



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

*Brussels, 2.2.2016
C(2016) 293 final*

Dear Chair,

The Commission would like to thank the Houses of the Oireachtas for their Opinion on the Common Agricultural Policy Simplification Process.

You refer, in particular, to the letter of the Commission dated 29 October 2015 referenced C(2015)6183 final and to the specific situation of farmers under the age of 40 having set up before 2010 and therefore not eligible to the young farmer payment. You ask for additional clarifications, in particular on the meaning of 'the specific income support' mentioned by the Commission.

This term refers precisely to the young farmer payment, which is a supplementary payment provided to young farmers during their initial establishment for a period of maximum five years. The Commission fully acknowledges the concerns expressed by the Houses of the Oireachtas and their willingness to increase the share of young farmers in Ireland. Yet, it wants to highlight the political significance of the decision of the EU legislator to establish a compulsory payment for those young farmers who recently set up an agricultural holding as the head of that holding.

In order to address the specific situation of farmers who are no more than 40 years of age and who established their holding between 1 January 2008 and 31 December 2009 and were thus excluded from the benefits of the Young Farmers Installation Scheme while also being excluded from the benefit from the payment period for young farmers, the Irish national authorities notified their intention to use the provisions of Article 30(7)(b) of Regulation (EU) No 1307/2013 in the framework of the notifications regarding the implementation of direct payments' schemes in Ireland. The legal framework provides that the payment entitlements allocated or the increase in the value of the existing payment entitlements shall be limited to the national average value.

*Mr Andrew DOYLE T.D.
Chairman of the Oireachtas Joint
Committee on Agriculture, Food
and the Marine
Houses of the Oireachtas
Leinster House
Kildare Street
Dublin 2*

*Mr Seán BARRETT T.D.
President of the Dáil Éireann
Houses of the Oireachtas
Leinster House
Kildare Street
Dublin 2*

*Senator Paddy BURKE
President of the Seanad Éireann
Houses of the Oireachtas
Leinster House
Kildare Street
Dublin 2*

The Commission hopes that the clarifications provided in this reply address the issues raised by the Houses of the Oireachtas and looks forward to continuing our political dialogue in the future.

Yours faithfully,

A stylized handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, sweeping initial 'F' followed by a horizontal line.

*Frans Fimmermans
First Vice-President*

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Phil Hogan' in a cursive script.

*Phil Hogan
Member of the Commission*