Question for written answer E-001252/2020
to the Commission
Rule 138
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Subject: Trade war between the European Union and the United States – support for French winegrowers

The ongoing trade war between the United States and Europe is a matter of geopolitical importance. As such, its handling will require unity and solidarity among Member State economies, and therefore strong support for those sectors whose economic future hangs in the balance as a result of the US Government’s retaliatory measures.

French winegrowers are caught in the crossfire. Since 18 October 2019, US customs have imposed a punitive tariff of close to 25% on French wines. This hike appears to have hit US sales, which are reported to have dropped by between 40 and 50%. The World Trade Organization allowed this sanction on account of the EU’s support for Airbus – a manufacturer operating in a sector with no link to wine-growing.

The French Minister for Agriculture has called for Europe to provide compensation and financial support to promote French wines abroad. This seems to be a perfectly legitimate request in the light of the principle of equality among EU Member States, since farmers should not be penalised because of support that has been paid to other sectors, no matter how strategically important they may be.

Does the EU intend to devise effective measures to protect farmers, and particularly winegrowers, against the impact of ongoing trade wars?