

Agenda 2000: wine, reform of the common organisation of the market COM

1998/0126(CNS) - 11/02/1999 - Text adopted by Parliament, partial vote at 1st reading/single reading

After voting a large number of non-binding amendments to the Commission's proposal to reform wine policy, MEPs then voted to refer the report, drafted by Mr. Philippe-Armand MARTIN (UPE, F), back to Committee for further discussions. The amendments included the following : - defining wine as an agricultural product resulting exclusively from the fermentation of grapes or fresh musts that have not been stabilised or frozen. - recognition of the importance of opening up external markets and providing better information for consumers about wine and health. - rights for new plantations : the EP wants the right to new plantations to correspond to 3% of the total surface area of the Member State planted in vines, whereas the Commission proposed a maximum 1% extension of Community vineyard surface area. The Member States would be accorded new rights every two years counting from the 2002-3 harvest year, depending on the situation of the markets for certain wines. - replanting : the EP considers that the right to replanting must allow vines to be planted over a surface area that is equivalent during thirteen years following the grubbing year. This right would be transferable from one farm to another at the same time as part of the farm. - creation of an aid regime for the transfer of wine-growing properties in order to facilitate the installation of young operators. - reconversion regime to be also allocated to rejuvenation. In addition to reconversion according to variety, the replanting of vineyards and management technique improvements, this regime should cover improved quality and vinification cellars, rejuvenation of the vineyards, replacement in the case of major health/sanitary problems and reconversion for biological wine growing. - all wines must belong to the species *Vitis vinifera*, in contrast to the Commission's proposal that wines would also be able to come from a cross between the above species and other species of the *Vitis* kind. - a committee of wine-growing experts from professional organisations, consumer associations and environmental protection organisations, as well as the Member States should be established to decide on lists of wine types and to ensure the preservation of the plant heritage formed by the older varieties that are fast disappearing. - support measures should be introduced for professional organisation in order to improve the promotion and marketing of wine. - grapes, musts and other products derived from grapes originating in third countries should, under no circumstance, be the subject of vinification or be added to wine in the context of Community production. The Ep recommends that the Commission should set up a group of special agents responsible for controlling the uniform application of the Regulation.