



EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

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Plenary sitting

A7-0247/2011

24.6.2011

RECOMMENDATION

on the draft Council decision on the conclusion of the Agreement between the European Union and the Swiss Confederation on the protection of designations of origin and geographical indications for agricultural products and foodstuffs, amending the Agreement between the European Community and the Swiss Confederation on trade in agricultural products (16198/2010 – C7– 0126/2011 – 2010/0317(NLE))

Committee on International Trade

Rapporteur: Béla Glattfelder

Symbols for procedures

- * Consultation procedure
- *** Consent procedure
- ***I Ordinary legislative procedure (first reading)
- ***II Ordinary legislative procedure (second reading)
- ***III Ordinary legislative procedure (third reading)

(The type of procedure depends on the legal basis proposed by the draft act.)

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DRAFT EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION

**on the draft Council decision on the conclusion of the Agreement between the European Union and the Swiss Confederation on the protection of designations of origin and geographical indications for agricultural products and foodstuffs, amending the Agreement between the European Community and the Swiss Confederation on trade in agricultural products
(16198/2010 – C7– 0126/2011 – 2010/0317(NLE))**

(Consent)

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the draft Council decision (16198/2010),
 - having regard to the draft Agreement between the European Union and the Swiss Confederation on the protection of designations of origin and geographical indications for agricultural products and foodstuffs, amending the Agreement between the European Community and the Swiss Confederation on trade in agricultural products (16199/2010),
 - having regard to the request for consent submitted by the Council in accordance with Article 207(4), first subparagraph and Article 218(6), second subparagraph, point (a)(v), of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (C7-0126/2011),
 - having regard to Rules 81 and 90(8) of its Rules of Procedure,
 - having regard to the recommendation of the Committee on International Trade and the opinion of the Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development (A7-0247/2011),
1. Consents to conclusion of the Agreement;
 2. Instructs its President to forward its position to the Council, the Commission and the governments and parliaments of the Member States and of the Swiss Confederation.

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

Switzerland is the European Union's fourth trading partner and in particular the values of exports and imports of agricultural products between the EU and Switzerland are very significant. In 2010, the EU exported Switzerland agricultural products for a value of €6.3 Bn which made of this country the third biggest export market for the EU's agricultural products. Therefore it is of the utmost importance that the European Union continuously works with the Swiss authorities to improve the conditions and the terms of the bilateral commercial relations.

The EU and Switzerland have defined their relations by establishing bilateral treaties in various fields. In order to minimise the negative consequences of the rejection of the EEA agreement by Switzerland in 1992, negotiations for commercial agreements were launched in seven sectors, including agricultural products. The agreement on agriculture (herein "the Agreement") was concluded in 1999 and has been in force since June 1st, 2002. It has not created a total free agricultural trade but only a partial liberalisation for some agricultural sectors.

The Agreement contains 11 Annexes, of which the European Commission has negotiated various upgrades, due to the enlargement of the European Union in 2004 and 2007 and to enhance the agricultural relations between both parties.

In December 2008, the European Union adopted an agreement (COM(2008)0509) aiming at the facilitation of agricultural trade between both parties, especially for wine and spirits, by removing technical barriers. In 2009, the European Parliament gave its consent to an agreement between the EC and the Swiss confederation which aimed at amending the Annex 11 on veterinary measures (COM(2008)0685).

Now, by adding a new annex (Annex 12), the two parties (the EU and Switzerland) seek to ensure the mutual recognition of protected designations of origins and protected geographical indications in order to preserve the conditions of bilateral trade in agricultural products while promoting the quality of the food chain.

Both parties have agreed on a harmonized procedure for designating and effectively protecting registered origins and geographical indications. Following this common understanding and the convergence of their domestic legislation, both parties have mutually recognized a list of registered protected agricultural products. Under this new Annex 12, around 800 geographical indications registered in the EU and 22 geographical indications registered in Switzerland. It represents a serious and long-awaited improvement on the past commercial conditions, since so far only the protection for designation of wines and spirits was established in a bilateral agreement with the Swiss confederation.

Article 8 ("specific provisions for certain names") of this Annex 12 will nevertheless allow the parties to benefit from some transitional periods (from 3 to 5 years) to continue designating and presenting on their respective market some products, mostly cheese varieties, under a tag which is registered as a geographic indication or origin by the other party.

Nevertheless, thanks to this addition to the Agreement, EU exporters in key agricultural productions such as meat and dairy products will now benefit in one of our closest and biggest market export from a higher protection of their origins and geographic indications, which reflect their know-how and a high degree of food quality.

