



Council of the
European Union

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OUTCOME OF PROCEEDINGS

From:	General Secretariat of the Council
On:	11 December 2023
To:	Delegations
No. prev. doc.:	15946/23
Subject:	Special Report No 23/2023 from the European Court of Auditors entitled: “Restructuring and planting vineyards in the EU: Unclear impact on competitiveness and limited environmental ambition” - <i>Council conclusions</i>

Delegations will find in the annex the Council conclusions on:

European Court of Auditors special report 23/2023 entitled: “*Restructuring and planting vineyards in the EU: Unclear impact on competitiveness and limited environmental ambition*”,

approved by the Council at its 3995th meeting held on 10-11 December 2023.

Council conclusions**European Court of Auditors Special Report 23/2023 entitled:*****“Restructuring and planting vineyards in the EU: Unclear impact on competitiveness and limited environmental ambition”***

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

1. NOTES the Court's Special Report No 23/2023 entitled *“Restructuring and planting vineyards in the EU: Unclear impact on competitiveness and limited environmental ambition”*, which examines the extent to which the EU restructuring and conversion measure (“the measure”) and the vine planting authorisations scheme (“the scheme”) helped to make wine growers more competitive and wine production more environmentally sustainable;
2. UNDERLINES that, as noted in the Court’s Special Report, the EU, with 2.2 million wine holdings covering about 2 % of the EU’s utilised agricultural area (46% of world’s total) and representing 7.5% of the value of EU agricultural production, is the world’s leading producer (59% of world’s total), consumer (48% of world’s total) and exporter of wine (67% of world’s total);
3. BELIEVES that the measure enables the European wine sector to develop modern production tools in response to market expectations and international competition and to supply consumers with quality products; ALSO BELIEVES that the scheme provides an appropriate and dynamic tool for the controlled growth of EU vineyards;
4. AGREES with the Commission that, as compared to the data used for the period 2014-2022 as a basis for the Court’s special report, the new legal framework, under which sectoral interventions for wine can be implemented as from 1 January 2024 in accordance with the national CAP Strategic Plans under the new Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), represents a considerable improvement in terms of objectives pursued and implementation modalities;

5. CONSIDERS that in the CAP for the period 2023-2027, the intervention for the wine sector is aimed at increasing competitiveness and sustainability in all its dimensions (economic, environmental and social) with overall more ambitious objectives as compared to the previous programming period;
6. WELCOMES the fact that the European Commission accepts the Court's recommendations that, to better target the measure and the scheme, the Commission could:
 - clarify what the competitiveness of EU wine producers entails,
 - inform Member States when the measure does not effectively contribute to the competitiveness objective, and
 - facilitate the exchange of good practices among Member States about the implementation of the measure and scheme;
7. Also WELCOMES the Commission's acceptance of the Court's recommendations that, to increase the environmental ambition of EU wine policy and in line with the general ambition for a greener Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), the Commission could:
 - assess whether the minimum 5% share of earmarked wine expenditure on the climate and the environment is appropriate,
 - facilitate the exchange of best practices and disseminate the results of the measure for the protection of the environment,
 - assess the extent to which the scheme impacted the environment, and
 - inform Member States when the measure does not effectively contribute to the environmental objective.