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⁽¹⁾ Text with EEA relevance.

II

*(Information)*INFORMATION FROM EUROPEAN UNION INSTITUTIONS, BODIES, OFFICES
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EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Non-opposition to a notified concentration**(Case M.9814 – Firmenich/Les Dérivés Résiniques et Terpéniques)****(Text with EEA relevance)**

(2020/C 193/01)

On 26 May 2020, the Commission decided not to oppose the above notified concentration and to declare it compatible with the internal market. This decision is based on Article 6(1)(b) of Council Regulation (EC) No 139/2004 ⁽¹⁾. The full text of the decision is available only in English and will be made public after it is cleared of any business secrets it may contain. It will be available:

- in the merger section of the Competition website of the Commission (<http://ec.europa.eu/competition/mergers/cases/>). This website provides various facilities to help locate individual merger decisions, including company, case number, date and sectoral indexes,
- in electronic form on the EUR-Lex website (<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/homepage.html?locale=en>) under document number 32020M9814. EUR-Lex is the online access to European law.

⁽¹⁾ OJ L 24, 29.1.2004, p. 1.

Non-opposition to a notified concentration**(Case M.9413 – Lactalis/Nuova Castelli)****(Text with EEA relevance)**

(2020/C 193/02)

On 9 December 2019, the Commission decided not to oppose the above notified concentration and to declare it compatible with the internal market. This decision is based on Article 6(1)(b) of Council Regulation (EC) No 139/2004 ⁽¹⁾. The full text of the decision is available only in English and will be made public after it is cleared of any business secrets it may contain. It will be available:

- in the merger section of the Competition website of the Commission (<http://ec.europa.eu/competition/mergers/cases/>). This website provides various facilities to help locate individual merger decisions, including company, case number, date and sectoral indexes,
- in electronic form on the EUR-Lex website (<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/homepage.html?locale=en>) under document number 32019M9413. EUR-Lex is the online access to European law.

⁽¹⁾ OJ L 24, 29.1.2004, p. 1.

IV

(Notices)

NOTICES FROM EUROPEAN UNION INSTITUTIONS, BODIES, OFFICES AND AGENCIES

COUNCIL

Conclusions of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States meeting within the Council on raising opportunities for young people in rural and remote areas

(2020/C 193/03)

THE COUNCIL AND THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE GOVERNMENTS OF THE MEMBER STATES MEETING WITHIN THE COUNCIL

RECOGNISING THAT

1. All young people should have equal opportunities in the context of their personal and professional development, regardless of obstacles, including geographical challenges. These challenges become bigger in times of global crises such as the novel coronavirus (COVID-19), which bring societal disruptions and economic consequences, and may additionally weaken and isolate young people.
2. The EU Strategic Agenda 2019–2024 ⁽¹⁾ recognises that inequalities, which affect young people in particular, pose a major political, social and economic risk; generational, territorial and educational divides are developing and new forms of exclusion emerging.
3. Until recently, almost one third of the EU population lived in a rural territory, including a significant number of young people ⁽²⁾. It is clear that there are differences between Member States in regard to population density and demographic structure, both in rural and remote areas. On the other hand, urbanisation as one of current key drivers of change is regarded as having a significant impact on future EU policies ⁽³⁾.
4. The European Union's population is ageing. This process is more pronounced in rural and remote areas and, as a consequence, these areas have a higher share of older persons throughout different Member States ⁽⁴⁾. These intergenerational and geographical imbalances, particularly when combined with poorer socioeconomic conditions, pose challenges to create and maintain comprehensive support services and sustainable service infrastructures responsive to the needs of all, which subsequently may have a long-term effect on social cohesion and solidarity in rural and remote areas.
5. Equality and non-discrimination, inclusion and the participation of young people are among the guiding principles underpinning the EU Youth Strategy 2019–2027, which takes into account the views of young people as expressed in the European Youth Goals and the EU Youth Dialogue process. In particular, European Youth Goal No 6 (Moving Rural Youth Forward) aims at creating conditions which enable young people to access their rights and fulfil their potential in rural areas.

⁽¹⁾ Adopted by the European Council on 20 June 2019.

⁽²⁾ According to Eurostat database in 2018, 49,2 % of young people age 15–24 were living in rural areas (EU-28 population by educational attainment level, sex, age and degree of urbanisation (%)).

⁽³⁾ https://espas.secure.europarl.europa.eu/orbis/sites/default/files/generated/document/en/ESPAS_Report2019.pdf (Global trends to 2030 – Challenges and Choices for Europe, ESPAS, April 2019).

⁽⁴⁾ https://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/pau/age/Policy_briefs/ECE-WG1-25.pdf (UNECE Policy Brief on Ageing No 18 (2017)).

6. Environmental and climate issues have been identified by young people as one of the areas that the EU needs to address as a top priority ⁽⁵⁾. Combating climate change is one of the major factors in the shaping of future policies ⁽⁶⁾. Since rural development and EU structural funds play an important role in achieving the EU's environmental objectives as well as in combating climate change, additional opportunities related to sectors such as agriculture, forestry, fisheries or tourism for young people in rural and remote areas should be considered.

TAKING INTO ACCOUNT:

7. The opportunities of rural and remote areas ⁽⁷⁾ such as the proximity to nature, lower housing costs ⁽⁸⁾ and a higher sense of belonging to a community ⁽⁹⁾.
8. The constraints imposed by the difficulties of accessibility to and from most rural and remote areas, including some islands ⁽¹⁰⁾ throughout the EU as well as the outermost regions of the Union ⁽¹¹⁾ and the Overseas Countries and Territories ⁽¹²⁾.
9. The process of urbanization and its possible effects on rural and remote areas, especially regarding the population ratio (younger/elderly, women/men ⁽¹³⁾), young graduates/young non-graduates) and the need to ensure the availability and accessibility of public and commercial services, leisure time activities, quality jobs and education, digital and physical infrastructures, public transportation, housing, social and health care facilities as well as the sustainability of natural resources.
10. The importance to include the ideas, opinions and creativity of young people in the Member States, including those collected during the 7th Cycle of EU Youth Dialogue consultations, as well as contributions during the EU Youth Conference held in Zagreb in March 2020 ⁽¹⁴⁾ within the framework of the specific subtheme 'Opportunities for Rural Youth'.
11. Young people who are NEET ⁽¹⁵⁾ in rural and remote areas and the need for particular attention regarding their education, training and employment prospects, as they are at higher risk of having fewer opportunities ⁽¹⁶⁾ and be more affected by the conditions of economy ⁽¹⁷⁾ as compared to those young people who are NEET in urban regions.
12. The commitment by the European Union and its Member States to implement the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals, in particular as regards human settlements and youth-related targets.

⁽⁵⁾ <https://ec.europa.eu/commfrontoffice/publicopinion/index.cfm/Survey/getSurveyDetail/instruments/FLASH/surveyKy/2224> (Eurobarometer 478).

⁽⁶⁾ Ibid footnote 3.

⁽⁷⁾ See definitions of 'rural areas' and 'remote areas' in the Annex.

⁽⁸⁾ The share of people overburdened by housing costs is lower in rural areas of the EU (European statistics on regions and cities, 2018).

⁽⁹⁾ Eurofound (2019), Is rural Europe being left behind?, European Quality of Life Survey 2016, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg.

⁽¹⁰⁾ Inhabited small islands that are not outermost regions or OCTs but which have difficult accessibility due to lack of connecting bridges, scarcity of air and maritime transport or other similar factors (see definition of 'remote areas' in the Annex).

⁽¹¹⁾ Those listed in Art. 349 TFEU.

⁽¹²⁾ Those listed in Annex II TFEU.

⁽¹³⁾ Women in rural areas of the EU make up below 50 % of the total rural population and they represent 45 % of the economically active population. According to the analysis, women's employment in EU rural regions (age class 15–64) has increased by almost 2 % in the period 2013–2017 (The professional status of rural women in the EU, European Parliament, 2019).

⁽¹⁴⁾ <https://mdomsp.gov.hr/UserDocsImages/Vijesti2020/Creating%20Opportunities%20for%20Youth%20-%20outcomes%20report%2027%20mar%202020.pdf>

⁽¹⁵⁾ Not in Education, Employment or Training.

⁽¹⁶⁾ https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Statistics_on_young_people_neither_in_employment_nor_in_education_or_training#NEETs:_analysis_by_degree_of_urbanisation

⁽¹⁷⁾ https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Archive:Impact_of_the_economic_crisis_on_unemployment.

13. Youth work as a valuable instrument for addressing disparities between the rural and urban environments, owing to its potential in helping to engage young people (with wide age-range and diverse backgrounds), including those who are at risk of being left behind, in different types of activities within their respective local communities.
14. Employment opportunities offered via entrepreneurial activities, including engagement in social enterprises ⁽¹⁸⁾. The latter is a tool that enables young people to properly address social and employment-related challenges and offers scope to effectively use existing natural and human resources in a sustainable manner.
15. In this context, activities within the Social and Solidarity Economy (SSE) ⁽¹⁹⁾, which can contribute to the improvement of the economic and social situation of rural and remote areas, and consequently make it possible to respond to the needs and aspirations of young people living in rural and remote areas.
16. Volunteering, as one of the expressions of active citizenship that can help ensure the social inclusion of young people in rural and remote areas as well as promote solidarity between generations in rural and remote areas, particularly to contribute to the resilience of communities to face adversities and crisis such as COVID-19.
17. Cross-border cooperation between remote and rural areas in Member States' bordering regions that could support their development, thus giving additional opportunities for young people in the field of education and training, work, health, social and leisure activities.

INVITE THE MEMBER STATES, IN LINE WITH THE PRINCIPLE OF SUBSIDIARITY AND AT THE APPROPRIATE LEVELS, TO:

18. Promote cross-sectoral approaches when developing youth policies and related strategies aiming to reduce inequalities between urban and rural/remote areas.
19. Include in relevant strategies and policies, where appropriate, action plans or measures which reflect young people's perspective and views in rural and remote areas. These action plans and measures should be developed on the basis of the knowledge, evidence, best practices, consultations with young people themselves as well as collected and disaggregated data including by sex, disability and other relevant perspectives, in particular where relevant services and/or infrastructures are lacking or need to be improved.
20. Promote effective models of inter-municipal cooperation in the area of youth in rural and remote areas in order to raise awareness and share best practices and evidence among different service providers.
21. Promote and facilitate active citizenship and meaningful participation of young people with diverse backgrounds in rural and remote areas in decision making processes on matters that affect them through appropriate tools, such as local youth councils and innovative/alternative ways of participation; foster cooperation between relevant administration at all levels, where appropriate, while carrying out public consultations (analogue or digital) as a tool to engage with young people; encourage public administrations to facilitate the work of youth-led organisations; and support relevant actors who provide youth work activities at all levels, including outreach youth work.
22. Further promote and improve inter-generational understanding, dialogue and solidarity in order to support mutually beneficial exchanges between generations, and encourage young people to become and remain actively involved in the life of local communities in rural and remote areas, including on family farms.

⁽¹⁸⁾ See definition in the Annex.

⁽¹⁹⁾ See definition in the Annex.

23. Further promote accessible volunteering and solidarity activities as a tool for the social inclusion of all young people, especially those in rural and remote areas.
24. Step up efforts to ensure regular, sustainable and affordable means of public transportation in order to better connect urban and rural and remote areas.
25. Where appropriate, improve information technology (IT) infrastructure, including high-speed broadband connection, in order to increase access to use of digital technologies and services.
26. Where appropriate, promote the creation of youth spaces ⁽²⁰⁾ or, where relevant, upgrade existing ones as well as remote access for young people living in rural and remote areas to different types of services, including youth work services, such as digital and smart youth work; in addition, encourage the establishment of different mobile services, such as those for leisure time and counselling, as well as of multi-functional service centres.

INVITES THE MEMBER STATES AND THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION, WITHIN THEIR RESPECTIVE SPHERES OF COMPETENCE, TO:

27. Promote synergies between different EU initiatives and instruments in the youth field and beyond, such as Erasmus+, the Youth Guarantee, the European Solidarity Corps, the European Social Fund or EU Interreg ⁽²¹⁾, with the aim of enhanced outreach to young people living in rural and remote areas, the facilitation of their access to these programmes, and the administrative simplification, as means of addressing challenges they are faced with.
28. Encourage the exchange of best practices in using the opportunities provided by youth-related programmes and policies such as Erasmus+, the European Solidarity Corps and the Youth Guarantee, as well as other relevant EU instruments such as the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development and European Regional Development Fund, in order to improve employability, mobility and participation, as well as to promote the EU values ⁽²²⁾; to share practices in solidarity and community development, especially in times of crisis; and to increase social cohesion in rural and remote communities.
29. Organise mutual learning activities, such as seminars, peer-learning activities or other relevant forms of formal and non-formal cooperation which could involve stakeholders from different policy areas, including young people with different geographical and cultural backgrounds, in order to explore cross-sectoral and intra-regional cooperation in access to services.
30. Further promote the attractiveness of rural and remote areas, with specific emphasis on their benefits and opportunities as regards available natural resources, where appropriate, and their sustainable use in order to raise awareness of the potential for entrepreneurial and SSE ⁽²³⁾ activities, taking into account that existing agricultural activities, where relevant, should be preserved and promoted as much as possible.
31. Step up efforts to enhance business knowledge, skills, competences and confidence among young people, where appropriate with a focus on young women ⁽²⁴⁾, with regard to the potential for entrepreneurship and SSE activities in rural and remote areas.

⁽²⁰⁾ See definition in the Annex.

⁽²¹⁾ <https://interreg.eu/>

⁽²²⁾ As set out in Art. 2 TEU.

⁽²³⁾ See definition in the Annex.

⁽²⁴⁾ Ibid footnote 13.