The rapporteur recommends Parliament to give its consent to the agreement.

25.5.2011

OPINION OF THE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

for the Committee on International Trade

on the draft Council decision on the conclusion of the Agreement between the European Union and the Swiss Confederation on the protection of designations of origin and geographical indications for agricultural products and foodstuffs, amending the Agreement between the European Community and the Swiss Confederation on trade in agricultural products

(16198/2010 – C7-0126/2011 – 2010/0317(NLE))

Rapporteur: Csaba Sándor Tabajdi

SHORT JUSTIFICATION

The present proposal is the result of bilateral negotiations, conducted from October 2007 to December 2009. The agreement provides for the mutual protection of designations of origin and geographical indications for agricultural products and foodstuffs, protected by the respective Parties.

The Parties (the European Union and the Swiss Confederation) aim to ensure the mutual recognition of protected designations of origin (PDOs) and protected geographical indications (PGIs) in order to improve the conditions of bilateral trade, to promote quality in the food chain and to retain the value of sustainable rural development. The agreement has no budgetary implication.

On the basis of the above, the Commission is proposing that the Council designate the person(s) empowered to conclude the Agreement on behalf of the European Union.

The Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development suggests approving the Commission proposal. It also notes that in the Annex of the agreement attached to the Commission proposal for a Council decision, the list of protected products is not in accordance with the current DOOR database. According to Commission information, this is due to the fact that the agreement has taken account of the existing databases by September 2009. Since that date, the databases are continuously being updated with new products. Article 16 of the Annex provides for the inclusion of new GIs in Appendix 1 to the Annex using the Committee procedures. The Parties undertake to examine the cases of GIs which are not included in Appendix 1 no later than two

years after the entry into force of the Annex and to consult each other with regard to any other amendments to be made to the Annex.

The Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development, further, notes that the legislation on origin protection, as a whole, is going to be revised through the new "Quality Package". Therefore, the Commission should revise the current agreement in December 2011, in the light of this new legislation to be adopted in the field.

The Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development calls on the Committee on International Trade, as the committee responsible, to propose that Parliament give its consent.

RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE

Date adopted	24.5.2011
Result of final vote	+: 34 -: 0 0: 0
Members present for the final vote	John Stuart Agnew, Richard Ashworth, Liam Aylward, José Bové, Luis Manuel Capoulas Santos, Vasilica Viorica Dăncilă, Michel Dantin, Paolo De Castro, Albert Deß, Herbert Dorfmann, Hynek Fajmon, Lorenzo Fontana, Béla Glattfelder, Martin Häusling, Esther Herranz García, Peter Jahr, Elisabeth Jeggle, Jarosław Kalinowski, Elisabeth Köstinger, Agnès Le Brun, George Lyon, Mairead McGuinness, Krisztina Morvai, Mariya Nedelcheva, James Nicholson, Rareş-Lucian Niculescu, Wojciech Michał Olejniczak, Georgios Papastamkos, Marit Paulsen, Britta Reimers, Alfreds Rubiks, Giancarlo Scottà, Czesław Adam Siekierski, Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris, Csaba Sándor Tabajdi, Marc Tarabella
Substitute(s) present for the final vote	Luís Paulo Alves, Salvatore Caronna, Esther de Lange
Substitute(s) under Rule 187(2) present for the final vote	Pablo Zalba Bidegain

RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE

Date adopted	21.6.2011
Result of final vote	+: 23 -: 0 0: 3
Members present for the final vote	William (The Earl of) Dartmouth, Laima Liucija Andrikienė, Kader Arif, David Campbell Bannerman, Daniel Caspary, Marielle De Sarnez, Christofer Fjellner, Yannick Jadot, Metin Kazak, Bernd Lange, David Martin, Emilio Menéndez del Valle, Vital Moreira, Paul Murphy, Cristiana Muscardini, Godelieve Quisthoudt-Rowohl, Niccolò Rinaldi, Tokia Saïfi, Helmut Scholz, Peter Šťastný, Robert Sturdy, Keith Taylor, Iuliu Winkler, Pablo Zalba Bidegain, Paweł Zalewski
Substitute(s) present for the final vote	Catherine Bearder, George Sabin Cutaş, Syed Kamall, Maria Eleni Koppa, Elisabeth Köstinger, Jörg Leichtfried, Jarosław Leszek Wałęsa