

Question for written answer E-001399/2015
to the Commission
Rule 130
Alessia Maria Mosca (S&D)

Subject: EU-Korea agreement on trade in organic products

The EU-Korea agreement on the mutual recognition of systems for the certification of organic products will enter into force in February, once a few remaining technical details have been ironed out. It will help the two sides to overcome the problems which have arisen following Korea's introduction of more stringent rules in July 2014. The successful conclusion of the negotiations is good news, coming as it does against the background of a rapidly expanding Korean market. It has been welcomed in particular by the EU food industry, because it does away with the need for double certification and thus simplifies procedures and cuts through the red tape which was previously hampering firms. Now that the duties, checks and documentation required under the two certification systems have been abolished, producers of organic foodstuffs will find it much easier to gain access to market with a combined value of EUR 23 billion generated by increasing demand from 550 million consumers.

1. Can the Commission state what criteria were used to determine that the Korean organic certification system is consistent with the production standards laid down by Regulation (EC) No 834/2007?
2. Can it specify which products will be covered by the mutual recognition arrangements?
3. What impact is the agreement likely to have on growth and jobs, in particular in small and medium-sized firms?