



Conference of Committee Chairs
The Chair

Mr Martin SCHULZ
President of the
European Parliament

303906 03.03.2015

Geda ref.: D(2015)9692

Subject: Request for association under Rule 54 by the Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development (AGRI) to a non-legislative report under Rule 52 by the Committee on the Internal Market and Consumer Protection (IMCO) entitled "**Unfair trading practices in the food supply chain**"

Dear President,

Dear Martin,

By letter dated 23 October 2014, the Committee on the Internal Market and Consumer Protection (IMCO) requested authorisation to draw up a non-legislative own-initiative report under Rule 52 entitled "*Unfair trading practices in the food supply chain*". By letter dated 13 November 2014, the Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development (AGRI) requested association to this report under Rule 54 of the Rules of Procedure. The IMCO Committee has thereafter opposed such association by letter dated 6 February 2015 and has requested to qualify this report as "strategic". The AGRI position was further reiterated in the letter of Ms Mairead McGuinness, the AGRI rapporteur, dated 9 February 2015.

Despite this exchange of letters, which you will find attached, as well as consideration in the Conference of Committee Chairs, it has not been possible to find a solution acceptable to both committees. Therefore, the Conference of Committee Chairs has mandated me to make a recommendation concerning the AGRI Committee's request for association.

Objectives of the report

In its justifications for drafting an own-initiative report on the topic the IMCO Committee refers to the Commission Communication on "*Tackling unfair trading practices in the business-to-business food supply chain*"¹. The Communication calls for continued cooperation to address unbalances in trading relationships. It does not however foresee regulatory action at EU level and does not prescribe a single solution to address the issue of unfair trade practices (UTPs), but rather encourages stakeholders and Member States to tackle UTPs at their level. It encourages operators in the European food supply chain to participate in voluntary schemes aiming at promoting best practices and reducing UTPs. The intended own-initiative report would provide Parliament's response to the Communication and, in particular, assess the proposed non-legislative approach.

¹ COM(2014) 472

Arguments of the parties

In its letter dated 13 November 2014, the AGRI Committee has requested association under Rule 54 to the above-mentioned own-initiative report by the IMCO Committee. It considers that the agricultural production, in its position at the source of the food supply chain, is an essential link in the chain. Although agricultural producers are not directly mentioned in the introduction of the communication, the AGRI Committee stresses that they are implied to be among the victims of these unfair trading practices as the communication refers back to Commission Communication on "*A better functioning food supply chain in Europe*"² on which Parliament on 7 September 2010 adopted a resolution entitled "Fair revenues for farmers: a better food supply chain in Europe"³.

The AGRI Committee further insists that other parts of the communication confirm that agricultural producers are directly concerned by UTPs and are essential links of the food supply chain and 4 out of 5 chapters make direct or indirect reference to agricultural production, the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) or farmers.

The IMCO Committee has opposed the Rule 54 request submitted by AGRI in a letter dated 6 February 2015. It considers that any initiative on UTPs will have an impact on the interface between the various market actors involved, including producers, wholesales operators and distributive traders, retailers as well as consumers, for whom IMCO has a general competence. It recalls that more fundamental measures addressing structural imbalances in the agricultural sector have been taken in the framework of the CAP, such as strengthening the representation of farmers in their market organisations, and they are clearly outside the scope of the present communication.

Furthermore, any envisaged regulation on UTPs should be horizontal in nature. The IMCO Committee emphasises that the communication in question ties with other legal acts and Commission initiatives within IMCO's remit contributing to a European legal framework for retail services in the Internal market such as the EU Services Directive⁴, the Retail Action Plan⁵ and the Directive on Unfair Trading Practices⁶.

Moreover, the IMCO Committee requests this own-initiative report to be qualified as "strategic" on the basis that tackling UTPs links to priority 4 of the 2015 Commission Work Programme "A Deeper and Fairer Internal Market with a Strengthened Industrial Base" and its action 7 "A strategy for a renewed and integrated approach for the Single Market"⁷.

Finally, the IMCO Committee proposes the "Rule 53+" arrangement which would confer the right on the Draftsperson for opinion to systematically attend and speak at all meetings, other events and shadow meetings of the lead committee, and to hold regular bilateral meetings with the lead rapporteur regarding their respective specific interests and concerns. It considers that this kind of enhanced cooperation will enable the AGRI draftsperson to actively influence the file.

² COM(2009)591

³ 2009/2237(INI)

⁴ Directive 2006/123/EC, OJ L 376 27.12.2006, p. 36-68

⁵ COM(2013)036

⁶ Directive 2005/29/EC, OJ L 149, 11.6.2005, p. 22-39

⁷ COM(2014)910

Findings

As you will recall, Annex VI of the Rules of Procedure attributes to the IMCO Committee the competence over:

- “1. coordination at Union level of national legislation in the sphere of the internal market and for the customs union, in particular:
 - (a) the free movement of goods including the harmonisation of technical standards,...);
2. the functioning of the Single Market, including measures aimed at the identification and removal of potential obstacles to the implementation of the Single Market, including the Digital Single Market;
3. the promotion and protection of the economic interests of consumers, except for public health and food safety issues;
4. policy and legislation regarding the enforcement of Single Market rules and consumer rights.”

whereas the AGRI Committee is responsible for:

- “1. the operation and development of the common agricultural policy; (...)
5. supplies of agricultural raw materials; (...)”

