

# **Geneva Act of the Lisbon Agreement on Appellations of Origin and Geographical Indications: accession of the European Union**

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The Committee on Legal Affairs adopted the report by Virginie ROZIÈRE (S&D, FR) on the draft Council decision on the accession of the European Union to the Geneva Act of the Lisbon Agreement on Appellations of Origin and Geographical Indications.

The committee recommended that the European Parliament give its consent to the accession of the European Union to the Act.

The Lisbon Agreement for the Protection of Appellations of Origin and their International Registration of 31 October 1958 created a 'Special Union' within the framework of the Union for the Protection of Industrial Property established by the 1883 Paris Convention for the Protection of Industrial Property.

On 20 May 2015, the Geneva Act revised the Lisbon Agreement. The Geneva Act expands the scope of the Lisbon system beyond appellations of origin to cover all geographical indications and makes it possible for international organisations, such as the European Union, to become contracting parties.

The Union has exclusive competence for the areas covered by the Geneva Act.

For certain agricultural products, the Union has put in place uniform and comprehensive protection systems for geographical indications for wines (1970), spirits (1989), aromatised wines (1991) and other agricultural products and foodstuffs (1992). However, without accession, the EU and its Member States would not be able to benefit from the Geneva Act of the Lisbon Agreement.

The rapporteur therefore welcomes the Council's decision to approve the Union's accession to the Geneva Act. She also welcomes the possibility for Member States to accede to the said Act in the interest of the Union and with due respect for its exclusive competence, which will guarantee the Union's right to vote while accommodating the particular situation of Member States already contracting parties to the Lisbon Agreement.