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## MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CDG WINE

*Meeting via videoconference (Interactio)  
on 10 November 2022*

Chair: AGRI.E2

Delegations present: All Delegations present (see Annex), except European Federation of Food, Agriculture and Tourism Trade Unions (EFFAT), European Public Health Alliance (EPHA), Pesticide Action Network Europe (PAN Europe), FoodDrinkEurope.

### 1. Approval of the agenda and of the minutes of previous meeting

The agenda was approved without changes.

### 2. Nature of the meeting

The meeting was non-public.

### 3. List of points discussed

#### 3.1. Wine Market situation and trade developments

The Commission services presented the market situation. The estimated EU wine production 2022/23 (161 Mio HI) foresees yields slightly increasing compared to the production 2021/22 (+1%), but remains below the five-year average (-2%). All the observers foresee a vintage 2022/23 of very good quality.

With an estimated production of 50,3 Mio HI (same as 2021), Italy would remain at the top, followed by France (44 Mio HI +18%) and Spain (37 Mio HI -7 %). These three Member States represent 81% of the Union production (IT 31%, FR 27% and ES 23%).

More than two thirds of the wines produced are quality wines (this proportion remains stable: 47% are PDOs and 22% are PGIs). Over the last three campaigns, there is a trend towards a slight increase in the production of PDOs, PGIs and varietal wines while the production of wines without appellations is going downward.

During the campaign 2021/22, exports of wines outside the EU broke again a record, even better than in 20/21: 32.1 Mio HI of wine have been exported, i.e. +12% compared to last year. These exports are mainly supported by quality wines, and PDOs alone represent more than half of the exports. In value, it is the same: record broken with 17.2 billion euros exported. PDOs and PGIs represent 90% of the value

exported. However, since August/September 22, there has been a slowdown of exports.

ECVC stated that the reduction of 9% for PT seemed too optimistic, in view of the effects on the harvest of extreme summer conditions, which add to the price of raw materials. She concluded that the profitability will be very difficult next year. COPA concurred with this assessment referring to IT, and added the reduction in domestic consumption to this picture. COPA asked for action at EU level, proposing a package of flexible measures (including investments, dates of planting/replanting) similar to those implemented during the Covid-19.

The COM concluded by calling for a prudent approach and taking decisions based on the monitoring of market developments, and asked the CDG members to continue providing information to the COM on the market situation.

### **3.2. Re-evaluation of metatartaric acid (E 353) from the Union list of authorised food additives**

DG SANTE, Unit E2, explained that in 2020, the safety of the permitted food additive metatartaric acid (E 353) was re-evaluated by the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA)<sup>1</sup> in the context of the programme for the re-evaluation of approved food additives required by Regulation No 1333/2008. In its opinion, EFSA made several recommendations concerning the specifications for metatartaric acid (E 353) in Regulation No 231/2012. In line with the approach<sup>2</sup> agreed for the follow-up of such inconclusive scientific opinions, DG SANTE E2 organised a call for data (published 19 January 2021) requesting business operators to submit the technical data needed to address the issues identified by EFSA by 19 July 2021. However, no data were received by the given deadline.

Based on this lack of interest, it could be concluded that there was no interest that metatartaric acid (E 353) remains permitted in the EU and the current authorisation for the use of metatartaric acid (E 353) as a food additive should be terminated. A targeted stakeholder consultation was performed regarding this proposed follow-up. Feedback was received confirming the interest to maintain the authorisation of metatartaric acid (E 353) in the EU with the commitment to submit the required data.

Therefore, the call for data was re-opened with a deadline of 30 November 2022. After this deadline, the submitted data will be checked and if indeed the required data have been submitted, DG SANTE will request EFSA to evaluate the new technical data to verify whether they are suitable to address the corresponding amendment to the existing specifications for metatartaric acid (E 353) in line with the recommendations made by EFSA during the re-evaluation of the safety of this food additive.

DG SANTE E2 also stressed the importance of receiving the data during the call for data, rather than when the call is already closed and the data analysis was finalised.

### **3.3. Update on the Delegated Regulation on the list of ingredients**

The COM presented the situation of the works developing a Delegated Regulation addressing the needs arising from the latest CMO revision, in particular concerning the obligation to provide the list of ingredients in grapevine products.

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<sup>1</sup> EFSA Journal 2020;18(3):6031 (<https://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/6031>)

<sup>2</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/food/system/files/2022-01/fs\\_food-improvement-agents\\_reeval\\_approach.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/food/system/files/2022-01/fs_food-improvement-agents_reeval_approach.pdf)

The process followed in the rounds of drafting included consultations involving experts from the EU Member States and specific discussions in four meetings of the GREX–Wine on 29 April, 20 June, 27 September and 20 October 2022. In addition, the Commission received and analysed position papers from representatives of the sector and Member States. The draft text is finished and will go through the regular adoption procedure.

