

**Question for written answer E-003769/2015**  
**to the Commission**  
Rule 130  
**Alberto Cirio (PPE)**

Subject: Interpretation of the decoupling principle

In its Decision No 802/2015, the Regional Administrative Court of Lazio reinstated a circular from the Italian Agricultural Payments Agency (AGEA), numbered ACIU.2013.979, which establishes the inadmissibility of third-party grazing for rural landowners, in an attempt to obtain direct payments.

This regulatory U-turn has caused numerous economic and organisational problems for the appellants, who had responded on the basis of a legitimate expectation concerning laws which have been developed over many years and are compliant with European Union legislation.

1. Given the lack of legislative changes at a European and national level, does the Commission believe that the new interpretation adopted by AGEA is correct and in line with the decoupling principle?
2. If said change is deemed to be in conformity with Union legislation, does the Commission not believe that it should have been implemented with an extension giving the appellants sufficient time to reorganise, given that the sentence of the Regional Administrative Court could result in wholly unforeseeable consequences for the direct payments scheme, with repercussions on the calculation of CAP payments for 2015 as well?
3. Finally, does it believe that the appellants are owed compensation for any economic losses suffered as a result of AGEA's abrupt change of interpretation?