32. Take into account environment and climate change, and in particular the latest scientific reports on both, when formulating future youth-related policies and measures for rural and remote areas, and provide where appropriate relevant education, training and access to information in order to raise awareness and foster participation in environment and climate issues amongst young people living in rural and remote areas.
33. Where appropriate, step up efforts to encourage young people to engage in agricultural ⁽²⁵⁾ and other economic activities in rural and remote areas, through different means such as start-up grants, income incentives, youth self-initiatives and targeted education and training.
34. Encourage cooperation between relevant stakeholders with the overall aim of fulfilling the right to quality and inclusive education, training and lifelong learning for young people in rural and remote areas, with a particular emphasis on reducing early school leaving and increasing opportunities for equal access to education, training and work.
35. Promote digital education and training as well as non-formal learning and youth work opportunities to improve the overall level of digital skills and competences, as well as to avoid the isolation of young people in rural and remote areas and mitigate the impact of crisis such as COVID-19, for instance by facilitating the access to internet and ICT ⁽²⁶⁾ devices, where appropriate, in all rural and remote areas.
36. Foster cooperation between EU rural and remote border areas, taking advantage of relevant programmes such as EU Interreg, in order to enhance opportunities for local young people.
37. Continue to consider and reflect on issues affecting young people in rural and remote areas when implementing current – as well as developing new – initiatives, such as a long-term vision for rural areas, and where appropriate in the context of activities related to the Conference on the Future of Europe; the European Education Area by 2025; the updated Digital Education Action Plan; the Climate Pact; and a reinforced Youth Guarantee.

INVITES THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION TO:

38. Consider research and analysis, using existing tools such as Youth Wiki, and collect disaggregated data (including by sex, disability and other relevant perspectives) with regard to issues related to young people and their well-being in rural and remote areas, in order to contribute to the enhancement of the knowledge, evidence and data to inform policies at all levels, bearing also in mind the need for possible monitoring mechanisms.
39. Foster synergies between EU youth policy and other relevant EU policies and programmes, for instance as regards rural development, agriculture and social cohesion, including by promoting the take-up of the outcomes of the EU Youth Dialogue in this respect.
40. Promote due attention to challenges faced by youth in rural and remote areas within the pursuit of the activities under the European Union-Council of Europe Youth Partnership ⁽²⁷⁾.

⁽²⁵⁾ For example, only 6 % of all farm holdings in the European Union are run by farmers under 35 and persuading more young people to begin farming is a significant challenge (https://ec.europa.eu/info/food-farming-fisheries/key-policies/common-agricultural-policy/income-support/young-farmers_en).

⁽²⁶⁾ Information and communications technology.

⁽²⁷⁾ <https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/youth-partnership>

INVITES THE EU YOUTH SECTOR ⁽²⁸⁾ TO:

41. Contribute to the effort of raising awareness among young people and the general population in rural and remote areas regarding the opportunities within their local communities, with a view to promoting work-related and professional opportunities on the one hand, while on the other use the available measures within the sector to combat stereotypes on rural youth and promote in a proactive manner a positive image of young people in rural and remote areas.
 42. Make maximum use of the opportunities provided by Erasmus+, the European Solidarity Corps and other relevant EU programmes in order to fulfil the potential of young men and women in rural and remote areas.
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⁽²⁸⁾ See definition in the Annex.

ANNEX

A. References

In adopting these conclusions, the Council and the representatives of the governments of the Member States meeting within the Council take note of the following documents:

- EU Strategic Agenda 2019–2024 ⁽¹⁾
- Resolution of the Council of the European Union and the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States meeting within the Council on a framework for European Cooperation in the youth field: The European Union Youth Strategy 2019–2027 (2018/C 456/01) ⁽²⁾
- Recommendation of the Committee of Ministers to Member States on the access of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods to social rights (CM/Rec(2015)3) – Council of Europe ⁽³⁾
- Council conclusions on digital youth work ⁽⁴⁾
- Council conclusions on Young People and the Future of Work ⁽⁵⁾
- Council Conclusions on Education and Training of Youth Workers ⁽⁶⁾
- Council Conclusions on the role of youth in dealing with demographic challenges in the EU ⁽⁷⁾
- Council Conclusions on promoting youth entrepreneurship to foster social inclusion of young people ⁽⁸⁾
- Council conclusions on smart youth work ⁽⁹⁾
- The 7th Cycle of the EU Youth Dialogue: Findings from the EU Youth Dialogue Activities in the Member States and across Europe – Creating Opportunities for Youth ⁽¹⁰⁾
- European Charter on Local Youth work (EGL) ⁽¹¹⁾
- Erasmus + Inclusion & Diversity Strategy in the Field of Youth (2014) ⁽¹²⁾
- 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development ⁽¹³⁾
- Council Recommendation of 22 April 2013 on establishing the Youth Guarantee ⁽¹⁴⁾
- Council Recommendation of 22 May 2018 on key competences for life-long learning ⁽¹⁵⁾.

B. Definitions

For the purpose of these Conclusions, the following definitions apply:

‘Rural areas’

Local administrative communities outside urban clusters, mostly characterised by lower population density, specific socio-geographical and cultural image, vicinity to natural resources and therefore different economic prospects, while at the same time with identified needs for further improvement of specific services aiming at youth as well as general population.

⁽¹⁾ <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/39914/a-new-strategic-agenda-2019-2024.pdf>

⁽²⁾ OJ C 456, 18.12.2018, p. 1.

⁽³⁾ <https://www.coe.int/en/web/youth/-/recommendation-on-the-access-of-young-people-from-disadvantaged-neighbourhoods-to-social-rights>

⁽⁴⁾ OJ C 414, 10.12.2019, p. 2.

⁽⁵⁾ OJ C 189, 5.6.2019, p. 28..

⁽⁶⁾ OJ C 412, 9.12.2019, p. 12.

⁽⁷⁾ OJ C 196, 8.6.2018, p. 16.

⁽⁸⁾ OJ C 183, 14.6.2014, p. 18.

⁽⁹⁾ OJ C 418, 7.12.2017, p. 2.

⁽¹⁰⁾ https://europa.eu/youth/sites/default/files/euyd_youth_dialogue_findings_-_version_for_general_release_24th_feb_2020_1.pdf

⁽¹¹⁾ https://www.europegoeslocal.eu/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/20191002-egl-charter_ENG_online.pdf

⁽¹²⁾ https://ec.europa.eu/assets/eac/youth/library/reports/inclusion-diversity-strategy_en.pdf

⁽¹³⁾ UNGA Resolution A/RES/70 of 25 September 2015.

⁽¹⁴⁾ OJ C 120, 26.4.2013, p. 1.

⁽¹⁵⁾ OJ C 189, 4.6.2018, p. 1.

‘Remote areas’

Local and regional administrative communities, most of them outside urban clusters characterised by difficult physical access, mostly due to geographical/natural divide (islands and/or mountains included, among others) accompanied by limited or less frequent public transport and/or difficult digital connectivity. These areas can share the same aforementioned features of ‘rural areas’. The EU outermost regions as set out in Article 349 TFEU are also considered as remote ones.

‘Social enterprise’

An operator in the social economy whose main objective is to have a social, societal or environmental impact for the general interest rather than make a profit for their owners or shareholders. It operates by providing goods and services for the market in an entrepreneurial and innovative fashion and uses its profits primarily to achieve social objectives. It is managed in an open and responsible manner and, in particular, involves employees, consumers and stakeholders affected by its commercial activities ⁽¹⁶⁾

‘Social and Solidarity Economy (SSE)’

Enterprises and organizations (cooperatives, mutual benefit societies, associations, foundations and social enterprises) which produce goods, services and knowledge that meet the needs of the community they serve, through the pursuit of specific social and environmental objectives and the fostering of solidarity ⁽¹⁷⁾

‘Youth spaces’

Youth-led physical facilities and infrastructures defined by being autonomous, open and safe, accessible to all, offering professional support for development and ensuring opportunities for youth participation ⁽¹⁸⁾

‘EU Youth Sector’

EU Youth sector generally refers to the totality of organisations, youth workers, members of the academia, youth civil society or other experts involved in youth policy development that carry out youth-relevant activities and projects in the EU ⁽¹⁹⁾.

⁽¹⁶⁾ Social Business Initiative- SEC (2011)1278 final.

⁽¹⁷⁾ International Labour Organization (ILO) definition.

⁽¹⁸⁾ EU Youth Strategy 2019–2027, Annex 3 on European Youth Goals, Goal 9, 4th target (OJ C 456, 18.12.2018, p. 16).

⁽¹⁹⁾ Council Conclusions on Young People and the Future of Work (see footnote 33).

Council conclusions on European teachers and trainers for the future

(2020/C 193/04)

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

RECALLING the political background to this issue as set out in the Annex to these conclusions;

RECOGNISING THAT:

1. Education and training shape humanity and have a transformative role for both individuals and society. They are important for the social, economic, democratic and cultural engagement of citizens, as well as for growth, sustainable development, social cohesion and prosperity within the Union. Relevant, inclusive and equitable quality education and training not only provide citizens with knowledge, skills and competences in line with current and future developments, but also shape their attitudes, values and behaviours, enabling them to thrive professionally and personally and be active and responsible participants in society.
2. Teachers and trainers ⁽¹⁾, at all levels and in all types of education and training, are an indispensable driving force of education and training. They have a crucial role in preparing individuals of all backgrounds and ages to live, learn and work in the world of today, as well as in creating and leading future changes.
3. In the context of constant social, demographic, cultural, economic, scientific, environmental and technological changes, the world of education and training is changing, and so is the occupation of teachers and trainers, with increasing demands, responsibilities and expectations put before them. Continuous innovations and challenges have an effect not only on the competences required, but also on teachers' and trainers' wellbeing and the attractiveness of the teaching profession.
4. European teachers and trainers are the cornerstones of the European Education Area, with a central role to play in promoting the European dimension of teaching ⁽²⁾, supporting learners in understanding and experiencing the sense of European identity and belonging.

ACKNOWLEDGING THAT:

5. The current crisis caused by COVID-19 has put an unprecedented challenge before teachers and trainers at all levels and in all types of education and training. They have been required to rapidly move from face-to-face to predominantly distance, and to a large extent virtual teaching. In such exceptional circumstances, teachers and trainers have shown impressive commitment, creativity, peer collaboration and made significant efforts to ensure that both learning and learners' progress continue, including by providing support for their wellbeing.

AWARE THAT:

6. In line with the principle of subsidiarity, which also encompasses the teaching profession, the responsibility for the organisation and content of education and training systems lies with the Member States. In this context, Member States have different requirements in terms of types and levels of qualifications needed to access and progress in the teaching profession ⁽³⁾.

⁽¹⁾ For the purposes of these conclusions, a *teacher* is a person who is acknowledged as having the status of a teacher (or equivalent) according to national legislation and practice, while a *trainer* is anyone who fulfils one or more activities linked to the (theoretical or practical) training function, either in an institution for education or training or at the workplace. They encompass teachers in general education and higher education, teachers and trainers in initial and continuing VET, as well as early childhood education and care professionals and adult educators.

⁽²⁾ As defined in the Council Recommendation of 22 May of 2018 on promoting common values, inclusive education, and the European dimension of teaching.

⁽³⁾ In the EU, teaching generally requires a tertiary qualification. The most common minimum requirement for teaching at primary level is a bachelor's degree. To teach at lower secondary level, half of the EU systems set the minimum qualification at master's level. To teach in upper secondary schools, in most EU countries, teachers need a master's degree as a minimum qualification (ET Monitor 2019, p. 24). However, in early childhood education and care there are different requirements for minimum qualifications across Europe. In some countries, there are the same minimum qualification requirements for all staff members, whereas in others different qualifications are required for different positions and profiles. Tertiary qualifications are often not required for all members of an early childhood education and care team. (Key data on early childhood education and care in Europe, Eurydice report, 2019, p. 71–72)

7. Completing higher levels of education and training can provide prospective teachers and trainers with a more comprehensive set of competences, including those needed to develop professional autonomy in their teaching practices. This can in turn contribute to greater job satisfaction, as well as to the perception of value and respect towards the profession ⁽⁴⁾.
8. Teachers and trainers have the responsibility to facilitate learners' acquisition of key competences ⁽⁵⁾ and professional skills, not only to prepare them to successfully perform future jobs – some of which are not even known yet – but also to foster their social responsibility and civic engagement, to convey human values, as well as to support their personal growth and wellbeing.
9. Their subject-related and pedagogical expertise, as well as their commitment, enthusiasm, job satisfaction and self-confidence, have an impact on learners' learning outcomes, progress and wellbeing. By being role models for lifelong learning, teachers and trainers can motivate learners' engagement and responsibility for their own lifelong learning, stimulating their interest and encouraging curiosity and creativity.
10. In reacting to different, ever-more-demanding roles, responsibilities and expectations of learners, institution leaders, policy makers, parents and communities, where applicable and in accordance with national circumstances, teachers and trainers need to remain engaged and supported to effectively respond to changes and challenges. These challenges may be present to a varying extent in different Member States, and are especially related, but not limited, to:
 - (a) balancing different aspects of their workload, often coping with numerous administrative tasks, taking part in institutional leadership, providing support and guidance to their learners, planning and finding time for peer collaboration and their professional development, while at the same time continuously developing and maintaining the quality of their teaching and learners' learning outcomes;
 - (b) encouraging the development of learners' intellectual, emotional, social and creative potential in a holistic manner, while at the same time ensuring their educational progress;
 - (c) using various research-based teaching methods and practices, mainstreaming innovative and digital methods and approaches, with a focus on learner-centred and competence-based approaches, in line with evolving and individual needs of learners, in order to facilitate the learning process and support the co-creation of learning and teaching, while ensuring that such practices are inclusive, socially just and equitable;
 - (d) working in environments transformed by technology, digitalisation and artificial intelligence, paying attention to their pedagogical potential and ethical, safe and responsible use;
 - (e) working in linguistically and culturally diverse classrooms and learning environments, with learners from a variety of socioeconomic backgrounds, with different needs, including special education needs ⁽⁶⁾ and safeguarding inclusiveness;
 - (f) participating in policy-making, in particular in development, implementation and evaluation of education and training reforms, including the continuous review of curricula;
 - (g) building a supportive and constructive atmosphere in learning environments, including positive and mutually supportive relationships within their teams and other educational staff, learners, families and employers, where relevant;
 - (h) dealing with classroom behaviour management and potentially preventing different types of violence, including cyber-violence, which can negatively affect learners' outcomes and health; moreover, possibly dealing with violent behaviour directed towards themselves;

⁽⁴⁾ ET Monitor 2019 (p. 24).