The COM explained the steps of the procedure from now on, which involve a check by the legal service, an interservice consultation, a TBT (Technical Barriers to Trade) consultation, a public feedback mechanism, and the translation to all EU languages. As the regulation is linked to an implementing act, the voting and adoption of the latter would take place would follow. In conclusion, adoption should take 4,5 to 5 months, and publication would take place after the 2-month scrutiny period.

The COM provided a few remarks concerning the list of ingredients, namely on the relationship with the Food Information to Consumers (FIC) Regulation.

Various CDG members expressed general satisfaction with the draft text (the version leaked after the last GREX meeting). The members noted the delay necessary to finalise the procedure, but insisted on the importance of early adoption to ensure legal certainty and enough time to implement the necessary adaptation of labels. They requested the provision of guidelines on the interpretation of the new rules, to provide clarity *vis a vis* the CMO and the FIC Regulation.

There were also some comments on an article in the draft referring to the wines transported in bulk, and requests for explanations on diverging dates of entry into force; the COM clarified that that article is not anymore in the latest draft, nor the divergence in the referred dates.

### **3.4. Revision of Geographical Indications system: state of play**

Commission representative mentioned the timetable and progress made by the Council Working Group under both the French and Czech Presidency as well as the works carried out in the European Parliament with the draft report by MEP Mr De Castro. Main areas of discussion, besides the scope of the regulation as well as the definitions, are on the novelties that were introduced: (recognised) producer groups, evocation, sustainability and EUIPO. She mentioned it unlikely that a General Approach would be adopted by the Council by the end of the year.

Several organisations (CELCAA, CEEV, COPA COGECA, EFOW, CEVI) took the floor. While positive opinions were expressed on the proposal, creating an opportunity to bring added value to the sector, concerns were raised that the simplification could lead to bureaucratic burden (CELCAA). The importance to respect wine specificities was stressed (COPA COGECA/CEEV/EFOW/CEVI) and a prudent approach as to the involvement of EUIPO was echoed by all organisations (except CEEV), expressing the need for the Commission to keep ultimate responsibility as well as a clear definition of potential roles of EUIPO. EFOW stressed for sustainability considerations to be flexible while CELCAA sees a more prominent role by introducing those into the GI product specifications.

In response to the interventions made, Commission representative confirmed that all the mentioned topics are high on the agenda of Council and of the European Parliament. When it comes to EUIPO, the aim of the Commission is to maintain the status quo of the current cooperation, as a minimum, while keeping full responsibility. On the specificity of the wine sector, the Commission is of the opinion that the sector could benefit from joining forces with the other GI sectors, to face

upcoming challenges in relation to e.g. the promotion of wine products and the framework on sustainable food systems.

### **3.5. Revision of the EU Regulation 1169/2011 on Food Information to Consumers**

In the absence of the relevant COM experts (DG SANTE), this agenda item was not addressed.

### **3.6. Irish Regulations on Wine labelling – TRIS & FIC procedures**

DG GROW, Unit E.3 explained the scope of Directive 2015/1535 (SMTD), the relationship between Directive 2015/1535 and Regulation 2011/1169 (FIC) and the limits of the assessment of the draft text under the SMTD.

In this respect, she underlined that the parts of the draft text laying down rules on health warning fell within the notification scope of Article 45 FIC, whilst the rules regarding the display of information regarding energy value and alcohol content were examined under the scope of the SMTD. With respect the latter, the Commission services did not raise objections to the rules regarding display of said nutritional information.

COPA and CELCAA showed concern on the management of this file and the absence of a detailed COM opinion, highlighting the risks for the single market of this decision by one MS. They recalled the concerns sent by many MS to the TRIS consultation. They also asked for the scientific evidence backing the Irish bill. EFOW expressed the confusion of the stakeholders on the whole process and questioned how a bill that is inconsistent with the FIC Regulation has not been stopped.

The COM concluded suggesting the members of CDG send their questions in written, so they can be replied by the relevant DGs.

### **3.7. Sustainable Food Systems Framework**

AGRI.A1 presented the state of play of the forthcoming Commission's proposal on the Framework Law on the Sustainable Food Systems (FSFS). It was explained that the initiative aims at promoting a better policy coherence at EU and Member States level, mainstreaming sustainability in all food-related policies, strengthening the resilience of the food system, while ensuring a better food environment where choosing healthy and sustainable food is easier for consumers.

The main policy options in relation to minimum requirements, sustainability label, procurement and governance were presented, together with some indicative elements that are part of the ongoing Commission's impact assessment and current reflection.

Participants (COPA; CELCAA) stressed the importance to build up as much as possible on existing efforts of the private sector, recognising the diversity and specificities of agri-food sectors in the EU. The CDG stressed the importance to ensure an open and regular involvement of the stakeholders in the definition of the sustainability aspects to be included in the Framework Law. They expressed support to voluntary systems and digital labels. CELCAA proposed a harmonised and transparent system of mutual recognition of sustainability labels.

