Question for written answer E-004454/2019

to the Commission

Rule 138

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Subject: Front-of-pack labelling schemes

Uncoordinated action toward the objectives of food safety, transparency and consumer protection has resulted in the proliferation of front-of-pack labelling schemes, which are fragmenting the EU single market.

There is no EU regulatory framework for country of origin and nutrition labelling, which varies between the different Member States and is sometimes even imposed by retailers.

In addition, voluntary nutrition labelling schemes implemented by several Member States, such as France and the UK, mislead consumers and influence their choices, but do not provide exhaustive and nutrient-specific information based on the reference intakes of the average consumer. Such schemes contravene Regulation (EU) 1169/2011, which states that the energy value and the amount of nutrients can be presented using graphical forms or symbols provided that they are objective and non-discriminatory, are based on sound and scientifically valid consumer research and do not mislead the consumer.

In the light of the above, does the Commission:

1. Consider that such an important issue for food safety and transparency towards consumers, as well as for the proper functioning of the EU single market, should be tackled through a harmonised EU approach?

2. Recognise the need to find a broad consensus among the EU scientific community, possibly involving the European Food Safety Authority?