⁽⁵⁾ As defined in the Council Recommendation of 22 May 2018 on key competences for lifelong learning.

⁽⁶⁾ Based on TALIS 2018 data, 21 % of teachers report a further need for training in teaching students with special needs, 16 % in the use of ICT for teaching, and around 13 % in teaching in multilingual and multicultural environments (ET Monitor 2019, p. 10). Data suggests that Europe's higher education student population is also becoming more diverse (Eurostudent VI (2016–2018)).

- (i) choosing appropriate assessment tools, criteria and methods, aligned with intended learning outcomes, in order to provide quality and timely feedback to each learner which can guide and improve their further learning;
 - (j) teaching with often limited resources, including scarce or inadequate educational infrastructure, learning spaces, equipment and tools, including tools enabling online learning.
11. These challenges are even more demanding for novice (newly qualified) teachers and trainers, since from the first years of teaching or training they are facing the same responsibilities as their more experienced colleagues. In addition, they may often find themselves working in challenging environments, such as education and training institutions with higher rates of learners with socioeconomically disadvantaged or migrant backgrounds ⁽⁷⁾. Senior teachers and trainers might experience other difficulties, for example facing a generation gap at a workplace.
12. Moreover, there may be additional challenges for teachers and trainers working in rural, remote or disadvantaged areas, such as those related to professional isolation, limited infrastructure including digital infrastructure, accessing support and opportunities for professional development or teaching multi-age and multi-grade classrooms. Furthermore, teachers and trainers working in densely populated urban areas may face more prominent challenges related to teaching learners from different multilingual, multicultural and socioeconomic backgrounds.
13. Although many teachers and trainers share many of the same challenges, there are also, to a varying extent in different Member States, specific challenges related to different levels and types of education and training, including the following:
- (a) in early childhood education and care:
 - difficulties to attract and retain qualified and well-trained early childhood education and care professionals,
 - ageing of staff and gender imbalances, with predominantly female workforce,
 - unattractive working conditions, including a high child/staff ratio, and a lack of attractive career pathways, as well as a lack of opportunities for continuous professional development;
 - (b) in school education:
 - there are difficulties related to attracting and retaining high-potential students in initial teacher education ⁽⁸⁾, as well as to attracting graduates and retaining practising teachers in the profession,
 - the teaching population is ageing; there are also gender imbalances, with predominantly female teachers, in particular in some subjects and at some levels of education; moreover, the profession may not be culturally representative of the community being served,
 - all of this is reflected in shortages of teachers many Member States are facing, whether in general, in specific geographical areas, in certain subject areas, such as STEM, or shortages of teachers with competences for teaching students with special needs, teaching in a multicultural or multilingual setting or teaching students from socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds ⁽⁹⁾;
 - (c) in vocational education and training:
 - teachers and trainers should be competent in promoting and developing basic skills and key competences, along with teaching up-to-date vocational or technical skills and knowledge,
 - there may be an increase in the need for hybrid-model teachers and trainers who work in both vocational education and training institutions and companies,

⁽⁷⁾ ET Monitor 2019 (p. 21).

⁽⁸⁾ There are shortages of students enrolling initial teacher education, as well as high drop-out rates (Teaching Careers in Europe, Access, Progression and Support, Eurydice, 2018, p. 10).

⁽⁹⁾ ET Monitor 2019, p. 9, 10, 21.

- there is also a need for collaboration between teachers and trainers, in particular in-company trainers, given their complementary roles and responsibilities, especially in delivery of apprenticeships and work-based learning,
 - since it may offer better incentives, work in the private sector may be more appealing than work in vocational education and training institutions,
 - many Member States face challenges related to the ageing of teachers and trainers;
- (d) in adult education:
- adult educators have a significant role in promoting and developing both basic and professional knowledge, skills and competences,
 - they may have to deal with the challenge posed by learners' literacy, numeracy and language difficulties or poor education and training experiences,
 - since adult educators often work with diverse groups of learners, they need to be prepared to apply diverse and effective teaching strategies and methods, in order to meet the needs, stimulate motivation and cater for individual learning pathways of their learners,
 - in order to empower individuals to undertake learning for upskilling and reskilling, the role of teachers and trainers may need to be reviewed in the light of their potential contribution to guidance and validation of skills attained through non-formal and informal learning,
 - adult educators may be required to engage with employers in relation to work-based learning,
 - adult educators are often not specifically prepared to teach adults and might work part-time or as freelancers, so their professionalisation presents a significant challenge to assuring the quality of adult education;
- (e) in higher education:
- entry qualifications to the academic profession often do not focus on equipping candidates with appropriate teaching skills,
 - large-scale, systemic opportunities for continuous professional development focused on improving the teaching skills of academic staff are not in place in all Member States,
 - not enough attention is given to the support for inter-institutional staff development, including international teaching mobility, but also to build communities of practice and professional networks,
 - diversity of the student population requires the use of different teaching methods based on student-centred approach that might be a challenge for the higher education institutions,
 - there are gender imbalances in some academic disciplines and female staff is especially underrepresented in higher ranks,
 - although teaching is one of the three missions of higher education, research is often more valued than teaching in evaluation with regards to career progression; more teaching is often demanded from junior and middle-ranking staff, as career progression often results in less teaching and more time for research ⁽¹⁰⁾.
14. Although the requirements are becoming more complex and their profession more demanding, many teachers and trainers do not feel respected or valued by society ⁽¹¹⁾ and the profession is losing its attractiveness in many Member States.

⁽¹⁰⁾ Modernisation of Higher Education in Europe: Academic Staff – 2017, Eurydice, 2017.

⁽¹¹⁾ Based on TALIS 2018 data, 18 % of lower secondary school teachers in the EU consider their profession to be valued by society, and the share gets lower the longer the time in the profession, as does (in several EU countries) the share of teachers who would still choose to work as teachers (ET Monitor 2019, p. 9).

STRESSES THAT:

15. It is essential to further develop and update the competences of teachers and trainers, to ensure their expertise and encourage their autonomy and engagement, and to foster their personal and professional wellbeing, motivation and feeling of value, preparing them to adequately respond to change, but also encouraging them to be proactive and innovative in their profession.
16. In order to do that, it is necessary to further develop national policies to support the work of teachers and trainers in a targeted and comprehensive manner, taking into account the requirements and training needs identified by teachers and trainers themselves, as well as the needs of wider learning communities, the relevant findings of education research and overall national education and training policy goals. Moreover, it is beneficial to offer various training models, including face-to-face, virtual, blended and work-based learning.
17. A complementary and comprehensive approach is needed at all levels and in all parts of teacher and trainer education and training. This should include the recruitment and selection of students, initial teacher education (including traineeship), induction and quality mentoring, as well as promoting and supporting continuous professional development throughout their teaching careers and, if relevant, appraisal mechanisms. Special attention should be paid to novice teachers, by providing them with additional guidance and mentoring, to facilitate their career start and help them cope with the specific needs they are facing.
18. In line with national circumstances, this could be underpinned by up-to-date and relevant national comprehensive competence frameworks for teachers and trainers ⁽¹²⁾, developed in structured, systematic dialogue with relevant stakeholders, reflecting contemporary and innovative teaching approaches, strategies and methods, as well as newly arising circumstances in society at large. In this sense, it is important that education and training for teachers and trainers during the professional continuum cover more systematically the topics and learning opportunities related to work in multilingual and multicultural environments, work with learners with special needs and disadvantaged backgrounds, digital pedagogies, sustainable development and healthy lifestyle. In this context, special attention should be paid to the requirements and needs expressed by teachers and trainers themselves ⁽¹³⁾.
19. The continuous professional development of teachers and trainers should be perceived as a precondition to delivering quality teaching and training; teachers and trainers should therefore be encouraged to reflect on their practices and training needs, as well as be motivated and supported to engage by offering quality training opportunities, as well as giving them time to participate and providing incentives.
20. Strengthening teachers' and trainers' link with researchers can have a positive effect on their professional development and stimulate research-led, innovative and enhanced teaching practices.
21. Cross-border mobility, either as short-term or longer-term, physical, virtual or blended, is a powerful learning experience and a valuable opportunity in developing participants' social, intercultural, multilingual and interpersonal competences, both for students in initial teacher education and practising teachers and trainers in their continuous professional development. However, there are obstacles impeding the mobility of both students and practising teachers, such as a lack of language competences, or finding replacements for practising teachers. Moreover, initial education programmes for teachers often display a weak international dimension and low levels of study and traineeship mobility, in comparison to study programmes in other subject fields ⁽¹⁴⁾, and there are challenges related to recognition of mobility periods abroad and learning outcomes.

⁽¹²⁾ Most European countries adopt frameworks describing a set of competences that teachers should possess or develop over their career. In practice, however, such frameworks vary in format, level of detail, value and use (ET Monitor 2019, p. 34).

⁽¹³⁾ Based on TALIS 2018 data, 21 % of teachers report a further need for training in teaching students with special needs, 16 % in the use of ICT for teaching, and around 13 % in teaching in multilingual and multicultural environments (ET Monitor 2019, p. 10).

⁽¹⁴⁾ International mobility of student teachers during initial teacher education (calculated as the proportion of teachers who have spent a study period abroad as part of their initial teacher education) is not very common and varies considerably between Member States (ET Monitor, p. 26).

22. Opportunities related to different career choices within the teaching profession, offering multiple paths for professional progression, may increase motivation to access and remain in the profession, as well as motivation for lifelong learning. They may encourage teachers and trainers to remain dedicated to the profession, and committed to both their learners' and their own learning during the course of their working life. On the other hand, it is equally important that teachers and trainers are not overly burdened with administrative tasks in such a way that would make it difficult for them to focus on teaching.
23. Teachers and trainers, as well as institution leaders, can contribute to policy-making with their knowledge, expertise and practical insights. At the same time, their involvement in policy-making may increase their ownership, and consequently have a positive effect on the results of the implementation of various policy initiatives and reforms.
24. The wellbeing of teachers and trainers influences their job satisfaction and enthusiasm for their work, and has an impact on the attractiveness of their profession, and subsequently on their retention in the profession. It is an important factor in quality and performance, correlating with their own motivation and with the motivation and achievements of their learners.
25. Important aspects of wellbeing may be related to, inter alia, understanding and managing expectations; workload, work environments, including the safety of teaching and learning, and working conditions; available peer and institutional support; relationships with learners, parents, peers and institution leaders; and respect and appreciation given by the wider community. If these factors are missing or not experienced positively, it may lead to physical and emotional exhaustion, stress and burn-out, affecting mental and physical health.
26. In order to support both the achievement and wellbeing of teachers and trainers, as well as learners, it is beneficial to build and promote collaborative learning communities, and a collaborative team culture between teachers and trainers, their peers and institution leaders, learners, parents, and other stakeholders, such as employers. Experienced teachers and trainers can play an important role as mentors to their younger colleagues, while also benefitting themselves from intergenerational exchange. Moreover, it is important to stimulate bottom-up, peer-based professional learning, promote instructional and participatory leadership that builds trust, inspires and motivates educational staff. Furthermore, as appropriate, appraisal could be used to support improvements in their work, by providing constructive evaluation and feedback on their performance, setting up criteria for promotion and recognition of those who accomplish significant achievements.
27. Sufficient, effective and sustainable investment in teachers and trainers is investment in the quality of education and training. This encompasses various aspects, such as investment in opportunities for education and training of teachers and trainers, adequate infrastructure and learning spaces, tools and resources, as well as salaries ⁽¹⁵⁾.
28. All of the above could be considered while developing incentives to tackle the issue of shortages of teachers and trainers. Additional possibilities to explore may include scholarships to attract students to relevant study programmes or recruitment of professionals with qualifications other than in teaching, while taking care to promote and support high-quality provision.

INVITES THE MEMBER STATES, WITH DUE REGARD TO INSTITUTIONAL AUTONOMY, AND IN ACCORDANCE WITH NATIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES, TO:

29. Continue and make further efforts to involve teachers and trainers in creation of education and training policies at all levels of policy design, increasing collaboration, fostering their ownership of the process, as well as their autonomy in applying these policies in practice.
30. Take into account the need for a comprehensive approach to teachers' and trainers' initial education, induction and continuous professional development when developing policies related to education and training of teachers and trainers.
31. Promote and support greater participation of teachers and trainers in continuous professional development, in particular by taking further steps to remove barriers to participation and opportunities, and strive for appropriate appraisals and recognition of the value of continuous professional development as a building block of career progression.

⁽¹⁵⁾ Evidence suggests that salaries have an impact on recruitment and retention of teachers and trainers, as well as on learning outcomes. Salaries of teachers are often lower than the average salaries of other tertiary-educated workers. (ET Monitor 2019, p. 39–40).