### **3.8. Revision of the European policy on Sustainable Use of pesticides**

In the absence of the relevant COM experts (DG SANTE), this agenda item was dropped.

### **3.9. Health issues of pesticides in wine**

Dr G. Mazzi (International Society of Doctors for Environment, ISDE) made a presentation highlighting the risks and damages of both occupational and other types of exposure (e.g. living in neighbouring areas to areas treated) as well as direct consumption of food and drinks with pesticides, even in very low amounts, as they are a primary cause of cancer, but also of other disorders (attention/hyperactivity, autism, obesity, diabetes, sexual differentiation and fertility disorders) due to their action as Endocrine Disrupting Chemicals (EDC), and Immune Disrupting Chemicals (IDC). Dr Mazzi also highlighted the problems for detecting damage to health, in the absence of a methodology to check the additive and synergistic toxicity of pesticides present in food.

Beyond the reduction objectives defined in the Farm to Fork Strategy on use of pesticides and the focus on the most hazardous pesticides, Dr Mazzi advised wine producers to consider EDC and IDC to be extremely dangerous.

COPA underlined the importance of the topic and the will of the sector to move forward tackling the sustainability and health concerns, and to be a partner in the development of high standards for health and the environment. They underlined the EU environmental and health policies are the most advanced and guarantee that external food products, including wine, are often more damaging than the domestic ones. They underlined the need to develop research on alternatives, including on disease-resistant molecules to secure the future of vineyards. They also stated that if the sector is in crisis, progress will be slower.

### **3.10. Update on the review of the promotion policy for EU agri-food products and 2023**

AGRI.F.1 provided updated information on the Annual Work Programme 2023, and informed the CDG members of the outcome of the vote in the CMO meeting of 28 October 2022. AGRI.F.1 gave also an update on the Promotion policy review and informed the CDG members that the impact assessment has been completed and that internal discussions are ongoing concerning the future proposal. A precise timeline for the adoption of the proposals was not provided. Finally, the presentation included concrete examples from Commission own initiatives on wine promotion which recently took place in Australia, Mexico and South Africa.

COPA COGECA emphasised its opposition to any “discrimination/exclusion” against the wine sector, as a key agricultural product that builds an important economic, industrial and social network in rural areas, and that is going through a critical phase. CELCAA invited the Commission to take into account market trends when drafting the annual work programme, and stated that the budget allocation is disproportionate to “Organics”, calling for a fairer budget distribution. CEVI thanked the Commission for its actions in wine promotion under Commission own initiatives, as wine is in the top agricultural products exported in third markets

### **3.11. Packaging and Packaging Waste Directive review**

The presentation of this agenda item was not possible due to connection problems.

Some questions raised by the CDG member included a request for confirmation whether wine is excluded from the regulation target, according to a leaked version; they showed concern on the impact of targets for a product that is widely exported; and on the need to consider trade-offs for increased targets on reuse, including for the environment.

### **3.12. AOB**

#### **3.12.1. Variétés hybrides/résistantes dans l'UE**

M. Hochereau (INRAE, France) presented a comprehensive overview of the state of art in the EU developing and introducing grape varieties (so-called 'Piwis') resistant to some of the most prominent challenges that may constrain viticulture now and in the future, namely on climate change, environment and health. He presented a detailed picture of the research and developments of viticulture in DE using experimental varieties, and the lessons learnt from the past. The situation in HU, CZ and other Northern countries was also followed by a presentation of the situation, perception and development in FR and IT. As a conclusion, M. Hochereau claimed the need to balance resistance, quality and identity, as the formula for successful introduction of new varieties, and reflected on the decisions to be made in the near future to facilitate the integration of these varieties in winemaking. Finally a list of existing experimental varieties (Piwis) was presented and described.

Participants underlined the problem for matching the new varieties with the tradition and reputation values of wine. They insisted that Piwis are considered a tool to develop and test resistance, used in grafting but not in vinification. They also underlined the need to carry out a clever marketing by presenting positive arguments about the use of Piwis.

#### **4. Next meeting**

Next meeting is planned to take place next 15 May, 2023

#### **5. List of participants**

See Annex

[e-signed]

Pierre BASCOU

Annex: List of participants  
**MEETING OF THE CDG WINE**  
**10 November 2022**

<b>ORGANIZATIONS</b>
Confédération européenne des vignerons indépendants (CEVI)
European agri-cooperatives (COGECA)
European Coordination Via Campesina (ECVC)
European Council of Young farmers (CEJA)
European farmers (COPA)
European Federation of Origin Wines (EFOW)
European Liaison Committee for Agriculture and agri-food trade (CELCAA)
European Alcohol Policy Alliance (Eurocare)
IFOAM Organics Europe
ad hoc expert 1
ad hoc expert 2