

**Question for written answer E-011011/2013
to the Commission**

Rule 117

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Subject: Food labelling: UK traffic-light system

Following a recommendation issued by the UK Government's Department of Health on 19 June 2013, major retailers in the UK are labelling food products according to a colour-coding system (red, orange and green) based on their fat, saturated fat, salt and sugar content. This recommendation was adopted on a voluntary basis in accordance with Article 35(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011. The same regulation stipulates that certain requirements must be met (Article 35(1)) and that the Commission must adopt implementing acts. Any system which classifies foodstuffs exclusively according to fat content risks penalising numerous European products (Parmigiano-Reggiano, mozzarella and other cheeses, ham, etc.), which would thus be considered 'unhealthy' despite their high quality. Furthermore, the attribution of labels by major retailers runs the risk of penalising small and medium-sized enterprises in particular, owing to additional – and escalating – production costs.

1. Has the Commission verified that the above-mentioned UK Government recommendation conforms with Article 35(1) of Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011, i.e. that the food labels in question are objective and non-discriminatory and that their application does not create obstacles to the free movement of goods?
2. Does the Commission intend to ensure the correct application of Article 35(6) of Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 (on implementing acts) following the UK Government recommendation, and to define the requirements of Article 35(1) more precisely?
3. Does the Commission not think it necessary for the UK Government to notify the Commission of the above-mentioned recommendation, in accordance with Directive 98/34/EC?