exceed 2,000 units of account per converted hectare and is reduced by at least 10% each year from the third year onward.

3. The object of progressively reducing the premium from the third year onward was to speed up conversion operations in the regions concerned. However, experience has shown that the introduction of a degressive premium is not a particularly strong incentive for potential beneficiaries to make rapid use of the facility made available to them.

4. Moreover, as the Council adopted Regulation (EEC) No. 456/80³ on the granting of temporary and permanent abandonment premiums in respect of certain areas under vines and of premiums for the renunciation of replanting, wine-growers who wish to convert can await the expiry of the abovementioned directive before doing so, and then apply for the abandonment premium of 2,418 ECU per hectare provided for in Article 4(2) of Regulation (EEC) No. 456/80, to which no phased reduction applies. This means in effect that Directive 78/627/EEC may become a dead letter unless its provisions are brought into line with those of the Regulation.

5. Consequently, the Commission is proposing to bring the amount of the special conversion premium into line with that of the permanent abandonment premium, i.e. 2,418 ECU per converted hectare (the equivalent in ECU of 2,000 units of account), by abolishing the phased reduction.

In support of this measure the Commission argues that the present situation gives rise to discrimination between regions with similar problems. Furthermore, the very fact that the premium is degressive makes it unlikely that this Directive will have the desired effect.

¹ OJ No. L 206, 29.7.1981, p.1

² Doc. 470/77 and Doc. 34/78 - Rapporteur: Mr LIGIOS

³ OJ No. L 57, 29.2.1980, p. 16

6. The Commission also proposes that certain amounts provided for in Directive 78/627/EEC be converted into (agricultural) ECUs, but maintains at the same time that the total estimated cost of the operation should remain unchanged, since the units of account in question are budgetary and not agricultural units of account. It is time to standardize and make the ECU the Community's sole monetary unit, because the existence of several units of account can only lead to confusion.

7. The abolition of the phased reduction is likely to cost an additional 5 million ECU, of which half will be borne by the Community budget.

8. This proposal demonstrates, if demonstration were necessary, that the proposals adopted by the Council are not always consistent the one with the other. It would help if the Council were to pay close attention in future when adopting Commission proposals so as to avoid possible conflict between individual pieces of Community legislation on a particular subject.

9. This being so, the Committee on Agriculture feels that the amendments to Directive No. 78/627/EEC proposed by the Commission are essential because the introduction of the phased reduction as from October 1981 will hold up the implementation of the conversion programme in the regions concerned.

The Committee on Agriculture therefore approves the Commission's proposal.