32. Encourage education and training institutions to provide impactful and research-based continuous professional development opportunities for teachers and trainers, based on collaboration, peer observation and peer-learning, guidance, mentoring and networking. In development of such opportunities, if appropriate, encourage education and training institutions to broaden their learning offer, including smaller units of learning, such as those possibly leading to microcredentials, taking into account quality-assurance arrangements.
33. Continue supporting higher education institutions, while fully respecting their autonomy, in enhancing the competences of academic staff in applying research-based and student-centred learning, teaching and assessment approach, and setting up and following clear, transparent and fair processes for staff recruitment and employment that recognise the value of teaching activities ⁽¹⁶⁾, which should also be taken into account in advancement policies and practices.
34. Explore possibilities for diversifying careers of teachers and trainers and developing national career frameworks to help fulfil their career aspirations and motivations, as well as their learning needs.
35. Motivate education and training institutions to embed teachers' and trainers' mobility – physical, virtual or blended – in their learning, development and internationalisation strategies, including using the potential of European tools such as e-Twinning and EPALE as an integral part of the learning provision. Validate, whenever possible and in line with national regulations and according to national circumstances, the skills and competences acquired through European tools and mobility as part of continuous professional development of teachers and trainers.
36. Make further efforts to promote mobility among both students and practising teachers and trainers and remove persisting obstacles with a view to increasing participation rates. In this respect, encourage higher education institutions in charge of initial teacher education to fully harness the potential of mobility as part of their learning offer, which may include, as appropriate, mobility windows in study programmes. Moreover, facilitate participation in various forms of mobility in the professional development of practising teachers and trainers, including by making efforts to find sustainable solutions for replacement needs.
37. In order to improve the attractiveness and status of the profession, invest in measures related to improving their initial education and continuous professional training, working conditions and career prospects, as well as measures to further enhance their resilience and wellbeing, in order to support them in addressing stressful aspects of their work. In addressing these aspects, it is important to enable effective engagement of social partners.
38. Cooperate and exchange experience and information related to policy developments regarding teachers and trainers, including development and revision of national competence frameworks for teachers and trainers.

INVITES THE COMMISSION, IN LINE WITH ITS COMPETENCES AND WITH DUE REGARD FOR SUBSIDIARITY, TO:

39. In order to facilitate mobility of students and practising teachers and trainers, in cooperation with Member States, foster a dialogue and examine obstacles, including structural aspects, recognition of outcomes of learning periods abroad and academic qualifications, and provide guidance to education and training institutions to improve mobility and to broaden the international perspective of student teachers and trainers.
40. To complement existing national efforts, explore the possibility to prepare a proposal for a relevant European competence framework ⁽¹⁷⁾ in order to foster development and assessment of knowledge, skills and attitudes related to sustainable development, to be used on a voluntary basis.
41. Support closer cooperation between education and training institutions in the Union, in order to strengthen research-based teacher education, support cross-border mobility and joint learning opportunities within a continuum of teachers' professional development, for example by means of encouraging voluntary cooperation and networking of national education and training institutions at Union level, in the form of European teacher training academies.

⁽¹⁶⁾ Standards 1.3 and 1.5, Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area, 2015.

⁽¹⁷⁾ Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the European Council, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions: The European Green Deal Communication, 11 December 2019 (p. 19)

42. In order to complement existing national efforts, explore the possibility of developing European guidelines as support to be used, on a voluntary basis, in the creation of career frameworks at national level, building on the results of the work of the Education and Training 2020 Working Group on Schools, to address the progression of teachers and trainers in a broader perspective and provide a response to their aims, motivation and ambitions.
 43. In cooperation with Member States, promote the use and consider further development of existing online platforms, such as e-Twinning, School Education Gateway and EPAL, and examine possible ways of extending their use in facilitating the mobility of both students and practising teachers and trainers, such as finding partners for mobility projects and by providing a platform for the preparation and follow-up of mobility.
 44. In order to foster appreciation, promote the importance of the teaching profession and give visibility to high-quality teaching, investigate the feasibility and added value of introducing an annual European reward for exceptional teachers or trainers, for example for promoting innovation, inclusiveness or the European dimension in teaching.
 45. Continue supporting the development of education and training opportunities for prospective and practicing teachers and trainers, as well as their mobility, in particular via the Erasmus+ programme and the European Structural and Investment Funds, in particular the European Social Fund, and their successors.
 46. Take full account of these conclusions when developing proposals for the European Education Area and the new strategic framework for cooperation in education and training, including the continuation of exchange of good practices between Member States.
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ANNEX

Political background

1. Conclusions of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council, on improving the quality of teacher education (15 November 2007)
 2. Council Conclusions on the professional development of teachers and school leaders (26 November 2009)
 3. Council Conclusions on effective leadership in education (25 and 26 November 2013)
 4. Council Conclusions on effective teacher education (20 May 2014)
 5. Conclusions of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council, on inclusion in diversity to achieve a high-quality education for all (17 February 2017)
 6. Council Conclusions on school development and excellent teaching (20 November 2017)
 7. European Framework for the Digital Competences of Educators (2017)
 8. Council Recommendation on promoting common values, inclusive education, and the European dimension of teaching (22 May 2018)
 9. Council Recommendation on key competences for lifelong learning (22 May 2018)
 10. Council Recommendation on high-quality early childhood education and care systems (22 May 2019)
 11. Council Recommendation on a comprehensive approach to the teaching and learning of languages (22 May 2019)
 12. TALIS – The OECD Teaching and Learning International Survey 2018
 13. Education and Training Monitor 2019
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Council conclusions amending the Work Plan for Culture (2019–2022)

(2020/C 193/05)

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

RECALLING the Council conclusions on the Work Plan for Culture 2019–2022 ⁽¹⁾,

REITERATING that promoting sustainable development is a key action for European Union's future in the Strategic Agenda 2019–2024 ⁽²⁾ and restating the role of culture as an engine for sustainable social and economic development, as underlined in the New European Agenda for Culture ⁽³⁾,

IN THE LIGHT OF the Resolution of the Council of the European Union and the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States meeting within the Council on the Cultural Dimension of Sustainable Development ⁽⁴⁾, whose objective is to strengthen culture's contribution to sustainable development by launching a process that will include an OMC group and will lead to an action plan, to be prepared by the European Commission in coordination with Member States, on the cultural dimension of sustainable development at EU level,

AGREE, in the context of this process, which is aimed at maximising culture's contribution to sustainability, to amend the Work Plan for Culture (2019–2022) by adding priority F on culture as a driver of sustainable development as follows:

Under II. PRIORITIES, the following is added:

F. Culture as a driver of sustainable development

Sustainable development is a key political priority of the European Union, and there is an urgent need to step up action in this respect. Culture is intrinsically linked to all three dimensions of sustainable development (economic, social and environmental), and several fundamental objectives of cultural policies and measures at EU level converge with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and their targets, which form the backbone of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: they include fostering inclusion, diversity, identity, participation, creativity and innovation. The impact of these policies and measures also fully complements the results of sustainable development: improved health and well-being, growth, innovation and job creation, and urban regeneration.

The need to systematically employ cultural policies and measures to complement the instruments currently used to deliver sustainability was indicated in the Resolution on the Cultural Dimension of Sustainable Development adopted by the Council of the European Union and the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States in November 2019.'

⁽¹⁾ OJ C 460, 21.12.2018, p. 12.

⁽²⁾ Adopted by the European Council on 20 June 2019.

⁽³⁾ COM (2018) 267 final.

⁽⁴⁾ OJ C 410, 6.12.2019, p. 1.

Under IV. ACTIONS, the following is added:

F. Culture as a driver of sustainable development

Topic:

The cultural dimension of sustainable development

Working methods:

OMC and an action plan*

Rationale:

In its Resolution on the Cultural Dimension of Sustainable Development, the Council confirms its commitment to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and agrees to step up efforts by initiating a process that will lead to an action plan on the cultural dimension of sustainable development at EU level. The European Commission was invited to prepare this action plan in coordination with Member States and to integrate it into the EU's implementation strategy for the 2030 Agenda.

The rapid setting up of an OMC group on the cultural dimension of sustainable development was indicated as part of this process in the Resolution.

Target outputs:

EU-level action aimed at supporting, coordinating or supplementing Member States' cultural policies and measures will maximise their contribution to sustainable development. The integration of the action plan into the EU's implementation strategy for the 2030 Agenda would achieve enhanced policy coherence and unlock culture's full potential for sustainability.

* The date of the finalisation of the action plan is dependent on the resources available at Commission level for the implementation of the Work Plan for Culture 2019–2022; however, this should not affect its integration into the EU's implementation strategy for the 2030 Agenda.

Under Annex A, the following is added:

Indicative timetable of the Work Plan for Culture 2019–2022

Priority	Topics	2019		2020		2021		2022	
		1 st half	2 nd half	1 st half	2 nd half	1 st half	2 nd half	1 st half	2 nd half
F. Culture as a driver of sustainable development	The cultural dimension of sustainable development				OMC group		exam. OMC report		action plan ⁽¹⁾

⁽¹⁾ The date of the finalisation of the action plan is dependent on the resources available at Commission level for the implementation of the Work Plan for Culture 2019–2022; however, this should not affect its integration into the EU's implementation strategy for the 2030 Agenda.'

Council conclusions on media literacy in an ever-changing world

(2020/C 193/06)

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

TAKING INTO CONSIDERATION:

1. the political background as set out in the Annex;

RECOGNISING THAT:

2. technological and digital progress has brought major changes to our lives. New media and communication platforms have changed social and communication relationships, influenced the cultural and creative industries, changed the media landscape, and the way in which we produce, distribute and consume content. It has brought about significant new opportunities for the citizens of Europe to communicate and to find, create and distribute different types of content;
3. digital and technological changes happen in an unpredictable and continuous manner, imposing the need for constant adjustment by both citizens and society. Innovations that make the world a better place, including digitalisation and the development of media and communication platforms have consequences that need to be addressed;
4. alongside the numerous advantages and positive effects of the new media ecosystem, it has also brought increasing amounts of disinformation, manipulation and hate speech;
5. in the new media ecosystem, citizens are overwhelmed with information and may have trouble understanding the news and finding accurate information and reliable news sources, as well as quality content in general;
6. the exposure of citizens to a large amount of disinformation, especially in times of major global crisis, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, emphasises the importance of a systematic approach to the development of media literacy, the importance of collaboration between online platforms, experts and competent authorities as well as the importance of developing an independent fact-checking procedure in order to limit the spread of online disinformation campaigns, while respecting freedom of expression;
7. today's world requires the acquisition of a great deal of new individual and societal knowledge and skills to enable citizens of all ages to access, select, understand and make sophisticated and responsible use of information and of different kinds of media, both professional and user-generated, on all kinds of channels and distribution or communication platforms;
8. all these abilities constitute media literacy, which is understood as an umbrella expression that includes all the technical, cognitive, social, civic, ethical and creative capacities that allow a citizen to access and use information and media effectively, and to safely and responsibly create and share media content through different platforms. Media literacy should not be limited to learning about tools and technologies, but should also aim to equip citizens with the critical thinking skills required to exercise judgment, analyse complex realities and recognise the difference between opinion and fact. All these capacities allow the citizen to participate in the economic, social and cultural aspects of society as well as to play an active role in the democratic process ⁽¹⁾;

ACKNOWLEDGING THAT:

9. similarly to other challenges of today's world, the COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the need for reliable sources of information and the need for transparency on the part of online platforms; empowering citizens with the skills needed to manage disinformation has become vital;
10. taking into account the vast amount of information available on the internet, algorithms are crucial for the organisation of that information and make it possible to target content in order to provide users with a relevant and personalised experience;

⁽¹⁾ Based on the definitions set out in the mission of the Media Literacy Expert Group and in the revised Audiovisual Media Services Directive.

11. at the same time, the lack of transparency and the use of algorithms without appropriate risk and impact assessments can exacerbate the problem of disinformation and stimulate sensationalism, extreme content and clickbait journalism;
12. the influence of algorithms on dissemination channels and the selection of recipients can exert a considerable impact on public opinion, shape socio-political discourse and potentially lead to social polarisation;
13. the increased volume of online content involving hate speech, incitement to violence or hatred, cyberbullying and other illegal and/or harmful content presents a challenge to society;
14. in a data-driven global digital media economy, the dominant market position of several global players and the algorithm patterns used by online platforms could threaten media pluralism and diversity of content;
15. rapid growth and ongoing changes in the media ecosystem have consequences for trust in the media, also potentially putting pressure on professional media and journalism standards.

NOTING THAT:

16. media literacy and our capacity to have a critical understanding of and interact responsibly with media have never been as important as in today's world affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, not only for the protection of public health, but also for ensuring the resilience of democratic societies and the enhancement of democratic participation;
17. it is necessary to intensify work on empowering citizens of all ages with media literacy and critical thinking, while taking into account cultural diversity and significant differences in media literacy and digital competence in general among EU Member States;
18. constant development of new media and communication technologies is increasing the demand for new approaches to media literacy, especially in non-formal and informal learning;
19. there is a need to develop new models of lifelong learning in media literacy, and to provide people of all ages with the practical opportunities to learn the skills needed to understand and operate within the highly complex media communication landscape, through programmes adapted to various target groups, which can be age-specific and/or context-specific;
20. there is a need to broaden the involvement in media literacy to stakeholders who are in a position to reach citizens of all ages, such as cultural institutions (e.g. libraries, museums, and cinemas) which have access to the relevant infrastructure and which enjoy a high level of trust in society, and which should therefore be further encouraged to reinforce media literacy through their services and activities;
21. media outlets, especially public service media, and journalism organisations hold an influential position in the society and could play a more prominent role in terms of promoting, informing and raising public awareness of the importance of media literacy;
22. relevant national agencies and bodies, in particular national media regulatory authorities, in parallel to the joint activities they carry out through the European Regulators Group for Audiovisual Media Services (ERGA), depending on the national legal framework in which they operate, can have an important role to play as far as they have the competencies and position to enable them to actively promote, organise and coordinate media literacy initiatives and to bring together stakeholders, as well as to contribute significantly to addressing disinformation;
23. strengthening professional journalism, independent media, investigative reporting and media pluralism, facilitating citizens' access to quality, credible and diversified information sources and building public trust contribute to the protection of democracy;
24. it is important to encourage the European media industry in its use of emerging technologies in terms of content development, distribution channels, data collection and analysis, in order to attract a wider audience and help it access diverse quality content, and to foster media pluralism;

25. it is important to continue to emphasise the need to achieve higher standards of responsibility and transparency for the online platforms with regard to making further efforts to protect users from illegal and harmful content and from disinformation, while respecting freedom of expression;
26. the importance of cooperation with public authorities on the part of online platforms applies to various kinds of information such as information regarding algorithms and data sets, which could facilitate the effective monitoring of platforms in order to address problems of disinformation;
27. a cross-sectoral approach to empowering citizens' media literacy, in addition to the digital and technological advancement of the media and of the cultural and creative industries, will strengthen both users and content creators, and lead to a more creative and competitive media industry;
28. the strengthening of media literacy and the addressing of disinformation call for a systematic, strategic and comprehensive approach by all Member States, as well as inter-sectoral collaboration between the various stakeholders.

