Wednesday 16 December 2020

P9_TA(2020)0354

Transitional provisions for support from the EAFRD and EAGF in the years 2021 and 2022 ***I

European Parliament legislative resolution of 16 December 2020 on the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council laying down certain transitional provisions for the support by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) and by the European Agricultural Guarantee Fund (EAGF) in the year 2021 and amending Regulations (EU) No 228/2013, (EU) No 229/2013 and (EU) No 1308/2013 as regards resources and their distribution in respect of the year 2021 and amending Regulations (EU) No 1305/2013, (EU) No 1306/2013 and (EU) No 1307/2013 as regards their resources and application in the year 2021 (COM(2019)0581 — C9-0162/2019 — 2019/0254(COD))

(Ordinary legislative procedure: first reading)

(2021/C 445/40)

The European Parliament,

— having regard to the Commission proposal to Parliament and the Council (COM(2019)0581),

— having regard to Article 294(2) and Article 43(2) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, pursuant to which the Commission submitted the proposal to Parliament (C9-0162/2019),

— having regard to Article 294(3) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union,

— having regard to the opinion of the Court of Auditors of 26 February 2020 [1],

— having regard to the opinion of the European Economic and Social Committee of 7 May 2020 [2],

— after consulting the Committee of the Regions,

— having regard to the provisional agreement approved by the committee responsible under Rule 74(4) of its Rules of Procedure, and the information from the Council on approval of Parliament's position, in accordance with Article 294 (4) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union,

— having regard to Rule 59 of its Rules of Procedure,

— having regard to the opinion of the Committee on Regional Development,

— having regard to the letter from the Committee on Budgets,

— having regard to the report of the Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development (A9-0101/2020),

1. Adopts its position at first reading hereinafter set out;

2. Approves its statements annexed to this resolution;

3. Approves the joint statements by Parliament and the Council annexed to this resolution;

4. Takes note of the statements by the Commission annexed to this resolution;

5. Calls on the Commission to refer the matter to Parliament again if it replaces, substantially amends or intends to substantially amend its proposal;

6. Instructs its President to forward its position to the Council, the Commission and the national parliaments.

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[1] OJ C 109, 1.4.2020, p. 1.
[2] OJ C 232, 14.7.2020, p. 29.

Wednesday 16 December 2020

P9_TC1-COD(2019)0254

Position of the European Parliament adopted at first reading on 16 December 2020 with a view to the adoption of Regulation (EU) 2020/… of the European Parliament and of the Council laying down certain transitional provisions for support from the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) and from the European Agricultural Guarantee Fund (EAGF) in the years 2021 and 2022 and amending Regulations (EU) No 1305/2013, (EU) No 1306/2013 and (EU) No 1307/2013 as regards resources and application in the years 2021 and 2022 and Regulation (EU) No 1308/2013 as regards resources and the distribution of such support in respect of the years 2021 and 2022

(As an agreement was reached between Parliament and Council, Parliament's position corresponds to the final legislative act, Regulation (EU) 2020/2220.)

Wednesday 16 December 2020

ANNEX TO THE LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION

Statement by the European Parliament on CAP transitional arrangements and the Multiannual Financial Framework

Crisis reserve fund

Since its establishment in 2014, the reserve for crises in the agricultural sector has never been activated due to the mechanism of financial discipline provided for in Article 25 of Regulation (EU) No 1306/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council, according to which funding for that reserve is drawn at the beginning of each year from the total amount of direct payments. Unused money is returned to direct payments at the end of the year. As a result, the reserve has never been used in order to avoid withholding resources from farmers.

Established to assist farmers with price or market instability, the fact that the reserve has never been activated is testament to the limitation of its financial structure and operation. The increasing frequency of economic, as well as adverse climate and sanitary, conditions resulting in significant market disruption, demonstrates the urgent need for a fully-functioning crisis reserve fund, which can be activated and made available in a responsive and efficient manner.

The European Parliament stresses that a fully-financed crisis reserve fund, initially established at EUR 400 million in addition to the EAGF and EAFRD budgets, which is cumulative, with unused funds carried over and added to the following year across the programming period, would function more effectively and with greater impact to provide timely crisis assistance and the funding of targeted measures for the sectors affected.

POSEI and Aegean islands

Due to their geographical situation, in particular their remoteness, insularity, small size, difficult topography and climate, the outermost regions, as referred to in Article 349 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, are faced with specific socio-economic problems related to the supply of food and agricultural products essential for consumption or agricultural production. Specific measures in the agricultural sector to remedy the difficulties caused by that specific situation, as provided for in that Article, were established in Regulation (EU) No 228/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council. Furthermore the scheme for specific measures for agriculture in favour of the smaller Aegean islands provided for under Regulation (EU) No 229/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council also tackles the same issues but in a different geographical location.

