

Question for written answer E-002329/2019
to the Commission
Rule 138
Lefteris Nikolaou-Alavanos (NI)

Subject: EU Court of Justice judgment increasing taxation on tsipouro and tsikoudia

On the basis of the ECJ judgment in Case C-91/18, Greece is threatened with sanctions if it does not comply with EU Directives 92/83 and 92/84 in relation to the taxation of tsipouro and tsikoudia.

The implementation of these Directives will inevitably result in the disappearance of 6 000 pot still distillers and will further reduce the income of 30 000 vine growers, most of them small-scale producers, who have distillation licences, because even in the best-case scenario, taxation on their products will increase ninefold.

The dozens of small and medium-scale tsipouro and tsikoudia distilleries and bottling plants will also be affected because of the doubling of the existing rate of excise duty on their products.

Once more, the approach taken by the EU and the ECJ's judgments will satisfy the desire of the monopolistic processing and marketing groups - in this case the drinks industry and wholesalers and importers of bottled drinks - to increase their profitability at the expense of producers and vine growers who have already had to endure the calamitous consequences of the CAP for their production and income for many years and of small processing plants.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

How does it view the prospect of small distillers being wiped out and of Greek vine growers suffering further loss of income?