INVITES MEMBER STATES, WITHIN THEIR AREAS OF COMPETENCE AND IN DUE COMPLIANCE WITH THE PRINCIPLE OF SUBSIDIARITY, TO:

29. work systematically to raise public awareness of the importance of media literacy and support the consistent development of media literacy policies and their implementation;
30. support the establishment and development of media literacy networks (national, regional, local, thematic) in order to bring together relevant stakeholders and enable them to cooperate and develop sustainable and long-term viable media literacy projects and initiatives;
31. develop a lifelong-learning approach to media literacy for all ages and provide support in that context for pilot and research projects, in order to create or develop and assess new methodologies, actions and content adapted to the specific needs of targeted groups;
32. support the development and the sharing of media literacy teaching and training materials and the development of a systematic approach for enhancing the competencies of professionals in different fields (e.g. librarians, museum staff, youth workers, teachers, media literacy professionals, journalists), so as to enable them to strengthen their important role in developing citizens' media literacy;
33. encourage cultural institutions, civil society organisations and journalism organisations to integrate lifelong media literacy learning programmes and to foster all types of media organisations, especially public service media, to develop and promote media literacy initiatives and to take part in other stakeholders' initiatives and projects;
34. continue to explore possibilities for the promotion and fostering of professional journalism as a sustainable element of the global digital media environment;
35. improve existing training models, and if necessary design new ones, for the development of digital skills within the European cultural and creative industries in order to foster the effective use of innovative technologies and keep pace with technological progress.

INVITES THE COMMISSION TO:

36. further strengthen and develop the concept of the European Media Literacy Week in collaboration with Member States, and to promote participation in that event;
37. develop, within the forthcoming European Digital Media Observatory, mechanisms to facilitate collaboration and the voluntary exchange of ideas and practices in media literacy by a diverse range of stakeholders;
38. propose potential further steps to find long-term, systematic and efficient solutions in order to address disinformation, on the basis of the outcome of both existing and future comprehensive research on and analysis of the measures already taken, including due consideration for the work carried out by the European Regulators Group for Audiovisual Media Services in this field and for the necessary cooperation between national regulatory authorities;

39. reflect, in the context of the recently published EU Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy 2020–2024 and in view of the preparation of the new Digital Services Act, the European Democracy Action Plan and the Media and audiovisual Action Plan, on the need for more effective methods to address problems of disinformation without hindering the protection of fundamental rights, where platforms' transparency and responsibility are a key principle;
40. ensure that account is taken of the local specificities and capacities of different Member States as well as the need for extensive collaboration between all relevant stakeholders across the Member States, so that the potential measures are applicable and effective and can be verified effectively and independently;
41. develop, in collaboration with Member States, systematic criteria and evaluation processes for EU-funded media literacy projects and initiatives and develop a uniform and comparative methodology for Member States' reporting on the development of media literacy, within the framework of the future guidelines provided for in the revised Audiovisual Media Services Directive, to be issued by the Commission after consultation of the Contact Committee.

INVITES THE COMMISSION AND MEMBER STATES, WITHIN THEIR AREAS OF COMPETENCE AND IN DUE COMPLIANCE WITH THE PRINCIPLE OF SUBSIDIARITY, TO:

42. continue and undertake further efforts in terms of a systematic, comprehensive and cross-sectoral approach to developing media literacy and raising awareness of the importance of media literacy; national efforts undertaken in this perspective, including funding initiatives, should be accompanied at EU level;
 43. foster better use of the possibilities offered by EU funds and EU programmes to support media education and diverse media literacy projects and initiatives (e.g. support for the media through the Creative Europe programme, in particular the new action on support for the media) and to develop additional funding sources as well as create synergies between the relevant EU programmes;
 44. ensure that media literacy measures targeting minors under the Better Internet for Children Strategy keep pace with the continuously evolving digital environment;
 45. finance and foster systematic and regular research into media literacy and the impact of media and digital platforms (e.g. systematic research on media literacy measures and initiatives; research into the influence of new media and communication platforms on well-being of citizens; research into the operation of algorithms and AI and their influence on public opinion, people's lives, and media consumption, as well as on the European media and audiovisual industry);
 46. support the audiovisual industry in developing quality European content and distribution platforms, taking into account the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the audiovisual sector in general;
 47. encourage platforms and media outlets to cooperate on the development of tools and processes that promote the visibility and findability of quality news sources, along with the visibility and findability of quality European audiovisual content.
-

ANNEX

Relevant policy documents**European Council**

European Council conclusions of 18 October 2018 (EUCO 13/18)

European Council conclusions of 13 and 14 December 2018 (EUCO 17/18)

European Council conclusions of 21 and 22 March 2019 (EUCO 1/19)

European Council conclusions of 20 June 2019 (EUCO 9/19)

A New Strategic Agenda 2019–2024 (adopted by the European Council on 20 June 2019)

Council

Council conclusions on a European approach to media literacy in the digital environment (OJ C 140, 6.6.2008, p. 8).

Council conclusions on media literacy in the digital environment (OJ C 301, 11.12.2009, p. 12).

Conclusions of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council, on media freedom and pluralism in the digital environment (OJ C 32, 4.2.2014, p. 6).

Council conclusions on European Audiovisual Policy in the Digital Era (OJ C 433, 3.12.2014, p. 2).

Council conclusions on cultural and creative crossovers to stimulate innovation, economic sustainability and social inclusion (OJ C 172, 27.5.2015, p. 13).

Council conclusions on developing media literacy and critical thinking through education and training (OJ C 212, 14.6.2016, p. 5).

Council conclusions on promoting access to culture via digital means with a focus on audience development (OJ C 425, 12.12.2017, p. 4).

Council Recommendation on key competences for lifelong learning (OJ C 189, 4.6.2018, p. 1).

Council conclusions on the strengthening of European content in the digital economy (OJ C 457, 19.12.2018, p. 2).

Conclusions of the Council and of the Member States on securing free and fair European elections (6573/1/19 REV 1, adopted by the General Affairs Council in February 2019)

Council conclusions on Democracy, (12836/19, adopted by the Foreign Affairs Council in October 2019)

Council conclusions on complementary efforts to enhance resilience and counter hybrid threats (14972/19, adopted by the General Affairs Council in December 2019)

Commission**Communications**

- Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions – European Strategy for a Better Internet for Children, COM(2012) 196 final
- Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions – A Digital Single Market Strategy for Europe, COM(2015) 192 final
- Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions – Online Platforms and the Digital Single Market. Opportunities and Challenges for Europe, COM(2016) 288 final
- Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions – Tackling Illegal Content Online. Towards an enhanced responsibility of online platforms, COM(2017) 555 final

- Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions – Tackling online disinformation: a European Approach, COM(2018) 236 final
- Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the European Council, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions – Artificial Intelligence for Europe, COM(2018) 237 final
- Report from the Commission to the European Parliament, the European Council, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on the implementation of the Communication ‘Tackling online disinformation: a European Approach’, COM(2018) 794 final

Joint Communications from the European Commission/High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy

- Joint Communication to the European Parliament, the European Council, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions – Action Plan Against Disinformation, JOIN(2018) 36 final
- Joint Communication to the European Parliament, the European Council, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions – Report on the implementation of the Action Plan Against Disinformation, JOIN(2019) 12 final
- Joint Communication to the European Parliament and the Council – EU Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy 2020–2024, JOIN (2020) 5 final

Other studies and reports

Mapping of media literacy practices and actions in EU-28 (European Audiovisual Observatory, 2016)

Towards European Media Sovereignty. An Industrial Media Strategy to Leverage Data, Algorithms and Artificial Intelligence (Guillaume Klossa, 2019)

Report of the activities carried out to assist the European Commission in the intermediate monitoring of the Code of Practice on Disinformation (European Regulators Group for Audiovisual Media Services, 2019)

Implementation of the revised AVMS Directive (European Regulators Group for Audiovisual Media Services, 2019)

Falling behind: How social media companies are failing to combat inauthentic behaviour online (NATO Strategic Communications Centre of Excellence, 2019)

Study on media literacy and online empowerment issues raised by algorithm-driven media services (SMART 2017/0081) (RAND Europe and Open Evidence, 2019)

ERGA Report on disinformation: Assessment of the implementation of the Code of Practice (2020)

Notice for the attention of certain persons and entities subject to the restrictive measures provided for in Council Decision 2014/145/CFSP and Council Regulation (EU) No 269/2014 concerning restrictive measures in respect of actions undermining or threatening the territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence of Ukraine

(2020/C 193/07)

The following information is brought to the attention of Mr. Denis Valentinovich BEREZOVSKIY (no. 4), Mr. Aleksandr Viktorovich VITKO (no. 19), Mr. Vladislav Yurievich SURKOV (no. 29), Mr. Dmitry Nikolayevich KOZAK (no. 34), Mr. Sergei Ivanovich NEVEROV (no. 40), Mr. Sergey Gennadevich TSYPLAKOV (no. 47), Mr. Rashid Gumarovich NURGALIEV (no. 76), Mr. Vladimir ANTYUFYEV (no. 87), Mr. Andrey Yurevich PINCHUK (no. 100), Mr. Viktor Petrovich VODOLATSKY (no. 109), Mr. Yevgeniy Vyacheslavovich ORLOV (no. 131), Ms. Ekaterina Vladimirovna GOGIASHVILI (no. 141), Mr. Zaur Raufovich ISMAILOV (no. 146), Mr. Konstantin Mikhailovich BAKHAREV (no. 153), Mr. Dmitry Anatolievich BELIK (no. 154), Mr. Andrey Vladimirovich CHEREZOV (no. 158), Mr. Evgeniy Petrovich GRABCHAK (no. 159), and the Crimean Republican Enterprise 'Azov distillery plant' (no. 17) and Federal state budget institution for science and research 'All- Russia national scientific research institute for wine growing and wine making "Magarach" Russian Academy of Sciences' (no. 19), persons and entities appearing in the Annex to Council Decision 2014/145/CFSP ⁽¹⁾ and in Annex I to Council Regulation (EU) No 269/2014 ⁽²⁾ concerning restrictive measures in respect of actions undermining or threatening the territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence of Ukraine.

The Council is considering maintaining the restrictive measures against the above-mentioned persons and entities with new statements of reasons. Those persons and entities are hereby informed that they may submit a request to the Council to obtain the intended statements of reasons for their designation, before 16 June 2020, to the following address:

Council of the European Union
General Secretariat
RELEX.1.C
Rue de la Loi/Wetstraat 175
1048 Bruxelles/Brussel
BELGIQUE/BELGIË

Email: sanctions@consilium.europa.eu

⁽¹⁾ OJ L 78, 17.3.2014, p. 16.

⁽²⁾ OJ L 78, 17.3.2014, p. 6.

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Euro exchange rates ⁽¹⁾

8 June 2020

(2020/C 193/08)

1 euro =

Currency			Exchange rate		
Currency			Exchange rate		
USD	US dollar	1,1285	CAD	Canadian dollar	1,5126
JPY	Japanese yen	123,41	HKD	Hong Kong dollar	8,7460
DKK	Danish krone	7,4555	NZD	New Zealand dollar	1,7291
GBP	Pound sterling	0,89173	SGD	Singapore dollar	1,5700
SEK	Swedish krona	10,3978	KRW	South Korean won	1 353,20
CHF	Swiss franc	1,0861	ZAR	South African rand	18,9799
ISK	Iceland króna	149,50	CNY	Chinese yuan renminbi	7,9836
NOK	Norwegian krone	10,4603	HRK	Croatian kuna	7,5650
BGN	Bulgarian lev	1,9558	IDR	Indonesian rupiah	15 815,42
CZK	Czech koruna	26,585	MYR	Malaysian ringgit	4,8159
HUF	Hungarian forint	344,16	PHP	Philippine peso	56,301
PLN	Polish zloty	4,4333	RUB	Russian rouble	77,0563
RON	Romanian leu	4,8359	THB	Thai baht	35,474
TRY	Turkish lira	7,6574	BRL	Brazilian real	5,5702
AUD	Australian dollar	1,6156	MXN	Mexican peso	24,3220
			INR	Indian rupee	85,2410

⁽¹⁾ Source: reference exchange rate published by the ECB.

COURT OF AUDITORS

Special Report 13/2020

‘Biodiversity on farmland: CAP contribution has not halted the decline’

(2020/C 193/09)

The European Court of Auditors hereby informs you that Special Report 13/2020 ‘Biodiversity on farmland: CAP contribution has not halted the decline’ has just been published.

The report can be accessed for consultation or downloading on the European Court of Auditors’ website: <http://eca.europa.eu>

V

*(Announcements)*PROCEDURES RELATING TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF COMPETITION
POLICY

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Prior notification of a concentration
(Case M.9843 – Colony Capital/PSP/NGD)**(Text with EEA relevance)**

(2020/C 193/10)

1. On 2 June 2020, the Commission received notification of a proposed concentration pursuant to Article 4 of Council Regulation (EC) No 139/2004 ⁽¹⁾.

