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NOTE

From: General Secretariat of the Council
To: Council

Subject: Simplification: implementation of the May 2015 Council conclusions
- State of play

Introduction

The Commission launched its **simplification exercise** at the end of 2014, one year after the adoption of the basic acts for the new CAP period (2014-2020) and before most of their provisions had entered into force on 1 January 2015. Its key focus was to assess where the greatest reduction in administrative burden could be achieved, both for farmers and national and regional administrations, while preserving the policy framework agreed in 2013 and ensuring sound financial management.

As far as the Council is concerned, the simplification exercise was launched under the Latvian Presidency in 2015, leading to a very comprehensive set of comments from Member States (around 580 pages), permitting the identification of a number of priority issues (as summarized in doc. 8483/15) and the adoption of **Council conclusions** on 11 May 2015 (doc. 8485/2015).

The Council has regularly reviewed **progress** since then (in November 2015, May 2016 and July 2016). In addition, it held debates on the Commission's report on greening in June 2016 and on the Commission's report on environmental focus areas in April 2017.

Guidelines, delegated and implementing acts

The Commission's first priority was to simplify the rules laid down through delegated and implementing acts and also its guidelines. Starting in 2015, there have been several waves of simplification measures covering all areas of the CAP.

Basic acts

Simplification is also the main objective of the "**Omnibus**" proposal (2016/0282 (COD)). Presented within the framework of the MFF mid-term review in September 2016, it includes amendments to the four CAP basic acts that seek to deliver simplification, mostly through providing greater flexibility for administration and farmers, but also, exceptionally, some policy changes (e.g., making the "active farmer" condition optional). Negotiations with the European Parliament are underway, with the aim of reaching agreement by October 2017 and allowing the new provisions to enter into force from January 2018.

Simplification is also one of the main objectives announced by the Commission as part of the comprehensive consultation exercise carried out during the first half of 2017 which will lead to the adoption of a **Commission Communication** on the future of the CAP in late 2017.