The importance of specific measures and opportunities in those regions and islands justifies the level of special support which is crucial for the successful implementation of those measures. Therefore, taking into account the public commitments previously given by the Commission to those regions and islands, the European Parliament calls for the undisturbed continuation of the very successful programmes run under Regulations (EU) No 228/2013 and (EU) No 229/2013 and the maintenance of at least the current level of support for those regions and islands. In that way, the Union would show its solidarity and commitment to those regions and islands facing specific disadvantages.

Statement by the European Parliament on interbranch organisations in the outermost regions

Given their very small size and their insularity, local markets in the outermost regions are particularly vulnerable to price fluctuations linked to import flows from the rest of the Union or from third countries. Article 349 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) recognises the special needs of the outermost regions and sets out the basis for a legislative framework to help them tackle their particular situations. This is further addressed in Regulation (EU) No 228/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council. In particular, since the use of interbranch organisations has shown potential for addressing the specific needs of the agricultural production sectors in the outermost regions, flexibility in the implementation of the relevant provisions of Regulation (EU) No 1308/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council in those regions should already be allowed in order to fully harness the resources allocated by this Transitional Regulation to those regions. Therefore, the interbranch organisations which are recognised under Article 157 of Regulation (EU) No 1308/2013 and are deemed representative should have the possibility to take the necessary collective measures designed to ensure that local production remains competitive on the local markets in question and sustainable. To that end, notwithstanding Articles 28, 29 and 110 TFEU and Article 165 of Regulation (EU) No 1308/2013, and without prejudice to Article 164 of that Regulation and based on Article 349 TFEU as interpreted by the Court of Justice of the European Union in its judgment in joined cases C-132/14 to C-136/14, the European Parliament emphasises the importance of exploring all appropriate instruments in order to allow the Member States concerned, in the context of extended interbranch agreements and after consultation with the stakeholders concerned, to make individual operators or groups of economic operators who are not members of the interbranch organisation concerned but which operate on the local market in question, irrespective of their origin, pay that organisation all or part of the financial contributions paid by its members, including in cases where the proceeds of those contributions fund measures to maintain only local production or where the contributions are levied at a different stage in the marketing process.

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Joint statement by the European Parliament and the Council on the outermost regions and smaller Aegean islands

The European Parliament and the Council recall:

— the importance of specific measures for the outermost regions, in accordance with Article 349 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union and Regulation (EU) No 228/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council, to take account of the special characteristics of those regions;

— the importance of specific measures for agriculture in favour of the smaller Aegean islands established under Regulation (EU) No 229/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council; and

— that the above issues justify special support for those regions and islands, in order to implement appropriate measures.

Joint statement by the European Parliament and the Council on EU funding arrangements for POSEI and the smaller Aegean islands

The European Parliament and the Council underline that the EU funding arrangements for POSEI and the smaller Aegean islands included in this Transitional Regulation for 2021 and 2022 are exceptional, reflecting the particularity of the circumstances, and do not constitute a precedent for future CAP financing, neither for the outermost regions and the smaller Aegean islands, nor for direct payments.

Statement by the Commission on the marketing rules on olive oil

The Commission takes note of the political agreement between Parliament and Council on the Parliament's amendment 106, inserting a new Article 167a into the CMO Regulation regarding the olive oil sector. The Commission notes that this amendment agreed by Parliament and Council is not in line with the principle of continuity of current rules that governs the Transitional Regulation, is substantive in nature and has been included by the co-legislators without an impact assessment as required by point 15 of the Inter-Institutional Agreement on Better Law-Making. The Commission recalls its commitment to maintain effective competition in the agricultural sector and to give full effect to the objectives of the CAP laid down in Article 39 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union.

Statement by the Commission on ANC payments

The Commission takes note of the agreement between the co-legislators that the EURI funds, when integrated into the EAFRD, may be used to finance payments for areas facing natural or other specific constraints (ANC payments).

The Commission has already stated its concerns about the limited contribution of ANC payments to environmental and climate objectives, considering that farmers do not have to carry out any specific practices to receive the payment. For this reason, the inclusion of ANC payments under the part of the EURI funds dedicated to contribute to environmental and climate objectives should not be considered as a precedent during the negotiations on the future CAP.