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'I/A' ITEM NOTE

From: General Secretariat of the Council
To: Permanent Representatives Committee/Council

Subject: Special Report No 16/2022 from the European Court of Auditors entitled:
“Data in the Common Agricultural Policy – Unrealised potential of big data
for policy evaluations”
- *Approval of draft Council conclusions*

1. The Permanent Representatives Committee instructed the Working Party on Financial Agricultural Questions (WP AGRIFIN) to examine the above-mentioned Special Report in accordance with the rules laid down in the Council conclusions of 8 May 2000 on improving the examination of special reports drawn up by the Court of Auditors (doc. 7515/00 + COR 1).
2. At its meeting on 21 September 2022, WP AGRIFIN discussed the above-mentioned Special Report as well as the Commission's replies to that report.
3. In the light of those discussions, the Presidency drew up draft conclusions (12972/2022) and presented them at the AGRIFIN meeting on 12 October. A revised version (12972/22 REV 1) was presented at the AGRIFIN meeting on 16 November.

4. In accordance with the Council conclusions of 8 May 2000, the Permanent Representatives Committee is hereby invited to suggest to the Council that it approve the draft Council conclusions as set out in the Annex to this note as an 'A' item at a forthcoming session.
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Draft Council conclusions

**European Court of Auditors on its Special Report 16/2022 entitled:
“Data in the Common Agricultural Policy: Unrealised potential of big data for policy
evaluations”**

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

1. NOTES the Court's Special Report No 16/2022 entitled “Data in the Common Agricultural Policy: Unrealised potential of big data for policy evaluations”, which assessed how the Commission uses data and data analytics for policy analysis of the CAP and how it has been preparing to make better use of Big Data;
2. CONSIDERS that the report is relevant and timely given the progress in digital technologies and the fact that agriculture is a sector where digital innovations and technologies are increasingly applied, even if the digital divide among farmers may cause delays in the optimal use of these technologies;
3. ACKNOWLEDGES that with evolving CAP objectives to address evolving challenges, including concerns about food security, food safety, environment and climate and changing consumers' expectations, the data needs have also evolved and broadened to other aspects like agri-environmental variables, emissions and bio-energy;
4. TAKES NOTE of the Court's recommendations to the Commission to establish a framework for using disaggregated data from IACS and to make more use of and develop data sources to meet policy needs, which the Commission accepts; HIGHLIGHTS that financial and administrative burden must be taken into consideration and that it is necessary to aim for a fair proportionality between the need for data and the administrative and financial burden involved;

5. WELCOMES the Court's finding that the Commission is using significant amount of data on economic, environmental, climate and social aspects and has taken several initiatives to make better use of existing data, as well as the Court's positive assessment of the achievements in terms of making a wealth of data available to the broader public through the AGRI-Food Data Portal of the Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development;
6. ACKNOWLEDGES the potential of new technologies to fill current data gaps and the possibility to replace burdensome and costly existing surveys, and the fact that any progress in achieving access to new data sources will require the setting up of incentives, infrastructure and win-win solutions; STRESSES that data gaps to be filled in by the CAP, must be limited to the agricultural scope and that the protection of privacy must be assured;
7. NOTES that, since the completion of this Special Report, there have been further advances in some key areas, including the legislative proposal to convert the Farm Accountancy Data Network (FADN) into a Farm Sustainability Data Network (FSDN). In addition, implementing and delegated acts related to IACS (Reg. (EU) 2022/1172 and 2022/1173) and the implementing regulation on Data for Monitoring and Evaluation (Reg. (EU) 2022/1475) have been adopted and published;
8. ACKNOWLEDGES that there are initiatives across the EU that are exploring the possibilities to modernise data and IT tools for designing, monitoring and evaluating the CAP and UNDERSTANDS that there is scope for incorporating cost-effective advanced analytics and related tools into existing IT systems and/or other IT solutions for automated information processing.