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**NOTE**

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From: General Secretariat of the Council  
To: Delegations

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Subject: Increase of “de-minimis” aid in the agricultural, fishery and aquaculture sector  
*- Information from the German delegation, on behalf of the Austrian, Bulgarian, Croatian, Cyprus, Estonian, French, German, Hungarian, Latvian, Luxembourg, Maltese, Polish, Romanian, Slovak and Slovenian delegations*

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Delegations will find in the Annex a note from the German delegation, on behalf of the Austrian, Bulgarian, Croatian, Cyprus, Estonian, French, German, Hungarian, Latvian, Luxembourg, Maltese, Polish, Romanian, Slovak and Slovenian delegations on the above-mentioned subject, to be dealt with under "Any other business" at the Council (Agriculture and Fisheries) on 29 April 2024.

**Increase of “de-minimis” aid in the agricultural, fishery and aquaculture sector**

*Information from the German delegation, on behalf of the Austrian, Bulgarian, Croatian, Cyprus, Estonian, French, German, Hungarian, Latvian, Luxembourg, Maltese, Polish, Romanian, Slovak and Slovenian delegations*

“De-minimis” aid plays an important role in supporting our farmers in Europe. Compared to the regular procedures to be carried out under the State aid provisions, the de-minimis regulation contributes to substantial administrative simplification for both administrations and farmers.

Given its flexible applicability, it allows for a targeted response to unforeseen events. Especially in crises, the “de-minimis” aid provides for effective and tailored answers to short-term funding needs. With the design of the scheme, the otherwise incurring administrative and time burden, including notification to and state aid approval procedures by the European Commission, can be avoided, whilst allowing the precise design of the funding to meet the needs arising.

As mentioned in the Commission’s non paper, dated 15 April 2024, on support possibilities under agricultural state aid rules, the amount was last amended in 2019. Since then, the farmers in the EU have been confronted with various crises.

These circumstances call for the adaptation of the maximum de-minimis amount, as the current rules for agricultural businesses do not reflect the impact of the economic development in recent years. Moreover, the amendment to the de-minimis regulation would mitigate the consequences of inflation in the internal market. As the general de minimis regulation and the SGEI de minimis regulation recently have been adjusted to inflation, it seems only natural to increase also the maximum amount of de minimis aid in the agricultural sector. As a result, State aid control policy would be simplified.

In line with the European Council conclusion on 17 April 2024, we, the ministers of Germany, France, Austria, Croatia, Romania, Hungary, Cyprus, Slovenia, Latvia, Luxembourg, Malta, Slovakia, Estonia, Poland and Bulgaria will therefore send the annexed letter to commissioner Vestager calling on the Commission to increase the ceiling of “de-minimis” aid in the agricultural sector per single undertaking to 50.000 euros over the course of three years, and accordingly the national ceilings for the Member States.

Similar considerations should also apply in the fishery and aquaculture sector.

**European Commission  
Ms Margrethe Vestager  
Executive Vice-President**

**26. April 2024**

**Subject: Increase of “de-minimis” aid in the agricultural, fishery and aquaculture sector**

Dear Executive Vice-President,

“De-minimis” aid plays an important role in supporting our farmers in Europe. Compared to the regular procedures to be carried out under the State aid provisions, the de-minimis regulation contributes to substantial administrative simplification for both administrations and farmers.

Given its flexible applicability, it allows for a targeted response to unforeseen events. Especially in crises, the “de-minimis” aid provides for effective and tailored answers to short-term funding needs. With the design of the scheme, the otherwise incurring administrative and time burden, including notification to and state aid approval procedures by the European Commission, can be avoided, whilst allowing the precise design of the funding to meet the needs arising.

As mentioned in the Commission’s non paper dated 15 April 2024 on support possibilities under agricultural state aid rules, the maximum de-minimis amount was last amended in 2019. Since then, farmers in the EU have been confronted with various crises:

- economic with farmers who are faced with price inflation in the internal market leading to increased production costs, imbalances along the supply chain and changes in the consumers’ behaviour,
- multiplication of climatic events such as droughts, floods, frosts, storms etc. and
- sanitary crises due to animal diseases or plant pests including damages pursuant to the ban of certain plant protection products.

These circumstances call for the adaptation of the maximum de-minimis amount, as the current rules for agricultural businesses do not reflect the impact of the economic development in recent years. Moreover, the amendment to the de-minimis regulation would mitigate the consequences of inflation in the internal market. As the general de minimis regulation and the SGEI de minimis regulation recently have been adjusted to inflation, it seems only natural to increase also the maximum amount of de minimis aid in the agricultural sector. As a result, State aid control policy would be simplified.

In line with the European Council conclusion on 17 April 2024 and as proposed by Italy and supported by many Member States in the Agriculture and Fishery Council in February 2024, we, the ministers from Germany, France, Austria, Croatia, Romania, Cyprus, Hungary, Slovenia, Latvia, Luxembourg, Malta, Slovakia, Estonia, Poland and Bulgaria therefore call on the Commission to increase the ceiling of “de-minimis” aid in the agricultural sector per single undertaking to 50.000 Euros over the course of three years, and accordingly the national ceilings for the Member States.

Similar considerations should also apply in the fishery and aquaculture sector.

We remain at your disposal for a further exchange on that matter.

<p>Cem Özdemir Federal Minister of Food and Agriculture, Germany</p>	<p>Marc Fesneau Ministre de l’Agriculture et de la souveraineté alimentaire, France</p>
<p>Norbert Totschnig Federal Minister of Agriculture, Forestry, Regions and Water Management, Austria</p>	<p>Marija Vučković Minister of Agriculture, Croatia</p>

Florin Ionuț Barbu Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, Romania	Maria Panayiotou Minister of Agriculture, Rural development and Environment, Cyprus
Dr. István Nagy Minister of Agriculture of Hungary	Mateja Čalušič Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Food, Slovenia
Armands Krauze Minister for Agriculture, Latvia	Martine Hansen Minister for Agriculture, Food and Viticulture, Luxembourg
Anton Refalo Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Animal Rights, Malta	Richard Takáč Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, Slovakia
Marko Gorban Secretary General of the Ministry of Regional Affairs and Agriculture, Estonia	Czesław Siekierski Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, Poland
Georgi Tahov Minister of Agriculture, Bulgaria	