

WRITTEN QUESTION E-0706/04
by Jaime Valdivielso de Cué (PPE-DE)
to the Commission

Subject: Wine

It came as a surprise when, in February, the Commission adopted an amendment to the Regulation on wine labelling, allowing third countries to market wines using traditional EU nomenclature, such as *crianza*, *reserva* or *gran reserva*, against the wishes of the producer countries.

Furthermore, for years now the Commission has been conducting thorny negotiations, both bilaterally and through the WTO, with a view to preserving our traditional appellations. Only recently have various third countries lodged complaints with the WTO against Regulation (CE) 753/2002¹ on the labelling of wine, since in practice, it does not authorise the use of the traditional Community terminology.

Why did the Commission not wait until the WTO returned its opinion before it made any amendment to the EU legislation, and thus not throw away the chance of defending our interests at WTO level?

What criteria does this change in the traditional EU stance on this issue obey?

What does the Commission estimate the losses to the sector at?

¹ OJ L 118, 4.5.2002, p. 1.