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**NOTE**

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From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Delegations
No. Cion doc.:	9556/18 + REV 1 (en, de, fr) + COR 1
Subject:	Proposal for a REGULATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL amending Regulations (EU) No 1308/2013 establishing a common organisation of the markets in agricultural products, (EU) No 1151/2012 on quality schemes for agricultural products and foodstuffs, (EU) No 251/2014 on the definition, description, presentation, labelling and the protection of geographical indications of aromatised wine products, (EU) No 228/2013 laying down specific measures for agriculture in the outermost regions of the Union and (EU) No 229/2013 laying down specific measures for agriculture in favour of the smaller Aegean islands - Non-paper on wine grape varieties

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Delegations will find in the Annex a non-paper provided by the Bulgarian, Croatian, Cypriot, French, Greek, Hungarian, Italian, Maltese, Portuguese, Slovak, Slovenian and Spanish delegations on the above-mentioned subject.

**Non-paper of Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, France, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Malta, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia and Spain**

**on wine grape varieties**

The proposed regulation amending regulation 1308/2013 establishing a common organisation of the markets in agricultural products presented by the Commission on the 1<sup>st</sup> of June 2018 would lift the ban on producing wine of the harvest of six hybrid direct producer varieties (*Noah, Othello, Isabelle, Jacquez, Clinton and Herbemont*) and varieties of the species *Vitis labrusca*.

Although the Commission has not provided an impact assessment on the effects of the proposed modification yet, its argumentation only focuses on health and environmental issues, but ignores important market and oenological aspects such as wine quality, the reputation of European wines or the balance of supply and demand on the wine market.

We share the concerns and the goals previously outlined by the Commission on reducing the sector's environmental impact and increasing its sustainability. However, we believe that the proposal addresses the problems in a counterproductive manner. Although these varieties may seem attractive in combatting pesticide use, they were banned or marginalised in the past decades because of duly justified reasons. It is commonly agreed that their resistance is (at least) questionable, and the quality of their wines is low as they are not stable due to their low content in alcohol and acids. The image of these outdated varieties is questionable among consumers and even a simple change in their legal status could seriously harm the general reputation of EU wines. Moreover, the EU single market requires a single European regulation. These outdated varieties should be considered as specialties rather than a general solution for the EU wine sector's possible sustainability problems.

**Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, France, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Malta, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia and Spain therefore call for maintaining the status quo and keep the ban on producing wine of the harvest of six hybrid direct producer varieties (*Noah, Othello, Isabelle, Jacquez, Clinton and Herbemont*) and varieties of the species *Vitis labrusca*. The already existing derogations should be retained.**