



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

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C(2020) 5709 final*

Dear Presidents,

The Commission would like to thank the Cortes Generales for the Opinion on the Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013 as regards the specific measure to provide exceptional temporary support under the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) in response to the COVID-19 outbreak {COM(2020) 186 final}.

This proposal was part of a broader package of measures taken in order to respond to the impact of the crisis arising from the COVID-19 outbreak, and it allows the Member States to address the liquidity problems that put at risk the continuity of farming activities and of small and medium size businesses active in processing, marketing or development of agricultural products.

The Commission is pleased with the overall support expressed in the Opinion. The Commission takes note of the view of the Joint Committee that the maximum share of the Union contribution to the new measure should be increased to 10 % of the contribution of the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development to the rural development programmes. The Commission proposed a maximum of 1 % as it is important to ensure adequate funding of the new measure but without jeopardising other objectives of the rural development programmes. According to estimates based on information from Member States, most Member States would still have sufficient funds available to make full use of 1% of the budget under the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development for the proposed measure.

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The European Parliament and the Council appreciated the urgency of the situation and have quickly adopted the proposal on 24 June 2020, including the amendments referred to in the Opinion. This means that the maximum share of the Union contribution to the new measure referred to above was set at 2 %.

Several Member States/regions, including regional authorities in Spain, are currently preparing to launch the new measure in their rural development programmes to make the support available as soon as possible according to the needs.

The Commission looks forward to continuing the political dialogue with the Cortes Generales in the future.

Yours faithfully,

*Nicolas Schmit
Member of the Commission*