



Parlement européen
Bât. ALTIERO SPINELLI 15E157
60, rue Wiertz / Wiertzstraat 60
B-1047 Bruxelles/Brussel

Dear Mr Jahr,

I am writing to you with regard to the Voluntary Coupled Support provisions in the CAP reform dossier under your rapporteurship.

I am a political activist with the EPP - Nationalist Party - in Malta and ran with my colleagues Roberta Metsola and David Casa for the last European election.

My campaign and message were heavily oriented towards the need to adapt the European project to respond to the aspirations and the particular context of the Maltese islands.

My visits to farms, fields and greenhouses revealed how the Maltese farmer was largely suffering EU membership rather than benefiting from it due to serious competitiveness issues and years of missed adaptation.

The upcoming CAP reform can make this worse, or better. The provisions on voluntary coupled support right now enable large sectors of our agricultural communities to remain competitive thanks to workable processing relationships and with relatively minimal support. The voluntary coupled support in the tomato sector, for instance, ensures that Maltese farmers can sell their sun-ripe tomatoes for processing into tomato sauce and the Maltese famous 'kunserva', exported also to Germany. The VCS is the little trigger that allows a whole system to thrive. Should this come missing, the Maltese tomatoes will, almost certainly, be replaced with Chinese mass produced tomato paste imported in the mega tonnes. I am sure that this is not our common intention for the common market.

That would happen if you do not change the text voted by the European Parliament. The text of the last vote in plenary includes an arbitrary capping to VCS which is tailored on much bigger territories. It would have a disproportionate, and I guess, unintended, impact on farming in Malta.

Malta is 30 kilometers wide(!) - we need the VCS provisions to be capped in a different manner. For this reason, I plead on you, as a representative of the peoples of Europe, to consider accepting the text of the Council of Ministers in your upcoming triologue negotiations, and in particular the proviso to sub-Article 5 of Article 86 and namely: "By way of derogation from the first and second subparagraphs, Member States may choose to use up to EUR 3 million per year for financing coupled income support. ". Apart for being a de minimis provision in the context of the relevant provisions, this proviso would allow for the



Union to legislate for a sound CAP reform while respecting the particular setting of small member states like Malta.

With kind regards and appreciation for your consideration,

Peter Agius