



## EUROPEAN COMMISSION

*Brussels, 21.1.2019  
C(2019) 94 final*

*Dear Chair,*

*The Commission would like to thank the Assembleia da República for its Opinion on the proposal for a Regulation amending Regulations (EU) No 1308/2013 establishing a common organisation of the markets in agricultural products, (EU) No 1151/2012 on quality schemes for agricultural products and foodstuffs, (EU) No 251/2014 on the definition, description, presentation, labelling and the protection of geographical indications of aromatised wine products, (EU) No 228/2013 laying down specific measures for agriculture in the outermost regions of the Union and (EU) No 229/2013 laying down specific measures for agriculture in favour of the smaller Aegean islands {COM(2018) 394 final}.*

*The Commission considers that Europe needs a resilient, sustainable and competitive agricultural sector in order to ensure the production of high-quality, safe and affordable food for its citizens, as well as solid socio-economic conditions in the rural areas. The context of the challenges of globalisation for the agricultural sector and the rural areas of the Union requires the maintenance of a strong, modernised and common agricultural policy, as confirmed in the legislative proposals.*

*The Commission is pleased that the Assembleia da República shares the view that the allocation of responsibilities between the European Union and the Member States envisaged in the proposal complies with the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality and will help to achieve the objectives of the Common Agricultural Policy more efficiently.*

*The Commission presented in May 2018 reasonable and balanced proposals for the Union's next Multiannual Financial Framework despite the very challenging overall context, including the forthcoming withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the EU and the need to address existing and new political priorities. The proposals allocate EUR 365 billion for the Common Agricultural Policy for 2021-2027, which is a strong signal of continued support for the future of European Union farming and rural areas.*

*Ms Regina BASTOS  
Chair of the European Affairs Committee of  
the Assembleia da República  
Palácio de S. Bento  
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*cc. Mr Eduardo FERRO RODRIGUES  
President of  
the Assembleia da República  
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*While direct payments would be cut only moderately in most of the Member States, in Portugal the allocations would be even increased owing to further external convergence. For rural development, the Commission proposed a rebalancing of support between the Union and the Member States, including the possibility of increased national contributions in order to keep an adequate level of support to rural areas.*

*The Commission proposals would simplify and modernise the Common Agricultural Policy. They foresee a new allocation of responsibilities between the Union and the Member States whereby more flexibility would be given to the Member States to set out the details of interventions according to their needs, thus offering them an increased potential for better targeting and simplification.*

*The Commission shares the Assembleia da República's concern on the climate change effects on the agricultural sector. Precisely for that reason, the future Common Agricultural Policy would be called on to increase the level of environmental and climate performance in light of the general objectives of strengthening environmental protection and climate action. Member States would have more responsibility in choosing how and where to invest their funding from the Common Agricultural Policy in order to meet ambitious common goals on environment, climate change and sustainability.*

*Discussions between the Commission and the co-legislators concerning the proposals are now underway, and the Commission remains hopeful that an agreement will be reached in the near future.*

*The Commission hopes that these clarifications address the issues raised by the Assembleia da República and looks forward to continuing the political dialogue in the future.*

*Yours faithfully,*

*Frans Timmermans  
First Vice-President*

*Phil Hogan  
Member of the Commission*