



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

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Dear Chair,

The Commission would like to thank the Assembleia da República for its Opinion on the proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on integrated farm statistics and repealing Regulations (EC) No 1166/2008 and (EU) No 1337/2011 {COM (2016) 786 final}.

The purpose of the proposal is to continue the programme of European surveys on the structure of agricultural holdings, which has been carried out in the Union since 1966. It will facilitate the examination of the trends in the structure of agricultural holdings at Union level and provide the statistical knowledge base necessary for the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of related policies, in particular the Common Agricultural Policy and environmental, climate change adaptation and mitigation policies. It follows the recommendations of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations' World Programme for the Census of Agriculture 2020. The Regulation makes provision for ensuring and providing financial support which the European Statistical System needs for adapting to the new statistical and technical systems and for carrying out the surveys.

The Commission agrees that the physical thresholds must be chosen so that the situation in the various Member States is taken into account. This is why several physical thresholds are proposed, in addition to the 5 hectare Utilised Agricultural Area (UAA) and any holding above at least one of these thresholds is part of the survey frame. Eurostat has made an analysis of the impacts, based on the situation in 2010, the year in which the last agricultural census was carried out. The results show that almost 90% of Portuguese agricultural holdings are over at least one of these thresholds, and more than 99% of the Utilised Agricultural Area and livestock units would be covered. The average size of the agricultural holdings outside the coverage would be 0.9 hectares.

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The Commission also agrees that the national specificities and territorial challenges should be taken into account when deciding the possible financial envelopes for European Union contribution to the costs of carrying out the surveys. This is why the Commission has suggested that Portugal would be eligible for co-financing of EUR 2,000,000.

The Commission looks forward to continuing our political dialogue in the future.

Yours faithfully,

*Frans Timmermans
First Vice-President*

*Marianne Thyssen
Member of the Commission*