

Question for written answer E-004306/2016
to the Commission
Rule 130
Mariya Gabriel (PPE)

Subject: The impact of national retail monopolies in some Member States on independent wine producers

Some independent wine producers, among them Bulgarian producers, have been facing difficulties in accessing the alcohol market in Nordic countries, including Member States such as Sweden and Finland, owing to specifications imposed in terms of prices and category of products. According to the Treaty on European Union, the free movement of goods, the first of the four fundamental freedoms of the internal market, is secured through the elimination of customs duties and quantitative restrictions, and the prohibition of measures having an equivalent effect. It is also one of the main objectives of the European Free Trade Association of which Norway and Iceland are members.

It seems that the retail monopolies on alcohol sales existing in the above mentioned countries might hinder and limit imports of wine and thus constitute a barrier to the free movement of goods. This situation not only penalises independent wine producers but also consumers in countries with retail monopolies as they do not have access to the whole range of products.

Is the Commission investigating this problematic issue?

To what extent are monopolies on alcohol retail considered to have a positive effect on health concerns?