

ORAL QUESTION WITH DEBATE O-0067/09

pursuant to Rule 108 of the Rules of Procedure

by Astrid Lulling, Jean-Pierre Audy, Joseph Daul, Françoise Grossetête, Véronique Mathieu, Elisabeth Morin, Margie Sudre, Oldřich Vlasák and Dominique Vlasto, on behalf of the PPE-DE Group, Patrick Louis, on behalf of the IND/DEM Group, Jean Marie Beaupuy, Anne Laperrouze, Nathalie Griesbeck and Marielle De Sarnez, on behalf of the ALDE Group, Sergio Berlato, Cristiana Muscardini, Roberta Angelilli, Domenico Antonio Basile, Alessandro Foglietta, Antonio Mussa, Sebastiano (Nello) Musumeci, Giovanni Robusti, Umberto Pirilli and Salvatore Tatarella, on behalf of the UEN Group
to the Commission

Subject: Rosé wines and permitted oenological practices

In the context of the discussion of the regulations implementing the CMO in wine, the Commission intends to rescind the provisions in force until 31 July 2009 concerning oenological practices so as to lift the ban on blending white wines with red wines without a protected designation of origin (PDI) or protected geographical indication (PGI) to produce rosé wine.

In recent decades, wine-growers in many regions in Member States have made considerable efforts, accompanied by substantial investment, to develop high-quality rosé wines which are recognised as such as wines in their own right and which meet a growing demand.

These efforts have helped to achieve balance in local and regional economies and in land use. Operators in the industry in the regions concerned have expressed their strong concern, inter alia to Parliament through the Viticulture-Tradition-Quality Intergroup, about the serious economic, ecological and employment impact of a decision which will make it possible to produce cheap rosé wine. This measure is liable, in particular, to cause confusion between traditional rosé wines and blended wines and to give rise to unfair competition which, even in the short term, could destroy traditional production of rosé wines.

In view of these concerns and the possible disastrous impact of a hasty decision, will the Commission:

1. postpone the contested decision, which is scheduled for the end of April;
2. undertake a broadly-based consultation exercise with the industry on the basis of a thorough study of the possible economic, social and environmental impact of lifting the ban on blending;
3. propose options which will make European wines more competitive on the European market and in third countries, while safeguarding traditional rosé wines against unfair competition?

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Deadline for reply: 13.04.2009