

**Question for written answer P-000883/2019
to the Commission**

Rule 130

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Subject: Shepherds' protests in Sardinia

Cheese is Sardinia's leading export item; overall, it indirectly provides employment for some 25 000 workers and the very survival of companies and families is linked to the operation of this market and to the earnings generated from the sale of the raw material. Sheep milk producers in Sardinia are being forced to operate within a market regime that is now prohibitive, due to the changes in rules on the quality of the finished product and the imports of low-cost milk from Member States such as Romania and Bulgaria. In order to attract the attention of all the authorities, including the EU, the shepherds have been forced to undertake extreme protest measures, even going so far as to pour the milk produced onto the ground. The issue could therefore soon become disastrous.

Can the Commission say:

- 1) whether it intends to take any action to defend the rights of Sardinian shepherds, which are currently being trampled upon with impunity;
- 2) whether and how it will take action to ensure a fair competition system within the EU, respecting the quality and excellence of the Sardinian produce?