This notification concerns the following undertakings:

- Colony Capital, Inc. ('Colony Capital', United States),
- Public Sector Pension Investment Board ('PSP', Canada),
- Next Generation Data Ltd ('NGD', United Kingdom).

Colony Capital and PSP acquire within the meaning of Articles 3(1)(b) and 3(4) of the Merger Regulation joint control of the whole of NGD.

2. The business activities of the undertakings concerned are:

- for Colony Capital: management of a global portfolio composed of, amongst other, investments in digital infrastructure, including macro cell towers, data centres, small cell networks and fibre networks,
- for PSP: management of the pension plans of the Canadian Federal Public Service, the Canadian Forces, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and the Reserve Force,
- for NGD: active in the design, building, operation and ongoing management of data centre solutions in the United Kingdom.

3. On preliminary examination, the Commission finds that the notified transaction could fall within the scope of the Merger Regulation. However, the final decision on this point is reserved.

4. The Commission invites interested third parties to submit their possible observations on the proposed operation to the Commission.

Observations must reach the Commission not later than 10 days following the date of this publication. The following reference should always be specified:

M.9843 – Colony Capital/PSP/NGD

⁽¹⁾ OJ L 24, 29.1.2004, p. 1 (the 'Merger Regulation').

Observations can be sent to the Commission by email, by fax, or by post. Please use the contact details below:

Email: COMP-MERGER-REGISTRY@ec.europa.eu

Fax +32 22964301

Postal address:

European Commission
Directorate-General for Competition
Merger Registry
1049 Bruxelles/Brussel
BELGIQUE/BELGIË

OTHER ACTS

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

**Publication of an application for approval of non-minor amendments to a product specification
pursuant to Article 50(2)(a) of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012 of the European Parliament and of the
Council on quality schemes for agricultural products and foodstuffs**

(2020/C 193/11)

This publication confers the right to oppose the amendment application pursuant to Article 51 of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council ⁽¹⁾ within three months of the date of this publication.

APPLICATION FOR APPROVAL OF NON-MINOR AMENDMENTS TO THE PRODUCT SPECIFICATION FOR A PROTECTED
DESIGNATION OF ORIGIN OR PROTECTED GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATION

**Application for approval of amendments in accordance with the first subparagraph of Article 53(2) of Regulation
(EU) No 1151/2012**

‘POULIGNY-SAINT-PIERRE’

EU No: PDO-FR-0128-AM03 – 24.12.2018

PDO (X) PGI ()

1. Applicant group and legitimate interest

Syndicat des producteurs de Pouligny-Saint-Pierre
Address: Maison de l'agriculture, 65 avenue Gambetta, 36300 Le Blanc, France
Tel. +33 254375213
Fax +33 254370421
Email: syndicataocpouligny@sfr.fr

The group is composed of producers and processors and has a legitimate interest in submitting the application.

2. Member State or third country

France

3. Heading in the product specification affected by the amendment(s)

- ☐ Name of product
- ☒ Description of product
- ☒ Geographical area
- ☒ Proof of origin
- ☒ Method of production
- ☒ Link
- ☒ Labelling
- ☒ Others: national requirements, inspection, contact details of the group and of the competent authority of the Member State.

⁽¹⁾ OJ L 343, 14.12.2012, p. 1.

4. Type of amendment(s)

- ☒ Amendment to product specification of a registered PDO or PGI not to be qualified as minor in accordance with the third subparagraph of Article 53(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012
- ☐ Amendments to the product specification of a registered PDO or PGI for which a single document (or equivalent) has not been published and which cannot be qualified as minor within the meaning of the third subparagraph of Article 53(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012

5. Amendment(s)

5.1. Description of product

The sentence:

“Pouligny-Saint-Pierre” is a cheese made exclusively from goat’s milk and shaped like the frustum of a pyramid, with a square base. The dimensions of the mould are as follows: a lower base of 6,5 cm and an upper base of 2,5 cm.’

has been replaced by:

“Pouligny-Saint-Pierre” is a cheese made exclusively from raw whole goat’s milk and shaped like the frustum of a narrow pyramid, with regular edges and a square base.’

The obligation to use raw whole milk strengthens the link with the geographical area by preserving the indigenous lactic flora. The characteristics of the pyramid have been supplemented to comply with the description of the product. The information on the dimensions of the mould has been moved to Chapter 5.3.4.

The following sentence:

‘It is obtained primarily from lactic curd.’

Has been amended as follows:

‘It is obtained from lactic curd by a process of slow curdling and natural draining.’

The word ‘primarily’ has been deleted, as it is inadequate, since the curd is always lactic. The reference to slow curdling has been moved from the ‘method of production’ chapter, because it does not contribute to the description of the product. The reference to natural draining is in line with current practices, which preserve the structure of the lactic curd.

The following sentence:

‘It is a soft, slightly salty and uncooked cheese with surface mould.’

Has been amended as follows:

‘It is a soft, slightly salty cheese. Mould is visible on the surface. Its wrinkled rind is ivory-white and marbled but may also be bluish.’

The description of the product’s appearance has been improved for the sake of a better characterisation. The new wording presents more clearly the characteristics of the cheese.

The following sentence has been added:

‘It is firm when cut. The cheese has a fresh, homogeneous and smooth appearance and is white in colour, with occasional ivory shades. The taste is balanced, neither too salty nor too acidic.

It has aromatic notes of a predominantly lactic and fermentative nature, with hints of “goat”, “mushroom” and “hazelnut”.

The texture is creamy and melting.’

The description of the paste’s appearance and of the product’s taste has been improved for the sake of a better characterisation. The new wording presents more clearly the characteristics of the cheese.

The following sentence:

‘The cheese has a dry-matter fat content of 45 %, which must be at least 90 grams per cheese.’

has been replaced by:

‘The cheese comes in two sizes:

- “Pouligny-Saint-Pierre”: with a weight at the end of the minimum ripening period of at least 250 grams and a total dry extract of at least 90 grams per cheese,
- The small “Pouligny-Saint-Pierre”: with a weight at the end of the minimum ripening period of at least 150 grams and a total dry extract of between 55 and 85 grams per cheese.

The minimum dry-matter fat content is 45 %.

“Pouligny Saint-Pierre” cheeses are presented and sold individually to the final consumer.’

In accordance with the national text related to Regulation (EC) No 1107/96 and Regulation (EC) No 1019/2009, there is also a smaller-size cheese, the small ‘Pouligny-Saint-Pierre’.

In other words, ‘Pouligny-Saint-Pierre’ comes in two sizes, and their total weight at the end of the minimum ripening period has been added.

By expressing the cheese’s weight as dry matter and setting a minimum dry extract for the cheese, it is possible to exclude from marketing cheeses that are too small (due to a moulding defect) or too moist (due to a lack of drying and/or the use of excessively wet curd).

It has been added that the cheeses are sold individually, that is to say whole, because the group does not wish to authorise the sale of sliced cheese; cutting the cheese has a negative effect on the preservation of its organoleptic characteristics (causing rancidity and desiccation of the paste, in particular) especially as it is small in size.

In the single document, the sentences:

‘Full-fat slightly salted and uncooked soft goat’s cheese, with surface mould, in the form of a frustum of pyramid with a square base.

‘The cheese has a dry-matter fat content of 45 %, which must be at least 90 grams per cheese.’

Have been replaced by:

“Pouligny-Saint-Pierre” is a cheese made exclusively from raw whole goat’s milk and shaped like the frustum of a narrow pyramid, with regular edges and a square base.

It is obtained from lactic curd by a process of slow curdling and natural draining.

It is a soft, slightly salty cheese. Mould is visible on the surface. Its wrinkled rind is ivory-white and marbled but may also be bluish.

It is firm when cut. The cheese has a fresh, homogeneous and smooth appearance and is white in colour, with occasional ivory shades. The taste is balanced, neither too salty nor too acidic.

It has aromatic notes of a predominantly lactic and fermentative nature, with hints of “goat”, “mushroom” and “hazelnut”.

The texture is creamy and melting.

The cheese comes in two sizes:

- “Pouligny-Saint-Pierre”: with a weight at the end of the minimum ripening period of at least 250 grams and a total dry extract of at least 90 grams per cheese,
- The small “Pouligny-Saint-Pierre”: with a weight at the end of the minimum ripening period of at least 150 grams and a total dry extract of between 55 and 85 grams per cheese.

The minimum dry-matter fat content is 45 %.

“Pouligny Saint-Pierre” cheeses are presented and sold individually to the final consumer.’

5.2. *Geographical area*

The following paragraph in the specification:

‘The production area covers a few municipalities in the department of Indre (the district of Blanc), cf. list of municipalities in Article 1 of the Decree of 29 December 1986.

Canton of Bélâbre: municipalities of Mauvières and Saint-Hilaire-sur-Benaize

Canton of Blanc: all municipalities

Canton of Mézières-en-Brenne: municipality of Azay-le-Ferron

Canton of Tournon-Saint-Martin: all municipalities.'

has been replaced by:

'The milk must be produced and the cheese made and ripened in the geographical area consisting of the following municipalities in the department of Indre (36):

Azay-le-Ferron, Le Blanc, Ciron, Concremiers, Douadic, Fontgombault, Ingrandes, Lingé, Lurais, Lureuil, Martizay, Mauvières, Mérigny, Néons-sur-Creuse, Pouligny-Saint-Pierre, Preuilly-la-Ville, Rosnay, Ruffec, Saint-Aigny, Saint-Hilaire-sur-Benaize, Sauzelles, Tournon-Saint-Martin.'

In the single document, the following paragraph:

'22 municipalities in the department of Indre:

Cantons of Blanc and Tournon-Saint-Martin: all municipalities

Canton of Bélâbre: municipalities of Mauvières and Saint-Hilaire-sur-Benaize

Canton of Mézières-en-Brenne: municipality of Azay-le-Ferron.'

Has been replaced by:

'The milk must be produced and the cheese made and ripened in the geographical area consisting of the following municipalities in the department of Indre (36):

Azay-le-Ferron, Le Blanc, Ciron, Concremiers, Douadic, Fontgombault, Ingrandes, Lingé, Lurais, Lureuil, Martizay, Mauvières, Mérigny, Néons-sur-Creuse, Pouligny-Saint-Pierre, Preuilly-la-Ville, Rosnay, Ruffec, Saint-Aigny, Saint-Hilaire-sur-Benaize, Sauzelles, Tournon-Saint-Martin.'

Compared with the previous specification, in which the geographical area was described using a list of cantons, the geographical area is described here using a list of municipalities, as this is more precise. It does not cause any changes to the geographical area. The same applies to the single document.

5.3. *Proof that the product originated in the area*

The following paragraphs:

'Every milk producer, processing plant and ripening plant fills in a "declaration of aptitude", which is registered with the INAO and enables it to identify all operators involved. All operators must keep their registers and any documents required for checking the origin, quality and production conditions of the milk and cheese at the INAO's disposal;

As part of the checks on the specified features of the designation of origin, an analytical and organoleptic test is carried out to ensure the products submitted for examination are of high quality and possess the requisite typical characteristics.'

Have been replaced by:

4.1. Identification of the operators

Any operator carrying out its activity under the production conditions of the designation of origin "Pouligny-Saint-Pierre" must complete an identification declaration addressed to the group not later than two months before the start of the activity in question, in accordance with the model approved by the director of the National Institute of Origin and Quality (INAO).

4.2. Reporting requirements

Statements required to notify and monitor the products to be sold under the designation of origin:

Each year before 15 February and in accordance with a model validated by the director of the INAO:

- Each farmer producer, each processor and each ripener submits to the group a detailed annual production declaration including a monthly summary of the production of "Pouligny-Saint-Pierre" in the previous year.

- In the case of farms using silage in facilities other than goat facilities, the producers submit to the group an annual declaration of the presence of silage.
- Each processor and ripener submits to the group a declaration of all its goat milk producers and farmer producers, stating their name and address and the quantities collected.

4.3. Record keeping

4.3.1. Traceability

The following data are recorded on documents specific to each operator:

Milk producer:

- The weekly quantities of milk intended for processing into “Pouligny-Saint-Pierre”.

Processor:

- the quantities of milk collected during each round,
- the quantities of milk processed into “Pouligny Saint-Pierre” per production day,
- the number of cheeses produced intended for the designation of origin “Pouligny Saint-Pierre” per production day,
- the number of downgraded cheeses,
- the number of cheeses marketed as the designation of origin “Pouligny-Saint-Pierre”.

Ripener:

- the quantities and origin of cheeses purchased for ripening, intended for the designation of origin “Pouligny-Saint-Pierre”,
- the number of ripened and packaged “Pouligny-Saint-Pierre” cheeses,
- the number of downgraded cheeses,
- the number of cheeses marketed as the designation of origin “Pouligny-Saint-Pierre”.

These data are accompanied by the batch numbers used to identify and track milks and cheeses intended for the designation of origin “Pouligny-Saint-Pierre”.

4.3.2. Monitoring compliance with the production conditions

The milk producers make available to the inspection bodies, in particular, the documents necessary to check the following:

- the geographical location of the holding and its parcels,
- the area of natural or temporary grassland intended for the provision of fodder to the goat herd, and the areas under cereals, protein crops and oilseeds intended for that herd,
- the areas of natural or temporary grassland, cereals, oilseeds and protein crops intended for all herds on the holding,
- the annual stocking rate of the goat facilities on the holding or the overall stocking rate of the holding if it has more than one herd,
- the origin, nature and quantities of feed purchased for the goat herd,
- the management of the goat herd,
- the quantities of feed distributed annually to the goat herd.

