



CAP reform deal: MEPs ensure significant improvements in future farm policy

Committees Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development [25-09-2013 - 14:03]

Parliament and Council negotiators reached a deal Tuesday evening on outstanding Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) reform issues such as co-financing rates for rural development and cuts to payments to big farms, after the Council showed flexibility on issues of crucial importance to Parliament: The deal was based on the new mandate adopted on 23 September by the Agriculture and Fisheries Council.

"We are very proud to have managed such a complex reform in such a short time, said Agriculture Committee chair and negotiating team leader Paolo De Castro (S&D, IT).

"It was a huge dossier and the European Parliament was for the first time involved as co-legislator on the CAP reform under the co-decision procedure. We proved that Parliament could make the reform better and more democratic, whilst working swiftly enough to ensure that farmers will benefit on time from the new CAP", he added.

"The CAP is reformed to face the challenges of the present and the future. Thanks to the European Parliament's co-decision powers, this is the fairest reform of the agricultural policy in Europe to serve not only farmers but also citizens and taxpayers", said rapporteur on Rural Development and Direct Payments Luis Manuel Capoulas Santos (S&D, PT).

For Parliament, the key issue in this final negotiating phase was to ensure that policy content which should be legislated under co-decision is not determined solely by heads of state. For example, negotiators saw it as essential that the Council accept Parliament's demand to increase the rural development co-financing rate (i.e. the EU contribution) for less-developed regions, outermost regions and smaller Aegean islands to 85%.

The Council also agreed to include the annual breakdown by member state of the rural development budget in an annex to the rural development regulation, granting the Commission the power to amend this annex through delegated acts (i.e. on its own initiative) in clearly defined circumstances.

Direct basic or single area payments of above €150,000 to large farms will be reduced by at least 5%.

Next steps

The Agriculture and Rural Development Committee will take its first reading vote on 30 September, which will then have to be confirmed in plenary during the second October session or the November session.

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