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*Committee on Regional Development*

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## **DRAFT OPINION**

of the Committee on Regional Development

for the Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development

on the reform of the common organisation of the market in wine  
(2006/2109(INI))

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## SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on Regional Development calls on the Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions in its motion for a resolution:

1. Notes that in many areas wine-production preserves the cultural heritage and the landscape and is imbued with local traditions; believes that the EU needs to seriously take into account, when adjusting the regulation governing the wine sector, the increasing de-population which challenges livelihoods in many European regions.
2. Points out that the difficulties facing the wine sector, such as overproduction, significantly falling EU wine consumption (especially of table wines), increasing wine imports from third countries, increasing wine stocks which exceed one year's production and have little prospect of being disposed, exert a downward pressure on prices and producers' incomes.
3. Notes that these increasing challenges and negative trends in the balance between supply and demand in the wine sector necessitate improvement of the regulations governing the sector so as to make it sustainable and competitive, while keeping specific common market organisation mechanisms for it.
4. Considers that any reform must take due account of the fact that the wine sector is the principal source of employment and prosperity in a number of European regions and that the quality of European wine production is world leading; believes that any reform must focus on how to maintain the dominant position of European wine producers; further believes that any step towards re-nationalisation of the CAP by means of national envelopes, as considered in the Commission's Communication of 22 June 2006<sup>1</sup>, should be avoided at all costs.
5. Stresses the need to maintain the Community budget and not transfer funds from the first pillar to the second pillar of the CAP, which concerns rural development.
6. Considers that a grubbing-up regime discussed by the Commission in its Communication of 22 June 2006<sup>2</sup> would severely damage the economic and social situation in European regions and is not in line with the objective of economic and social cohesion stated in the Treaty establishing the European Community; points out that the Community has given itself the task of pursuing "actions leading to the strengthening of social and economic cohesion" (Article 158(1) of the EC Treaty), with special emphasis on "reducing disparities between the levels of development of the various regions and the backwardness of the least favoured regions or islands, including rural areas" (Article 158(2) of the EC Treaty).
7. Calls on the Commission to propose measures to modernise European wine production techniques, marketing methods and labelling and improve consumer demand.

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<sup>1</sup> COM(2006)0319.

<sup>2</sup> COM(2006)0319.

8. Strongly believes that special aid should be made available to areas and regions straining under certain handicaps affecting their production capabilities.
9. Proposes that any reform should be implemented progressively, with provision being made for transitional periods as well as continuous evaluation of the effects of the reform on the economic and social situation of the European regions.
10. Asks the Commission to take into account in its proposal for a reform of the common market organisation the fact that the wine sector is part of the rural development strategy since it contributes to the sustainable development of the regions and most of the jobs generated by the wine sector are carried out in rural areas.