The processors and/or ripeners make available to the inspection bodies the documents necessary to check the following:

- compliance with the production parameters defined in Chapter 5,
- the keeping of the cheese dairy register.

These documents must be updated at least daily.

Farmer producers who engage in direct sales and farmer producers who make deliveries to ripeners describe their processing procedure and record any anomalies.

4.4. Checks on products

As part of the checks carried out on the characteristics of the product to which the designation of origin refers, a sample-based analytical and organoleptic test is conducted to ensure that the products are of high quality and possess the requisite typical characteristics.'

The declaration of aptitude is replaced by an identification declaration used to identify those producers who wish to participate in the procedure.

The declaration requirements applying to producers have been added. These amendments are linked to changes in national rules and legislation. Provision is made, inter alia, for identifying the producers with a view to accrediting them on the basis of their ability to meet the requirements of the specification, as well as the required declarations regarding knowledge, monitoring, and checks on products intended to be marketed as the designation of origin.

5.4. *Description of the method of production*

As the specification registered in compliance with Regulations (EC) No 1107/96 and (EC) No 1019/2009 does not provide for any rules on milk production, they have been defined in accordance with producers' current practices.

The following paragraphs have been added:

'5.1. Herd management:

"Goat herd" means all goats that have given birth at least once.

The milk used in the production comes from herds made up of Alpine, Saanen and Poitevine goats or from the crossing of these breeds.

The maximum stocking rate is:

- 10 goats per hectare actually used for grazing and/or production of fodder, cereals, protein crops and oilseeds used to feed the goats, as regards specialised goat holdings,
- 1,5 livestock units per hectare actually used for grazing and/or production of fodder, cereals, protein crops and oilseeds used to feed the herds in question, as regards other holdings with several ruminant herds.

A goat has a lying area of at least 1,5 m², and a maximum of three goats per linear metre of troughs is authorised.

The out-of-season breeding of herds is authorised.'

Provisions relating to the goat breeds used and to the management of the goats have been added (maximum stocking rate, minimum area per goat, possibility of out-of-season breeding).

The following paragraphs have been added:

'5.2. Animal feeding

A diet consisting solely of straw and concentrates is prohibited.

5.2.1. Fodder

Fodder is the basis of the herd's feed. The total annual ration is composed of a minimum of 660 kg of fodder dry matter per milk goat.

Fodder is grazed or distributed fresh, as hay or in dehydrated form.

The types of authorised fodder are:

- grass, hay, baled hay, hay with a preservative, originating from natural and temporary grasslands,
- annual fodder plants,
- straw from cereals, legumes and protein crops,
- green-fed grass harvested hygienically, distributed rapidly and consumed within 24 hours. All fodder remaining uneaten after 24 hours is removed from the troughs,

- roots and tubers,
- dehydrated fodder: lucerne,
- maize (the entire plant).

The quantity of dehydrated lucerne distributed may not exceed 12 % of the total annual feed ration, or 132 kg of the dry matter per milk goat.

Straw litter is not part of the ration.

Baled grass may be used to feed the goats, at the rate of up to 1 kg of dry matter per goat per day, provided that the baled grass contains at least 60 % dry matter and comes from the first cut of the forage areas.

Grass silage and maize silage are forbidden in the feed of the goat herd. In the case of farms using silage in facilities other than the goat facility, producers store the silage away from the goats' usual run and more specifically away from the feed intended for the goat herd.

5.2.2. Supplementary feed

Supplementary feed does not account for more than 40 % of the milk goat's diet, or for not more than 440 kg of dry matter per milk goat per year.

Cereals, protein crops, oilseeds, commercial concentrates and oilcakes are included when calculating the amount of supplementary feed.

The supplementary feed consists of:

- grains of unprocessed cereals, either flattened or crushed,
- grains of unprocessed oilseeds, either flattened, crushed or extruded,
- grains of unprocessed protein crops, either flattened or crushed,
- grains and products derived from the processing of cereals,
- grains and products derived from the processing of oilseeds by physical tanning using essential oils and plant extracts: oilcakes and soya oil, peas, field bean, lupin, linen, rapeseed, sunflower, vetches,
- products from sugar production: dehydrated beet pulp, liquid molasses from sugar cane or beet,
- fruit,
- minerals, trace elements, vitamins, flavouring and appetising substances.

The use of whey for feeding the herd is authorised in the area of the designation, but is not included in the calculation of the ration.'

Positive lists of fodder and supplementary feed have been established in order to regulate the nature of the feed distributed and to facilitate inspections, but also to prohibit the distribution of feed that affects negatively the organoleptic characteristics of the cheese. The variety of the feed distributed to the goats, the ban on silage and the regulating of baling and dehydrated foods help bring out the organoleptic characteristics of 'Pouligny-Saint-Pierre'.

The following paragraph has been added:

'5.2.3. Origin of the ration

All the fodder consumed by the herd comes from the geographical area, with the exception of the dehydrated lucerne.

Supplementary feed produced in the geographical area represents at least 15 % of the milk goat's annual ration, or at least 165 kg of dry matter or 195 kg of raw feed.

The feed produced in the geographical area (fodder + supplementary feed) represents at least 75 % of the total annual feed ration of the herd.'

Rules on the origin of the feed have been added to the specification to reinforce the link between the product and the geographical area. As the geographical area does not have sufficient agricultural resources to provide all the fodder required by the goat herds, the feed produced in the geographical area (fodder + concentrates) represents at least 75 % of the dry matter of the total annual feed ration of the herd.

The following paragraph has been added:

‘5.2.4. Other provisions relating to the feed

Only plants, by-products and supplementary feed derived from non-transgenic products are authorised in the animal feed. The planting of transgenic crops is prohibited in all areas of holdings producing milk intended for processing into cheese with the designation of origin Pouligny-Saint-Pierre. This prohibition applies to all types of plant likely to be given as feed to animals on the farm and to all crops liable to contaminate such plants.’

Feed derived from GMOs is prohibited in order to preserve the traditional character of the product.

The following paragraph has been added:

‘5.2.5. Fertilising the forage areas:

Only the following organic matter is authorised: manure, composted manure, slurry, liquid manure of agricultural origin from bovine, ovine, caprine, equine, poultry and porcine species; as well as effluents from dairies and cheese dairies.’

Organic fertilisers are likely to change the composition of the flora of the pasture land, and by regulating them it is possible to maintain a diverse natural flora and preserve the link with the geographical area.

Positive lists of fodder and supplementary feed have been established in order to regulate the nature of the feed distributed and to facilitate inspections, but also to prohibit the distribution of feed that affects negatively the organoleptic characteristics of the cheese.

In the single document, the following sentences have been added:

‘In order to ensure a close link between the locality and the product, at least 75 % of the dry matter of the total annual feed ration of the milk goats is produced in the geographical area. The geographical area does not have sufficient agricultural resources to provide all the fodder required by the goat herds.

The total annual ration of a milk goat consists of a minimum of 660 kg in dry matter of fodder, which may be grazed, distributed fresh, as hay, in dehydrated form (for lucerne only, its distribution being limited to 132 kg of dry matter per year), or in the form of baled grass at a rate of up to 1 kg of dry matter per milk goat per day, provided that it contains at least 60 % dry matter and comes from the first cut of the forage areas. The types of fodder allowed are set out in a positive list.

Grass silage and maize silage are forbidden in the feed of the milk goat.

Supplementary feed does not account for more than 40 % of the milk goat’s diet, or for not more than 440 kg of dry matter per milk goat per year.

Supplementary feed produced in the geographical area represents at least 15 % of the milk goat’s annual ration, or at least 165 kg of dry matter.

The authorised supplementary feed is itemised in a positive list.

Only plants, by-products and supplementary feed derived from non-transgenic products are authorised in the milk goat’s feed. The planting of transgenic crops is prohibited in all areas of holdings producing milk intended for processing into cheese with the protected designation of origin “Pouligny-Saint-Pierre”.

The following paragraph has been added:

‘5.3 Processing of cheese:

5.3.1 Milk collection

The milk used to make Pouligny-Saint-Pierre is non-standardised, non-homogenised whole goat’s milk.

The goat’s milk undergoes no treatment, and nothing is added to or removed from it, except for the following operations:

- cooling at a positive temperature for preservation,
- filtration to remove macroscopic impurities.

The goat's milk used comes from the following milkings only:

- for Pouligny-Saint-Pierre and the small, farm-produced Pouligny-Saint-Pierre: a maximum of 2 consecutive milkings from one day's production,
- for Pouligny-Saint-Pierre and the small, dairy-produced Pouligny-Saint-Pierre: a maximum 4 consecutive milkings from 2 days of production.

Mono milking is authorised during the last three months of lactation.'

Conditions for the storage of milk on the farm have been added to preserve the qualities of the milk and limit the development of psychrotrophic microorganisms, which in turn limit the development of natural lactic flora. The use of physical treatments is strictly limited to those that do not affect milk quality.

The production of raw milk has been made obligatory in order to preserve the qualities, in particular the organoleptic qualities, of the milk as well as its original flora, and thereby strengthen the link with the geographical area.

The following paragraph has been added:

'5.3.2. Preparation of the milk:

Raw milk is used. It may be "heated" if necessary at a temperature not exceeding 22 °C before renneting.

A lactic starter or whey from a previous curdling stage is added to the milk to promote the maturing process.

The milk is prepared and matured for curdling within a period not exceeding 24 hours after the last milking.'

Parameters for preparing the milk have been added to avoid the development of flora that is undesirable with regard to the ripening and visual characteristics sought.

The sentence:

'After renneting, the milk is curdled for 20 to 30 hours, depending on the season (semi-lactic slow curdling).'

Has been replaced by the sentence:

'5.3.3. Renneting and curdling:

The curdling lasts for at least 18 hours after renneting.'

The minimum duration of the curdling is reduced by 2 hours (from 20 to 18 hours) in order to adapt the description of cheese-making to the reality of production, which usually follows a 24-hour cycle for practical reasons relating to the organisation of work. For the same reason, the maximum duration of 30 hours has been removed.

The following sentence has been added:

'The milk is curdled using rennet at a milk temperature between 18 °C and 22 °C.'

The parameters for the renneting and curdling stages have been added in order to comply with current practices.

The following sentence has been added:

'Pre-draining is prohibited.'

Pre-draining leads to a breaking down of the curd that is not compatible with the description of the product.

The following sentence:

'When cracks appear in the curd, forming small cubes, it is put into a mould in order to obtain a homogeneous, fine-grained paste.'

Has been replaced by the sentence:

'The curd may be sliced coarsely and vertically into cubes (of 100 mm x 100 mm).'

When the curd is sliced coarsely, it is easier to control its moisture content during moulding.

Description of the mould:

The following sentence:

'The dimensions of the mould are as follows: a lower base of 6,5 cm x 6,5 cm and an upper base of 2,5 cm.'

Has been replaced by:

'Minimum characteristics of moulds for Pouligny-Saint-Pierre and the small Pouligny-Saint-Pierre:

Small base: 30 mm x 30 mm,

The angle between the bottom and the edge of the mould must be between 102° and 107°.'

The dimensions of the moulds have not been changed but reflect the dimensions laid down in the national text relating to Regulations (EC) No 1107/96 and (EC) No 1019/2009. They are expressed differently in order to describe more precisely the pyramidal shape of the mould and, consequently, of the cheese. These target values apply to the two formats of 'Pouligny-Saint-Pierre'.

The following paragraph has been added:

'5.3.4. Moulding, draining, salting:

The only instruments that may be used to fill the moulds are ladles or similar instruments with a capacity of less than 2 litres.'

This is in order to preserve the traditional character of the moulding and salting operation and take account of the structure of the curd.

The following sentences:

'The top of the pyramid's frustum must have no faults, holes or uneven shrinkage. The curd stays in moulds for approximately 24 to 36 hours before being removed and salt added.'

have been replaced by:

'Single and multiple moulds and extension frames are allowed.

Once the moulds have been filled, the curd is levelled by adding curd from the same production day and the base of the cheeses is smoothed using a small scraper or a spatula.

Draining is natural. It lasts for 24 to 48 hours after the start of the moulding process. The temperature of the room is kept between 18 and 24 °C.'

In order to preserve the traditional character of the moulding operation, the moulding technique is described in more detail.

Additionally, the maximum duration of the draining is increased from 36 hours to 48 hours in order to adapt the description of cheese-making to the reality of production, which usually follows a 24-hour cycle for practical reasons relating to the organisation of work.

The following sentence has been added:

'With the exception of the large base, which can be salted immediately once the curd has been levelled, the cheeses are dry-salted within 12 hours of being removed from the mould.'

The salting technique corresponding to the operators' practices has been added.

The following sentence has been added:

'5.3.5. Drying:

After salting, the cheeses are dried for a period ranging from 24 to 96 hours in a room where the temperature is kept between 12 °C and 16 °C, with a relative humidity of between 75 % and 95 %.'

As the drying stage was not described in the product specification registered in accordance with Regulations (EC) Nos 1107/96 and 1019/2009, it has been added that after salting the cheeses are dried for a certain period of time, in accordance with practices and given its importance for the products' final organoleptic characteristics.

The following phrase:

'At a temperature allowing natural ripening.'

has been replaced by:

'5.3.6. Ripening:

Ripening takes place in a ripening room that is separate from the drying room. The temperature of the ripening room varies between 9 and 16 °C, with a relative humidity of 75 % to 95 %.

In the case of cheeses processed on the farm and collected by a ripener, the cheeses are stored and transported before salting at a positive temperature ranging between 7 and 10 °C. The cheeses must be collected not later than within 72 hours of completion of the drainage process.

When leaving the ripening room, the cheeses have a complete rind covered with surface mould easily visible to the naked eye.'

The conditions for ripening the cheeses in ripening rooms have been added to describe current practices.

