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NOTE

From: General Secretariat of the Council
To: Delegations

Subject: Presidency Conclusions on front-of-pack nutrition labelling, nutrient profiles
and origin labelling
– Statement by Czech Republic, Greece and Italy

Delegations will find in annex a statement by the Czech, Greek and Italian delegations presented at the meeting of the "Agriculture and Fisheries" Council on 15-16 December 2020.

Declaration of Czech Republic, Greece and Italy on the Presidency Conclusions on front-of-pack nutrition labelling, nutrient profiles and origin labelling

Czech Republic, Greece and Italy believe that the Presidency Conclusions on front-of-pack nutrition labelling, nutrient profiles and origin labelling fall short of reference to some of the principles that the afore-mentioned countries consider essential for the development of an EU-harmonized FOPNL scheme and that were enshrined in the Non paper co-presented with other Member States to last 21st September Agrifish council.

Czech Republic, Greece and Italy believe that Commission should address the need to encourage EU citizens to adopt a healthier lifestyle through a multidimensional approach, including the urgent launch of effective education campaigns.

In this framework, a EU harmonized FOPNL scheme must be a voluntary instrument to provide factual information on calories and individual nutrients contained in a food product, in full compliance with the requirements set by article 35 of Regulation (EU) 1169/2011. FOPNL are a tool to favour balanced diets, that is to help consumers choose food products according to their particular conditions and state of health, in line with the pledge “*to empower consumers to make informed, healthy and sustainable food choices*” stated in the Communication from the Commission “A Farm to Fork Strategy for a fair, healthy and environmentally-friendly food system”. In this sense, a FOPNL scheme must neither be a marketing tool nor jeopardize traditional and high-quality productions. In this sense, Protected Designations of Origin, Protected Geographical Indications and Traditional Specialities guaranteed, as well as single ingredient products, will have to be exempted.

A EU harmonized FOPNL scheme has to be understandable and fully transparent. The use of colours is therefore not recommendable, since it would convey a simplistic message without shedding light on the underlying calculation used to attribute them.

A EU-harmonized FOPNL scheme should take into account the actual daily intake of foods and beverages, rather than a generic threshold of 100g/100ml, in order to avoid sending misleading messages, underestimating the contribution of food consumed in larger portions and penalizing those usually eaten in small quantities.

The coexistence between existing schemes and a future harmonized EU FOPNL scheme risks creating confusion and posing an unsustainable burden on industry, to the detriment of the internal market.

The decision on the development of such a scheme will have, over the next years, major implications on public health, the internal market and cultural values. It should therefore not be influenced by already established market-driven solutions.