

Mr. Janusz Wojciechowski

European Commissioner for Agriculture and Rural Development

Brussels, 30.04.2020

Esteemed Commissioner,

Following the discussion in the European Parliament's Committee for Agriculture and Rural Development on the wine sector, please find our letter of concern regarding the exceptional measures proposed by the European Commission to mitigate the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on this specific market with a longstanding European tradition. Adhering to the arguments of the influential wine producing Member States in the European Union, such as France, Italy and Spain, our delegation would like to emphasize the dire need for additional schemes and funding for the Romanian wine sector, which has absorbed so far more than 400 million euro, providing jobs for more than 60,000 workers.

Since the beginning of the pandemic, in Romania, as well as in all other EU's Member States, all the restaurants, bars, cafes and other HoReCa outlets selling wine products have been closed. Consequently, the sales of wine have dropped dramatically and this crisis is far from over. The drop in consumption on the internal market as well as the drop in exports is by no means offset by retail and online sales.

While we welcome the Commission's proposal to make measures within the wine national support programmes (NSP) more flexible, as well as exceptional measures proposed under Article 219 such as crisis distillation, private storage and green harvesting, such proposals are definitely insufficient

from a financial perspective, making them almost inaccessible with the remaining NSP budget.

Consequently, one opportunity to help the wine sector survive this disastrous situation would be the reactivation of the single payment scheme of the vine, according to Art. 221 of the Regulation (EU) No. 1308/2013. The funds for implementing the single payment scheme in the wine sector would be supported from the budgets already approved and will not influence the EU budget.

We remain at your disposal for any further details and we count on your ability to find a positive solution.

Sincerely yours,

Social-Democratic Romanian delegation in the European Parliament

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