The following sentence:

'The length of its ripening period is at least 10 days in the production area'

Has been replaced by:

'The Pouligny-Saint-Pierre leaves the ripening room not earlier than on the 10th day after renneting and is sold not earlier than on the 11th day after renneting.'

The small Pouligny-Saint-Pierre leaves the ripening room not earlier than on the 9th day after renneting and is sold not earlier than on the 10th day after renneting.'

It has been added that the ripening period is counted from the date of renneting in order to facilitate monitoring.

In the case of the small 'Pouligny Saint-Pierre', the ripening period has been reduced by one day because of its smaller size, which allows for faster ripening.

It has been added that the cheeses may not be marketed earlier than one day after the minimum ripening period to ensure compliance with the visual description of the cheeses.

The following sentence:

'Fresh cheeses and cheeses undergoing ripening may not be conserved under a modified atmosphere.'

Has been amended as follows:

'Fresh cheeses, cheeses undergoing ripening and ripened cheeses may not be conserved under a modified atmosphere.'

It has been added that the ban on conservation under a modified atmosphere also concerns ripened cheeses so as to maintain their organoleptic characteristics.

5.5. *Link*

The section of the product specification concerning the link to the geographical area has been entirely rewritten to make the link between 'Pouligny-Saint-Pierre' and its geographical area more explicit without making any fundamental changes to the link. Particular emphasis has been placed on how the milk production conditions allow the use of raw milk suitable for cheese making, which requires specific know-how and maturing conditions. The point on the 'specificity of the geographical area' reiterates the geographical area's natural factors as well as the human factors by summarising historical aspects and highlighting specific know-how. The point on the 'specificity of the product' showcases some of the elements presented in the description of the product. Finally, the point 'Causal link' explains the interactions between the natural and human factors and the product. The reference to the white colour of the salt used for the salting has been deleted, because it is not included in the specification.

This amendment has also been made to the single document.

5.6. *The specific labelling details*

The following sentences have been added:

'Furthermore, the labelling may bear the name of the designation of origin accompanied by the term "petit" (small) for the smaller cheese defined in point 2.

Irrespective of the regulatory references applicable to all the cheeses and the aforementioned term, the use of any qualifier or other reference accompanying the aforementioned designation of origin is prohibited on the labelling, advertising, invoices or commercial documents, with the exception of specific trademarks.

Labels must bear the AOP [PDO] logo of the European Union.'

The section on labelling has been updated to reflect developments in national and European legislation.

In the single document, the following sentences have been added:

‘Furthermore, the labelling may bear the name of the designation of origin accompanied by the term “petit” (small) for the smaller cheese defined in point 2.

Irrespective of the regulatory references applicable to all the cheeses and the aforementioned term, the use of any other qualifier or reference accompanying the aforementioned designation of origin is prohibited on the labelling, advertising, invoices or commercial documents, with the exception of specific trademarks.

Labels must bear the AOP [PDO] logo of the European Union.’

5.7. *Other amendments*

The address of the competent service of the Member State has been updated.

Under the heading on references to the inspection bodies, the name and contact details of the official bodies have been updated. This section provides the contact details of the authorities responsible for national inspections, i.e.: the National Institute of Origin and Quality (INAO) and the Directorate-General for Competition, Consumer Affairs and Fraud Prevention (DGCCRF). It has been added that the name and contact details of the certification body may be consulted via the INAO website and the European Commission’s database.

As regards the section on national requirements, a table displaying the main points to be checked and the method of evaluating them has been added.

SINGLE DOCUMENT

‘Poulligny-Saint-Pierre’

EU No: PDO-FR-0128-AM03 – 24.12.2018

PDO (X) PGI ()

1. **Name**

‘Poulligny-Saint-Pierre’

2. **Member State or third country**

France

3. **Description of the agricultural product or foodstuff**

3.1. *Type of product (as in Annex XI)*

Class 1.3. Cheeses

3.2. *Description of product to which the name in (1) applies*

‘Poulligny-Saint-Pierre’ is a cheese made exclusively from raw whole goat’s milk and shaped like the frustum of a narrow pyramid, with regular edges and a square base. It is obtained from lactic curd by a process of slow curdling and natural draining. It is a soft, slightly salty cheese.

Mould is visible on the surface. Its wrinkled rind is ivory-white and marbled but may also be slightly bluish.

It is firm when cut. The cheese has a fresh, homogeneous and smooth appearance and is white in colour, with occasional ivory shades. The texture is creamy and melting.

The taste is balanced, neither too salty nor too acidic. It has aromatic notes of a predominantly lactic and fermentative nature, with hints of ‘goat’, ‘mushroom’ and ‘hazelnut’.

The cheese comes in two sizes:

- ‘Poulligny-Saint-Pierre’, with a weight at the end of the minimum ripening period of at least 250 grams and a total dry extract of at least 90 grams,
- the small ‘Poulligny-Saint-Pierre’ with a weight at the end of the minimum ripening period of at least 150 grams and a total dry extract of between 55 and 85 grams.

The minimum dry-matter fat content is 45 %.

The 'Poulligny-Saint-Pierre' leaves the ripening room not earlier than on the 10th day after renneting and is sold not earlier than on the 11th day after renneting.

The small Poulligny-Saint-Pierre leaves the ripening room not earlier than on the 9th day after renneting and is sold not earlier than on the 10th day after renneting.

The cheeses are presented and sold individually to the final consumer.

3.3. *Feed (for products of animal origin only) and raw materials (for processed products only)*

In order to ensure a close link between the locality and the product, at least 75 % of the dry matter of the total annual feed ration of the milk goats is produced in the geographical area. The geographical area does not have sufficient agricultural resources to provide all the fodder required by the goat herds.

The total annual ration of a milk goat consists of a minimum of 660 kg in dry matter of fodder, which may be grazed, distributed fresh, as hay, in dehydrated form (for lucerne only, its distribution being limited to 132 kg of dry matter per year), or in the form of baled grass at a rate of up to 1 kg of dry matter per milk goat per day, provided that it contains at least 60 % dry matter and comes from the first cut of the forage areas. The types of fodder allowed are set out in a positive list.

Grass silage and maize silage are forbidden in the feed of the milk goat.

Supplementary feed does not account for more than 40 % of the milk goat's diet, or for not more than 440 kg of dry matter per milk goat per year.

Supplementary feed produced in the geographical area represents at least 15 % of the milk goat's annual ration, or at least 165 kg of dry matter.

The authorised supplementary feed is itemised in a positive list.

Only plants, by-products and supplementary feed derived from non-transgenic products are authorised in the milk goat's feed. The planting of transgenic crops is prohibited in all areas of holdings producing milk intended for processing into cheese with the protected designation of origin 'Poulligny-Saint-Pierre'.

3.4. *Specific steps in production that must take place in the defined geographical area*

The milk must be produced and the cheeses made and matured in the geographical area defined in point 4.

3.5. *Specific rules concerning slicing, grating, packaging, etc. of the product the registered name refers to*

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3.6. *Specific rules concerning labelling of the product the registered name refers to*

The labelling for the cheeses contains the name of the designation of origin 'Poulligny-Saint-Pierre' in bold characters at least two-thirds the size of the largest characters on the label. Furthermore, the labelling may bear the name of the designation of origin accompanied by the term 'petit' (small) for the cheese whose size is defined in point 2.

Irrespective of the regulatory references applicable to all the cheeses and the aforementioned term, the use of any other qualifier or reference accompanying the aforementioned designation of origin is prohibited on the labelling, advertising, invoices or commercial documents, with the exception of specific trademarks.

Labels must bear the 'AOP' [PDO] logo of the European Union.

4. **Concise definition of the geographical area**

The milk must be produced and the cheese made and ripened in the geographical area consisting of the following municipalities in the department of Indre (36):

Azay-le-Ferron, Le Blanc, Ciron, Concremiers, Douadic, Fontgombault, Ingrandes, Lingé, Lurais, Lureuil, Martizay, Mauvières, Mèrigny, Néons-sur-Creuse, Poulligny-Saint-Pierre, Preuilly-la-Ville, Rosnay, Ruffec, Saint-Aigny, Saint-Hilaire-sur-Benaize, Sauzelles, Tournon-Saint-Martin.

5. Link with the geographical area

'Pouligny-Saint-Pierre' is a raw goat's milk cheese that is shaped like a pyramid, with a wrinkled, ivory-white or bluish rind and made by a process of slow curdling of lactic curd obtained through inoculation with a lactic starter culture or whey from a previous batch. Its melting and creamy texture and aromatic notes of a predominantly fermentative nature are due both to the rules on the feeding of the herds, which prioritise a particular fodder from the area, and to the specific know-how of the cheesemakers and ripeners.

All of the geographical area, in the west of the department of Indre, more specifically around the village of Pouligny-Saint-Pierre, is located in the Brenne Regional Nature Park. It is a very particular region, consisting of clay-limestone plateaux from the Jurassic and limited to the north by the wetlands of the Brenne and to the south-west by the Creuse Valley. Its micro-climate is warmer and drier than in surrounding areas.

This unusual climate and geology have led to the establishment of a diverse flora made up of cherry trees, heathland, scented species, thorny species, oak trees, sainfoin and lucerne.

The sandy-loam soils of the Brenne are home to natural grasslands, with delayed grass growth, while the sandy soils of the Creuse Valley, which dry in the summer, are better suited to the cultivation of grassland based on grasses and leguminous plants.

All of these natural factors explain why, at a certain point in time, the inhabitants of this region took to rearing goats ('the poor man's cow'), which are hardy, undemanding animals.

As the dairy goat farms were originally very small, each farmer produced a few cheeses just for their own consumption. Gradually, collector-ripeners started collecting the cheeses in order to dry them and distribute them to various markets in Paris, Limoges, Châteauroux, Blois and Lyon.

Production then became more structured: the farms grew and the ripeners organised the collection of cheeses made from raw milk and based on a predominantly lactic curd. In 1972 'Pouligny-Saint-Pierre' became the first caprine controlled designation of origin to be recognised in France.

In order to feed the goat herds, goat producers continue to make the best use of the resources of this area with rather weak agronomic potential. They have introduced a diet combining the diversity of the natural resources available (fodder production, grazing, grass fodder, production of cereals and legumes) which, together with current breeding practices, makes it easier to control the quality of the milks used (fat content, protein content, natural flora of the milks).

The cheese producers use specific know-how when processing the cheeses, with the aim of enhancing the quality of the milk used, in particular by preserving the local microbiological flora. The ripeners have the requisite know-how to manage the development of the surface flora under well-defined conditions relating to the temperature, humidity and duration.

All these human factors live on even now in the geographical area.

As regards the specific features of 'Pouligny-Saint-Pierre', it is a cheese made from raw whole goat's milk and shaped like the frustum of a narrow pyramid, with regular edges and a square base. Its wrinkled rind is ivory-white and marbled but may also be slightly bluish. The taste is balanced, neither too salty nor too acidic. The texture is creamy and melting. It has aromatic notes of a predominantly lactic and fermentative nature, with hints of 'goat', 'mushroom' and 'hazelnut'.

The link between the specific features of the product and the natural and human factors in the geographical area is based first and foremost on the climate and the geology. They are the reason why this part of the Brenne has agricultural land that dries in the summer and has been for a long time best suited to the production of fodder. This fodder remains the basic element of the diverse diet of these goats, whose milk contributes to the characteristics of 'Pouligny-Saint-Pierre'. By making the best possible use of the various types of soil in the geographical area, the breeders of Brenne have been able to produce high-quality goat's milk used to make a cheese originally intended for family consumption.

The constraints affecting this production, which originally took place on farms, are the reason for the choice of raw whole milk and the use of lactic technology.

In addition, the producers have developed a special mould, whose pyramidal shape was supposedly inspired by the bell-tower of the church of Pouligny-Saint-Pierre. The use of a pointed pyramidal mould gives the cheese its original shape, which is an important part of its visual identity, and plays a key role in the development of its texture. Placing lactic curd in a traditional mould and applying the current production techniques, which derive from traditional know-how originally developed by farm producers and nowadays shared by all (inoculation with a lactic starter culture or whey from a previous batch, moulding of the curd with a small ladle, slow natural draining, dry salting), makes it possible to obtain a structured and well-drained curd that gives the cheese a characteristic melting and creamy texture. This texture as well as the balanced gustatory quality of the cheese and its aromatic notes of a predominantly lactic and fermentative nature, with hints of 'goat', 'mushroom' and 'hazelnut', are revealed thanks to the attentive care bestowed on the cheese by the ripener over a ripening period of at least 10 days (9 days for the small 'Pouligny-Saint-Pierre'), which promotes the development of an ivory-white or bluish wrinkled surface.

Reference to publication of the specification

(the second subparagraph of Article 6(1) of this Regulation)

<https://extranet.inao.gouv.fr/fichier/CDC-PoulStPierre-050919.pdf>

Notice of a request concerning the applicability of Article 34 of Directive 2014/25/EU**Extension of the period for adoption of implementing acts**

(2020/C 193/12)

On 13 December 2019 the Commission received a request pursuant to Article 35 of Directive 2014/25/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council ⁽¹⁾.

This request, made by SJ AB, concerns activities relating to the provision of railway passenger transport in Sweden. The relevant notice was published on page number 11 of OJ C 53 of 17 February 2020. The initial deadline was 3 July 2020.

Pursuant to the fourth subparagraph of paragraph 1 to Annex IV of Directive 2014/25/EU, the deadline may be extended by the Commission with the agreement of those having made the request for exemption. Given SJ AB's request to provide additional information and with the agreement of the Commission, the period available to the Commission for deciding on this request is hereby extended by 19 working days.

The final deadline therefore expires on 31 July 2020.

⁽¹⁾ Directive 2014/25/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 February 2014 on procurement procedures by entities operating in the water, energy, transport and postal services sectors and repealing Directive 2004/17/EC (OJ L 94, 28.3.2014, p. 243).

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