You will also recall that Rule 54 is applied only where:

"the Conference of Presidents, on the basis of Annex VI, considers that the matter falls almost equally within the competence of two or more committees, or that different parts of the matter fall within the competence of two or more committees."

In view that the proposed report by the IMCO Committee is linked to the Commission Communication on "*Tackling unfair trading practices in the business-to-business food supply chain*" its content should be gauged on the basis of that document. The Commission Communication itself focuses on abuses of different levels of bargaining power and economic imbalances in individual trade relations between the actors of the business-to-business food supply chain. The Commission stresses three areas for action in order to tackle UTPs: support for the voluntary "Supply Chain Initiative" which brings together all market operators of the sector, the exchange of best practices between Member States and the promotion of non-judicial complaint and redress mechanisms.

The Commission Communication does not analyse or propose any action related to the CAP and does not prescribe a single solution to address the issue of UTPs, but rather encourages stakeholders and Member States to tackle UTPs at their level. Moreover, the communication in question is linked with other legal acts and Commission initiatives within IMCO's remit such as the EU Services Directive, the Retail Action Plan and the Directive on Unfair Trading Practices.

Furthermore, it should be noted that the own-initiative report on "The European Retail Action Plan for the benefit of all actors"⁸ was based, inter alia, on the Commission Green Paper on "*Unfair trading practices in the business-to-business food and non-food supply chain in*

⁸ 2013/2093(INI)

Europe”⁹ and it was adopted under the IMCO Committee lead without any AGRI involvement in the procedure.

Having regard that the proposed own-initiative report builds upon the above-mentioned Commission Communication, which does not directly touch upon the elements falling under the remit of the AGRI Committee according to Annex VI, I believe that the IMCO Committee has the relevant competences to lead the procedure of this non-legislative file in Parliament. In view that the CAP aspects are indirectly invoked by the communication in question, I believe that AGRI involvement for the proposed own-initiative report should not extend beyond Rule 53.

Regarding the IMCO Committee request to qualify the proposed own-initiative report as “strategic”, the authorisation of which would then fall within the competence of the Conference of Committee Chairs, I would like to recall that, according to the Procedure for granting authorisation to draw up own-initiative reports, Article 1(1) b) “Strategic Reports,[are] drawn up on the basis of non-legislative strategic and priority initiatives included in the Commission Work Programme”¹⁰. The priority 4 of the 2015 Commission Work Programme and its action 7 “Internal Market Strategy for goods and services” as referred to by the IMCO Committee concerns a much wider scope of strategic proposals than just UTPs in the business-to-business food supply chain¹¹. Therefore, I would propose to draw up an ordinary non-legislative own-initiative report under Rule 52 upon authorisation by the Conference of Presidents.

My recommendation to the Conference of Presidents would thus be:

1. that the IMCO Committee be authorised to draw up an ordinary non-legislative own-initiative report entitled “*Unfair trading practices in the food supply chain*”;
2. that the AGRI Committee’s request for association under Rule 54 be dismissed;
3. that the AGRI Committee contribute with an opinion under Rule 53 to above-mentioned non-legislative own-initiative report.

Yours sincerely,


Jerzy BUZEK

cc: Ms FORD, Chair of the Committee on the Internal Market and Consumer Protection
Mr SIEKIERSKI, Chair of the Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development

Annexes

⁹ COM(2013)037

¹⁰ Decision of the Conference of Presidents of 12 December 2002 (with later amendments)

¹¹ COM(2014)910, Annex 1: action 7 “A strategy for a renewed and integrated approach for the Single Market, to deliver further integration and improve mutual recognition and standardisation in key industrial and services sectors where the economic potential is greatest, eg business services, construction, retail, regulated professions, advanced manufacturing and combined services/goods provision”



ЕВРОПЕЙСКИ ПАРЛАМЕНТ PARLAMENTO EUROPEO EVROPSKÝ PARLAMENT EUROPA-PARLAMENTET
EUROPÄISCHES PARLAMENT EUROOPA PARLAMENT ΕΥΡΩΠΑΪΚΟ ΚΟΙΝΟΒΟΥΛΙΟ EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT
PARLEMENT EUROPÉEN PARLAIMINT NA HEORPA PARLAMENTO EUROPEO EIROPAS PARLAMENTS
EUROPOS PARLAMENTAS EURÓPAI PARLAMENT IL-PARLAMENT EWROPEW EUROPEES PARLEMENT
PARLAMENT EUROPEJSKI PARLAMENTO EUROPEU PARLAMENTUL EUROPEAN
EURÓPSKÝ PARLAMENT EVROPSKI PARLAMENT EUROOPAN PARLAMENTTI EUROPAPARLAMENTET

Committee on the Internal Market and Consumer Protection
The Chairman

JF/ds
D(2014)49909

316844 23.10.2014

Mr Jerzy BUZEK
Chair
Conference of Committee Chairs
PHS 8B46

**Subject: Request for authorisation to draw up an Own-Initiative Report
under Rule 52 of the Rules of Procedure**

Dear Chairman,

The Committee on the Internal Market and Consumer Protection (IMCO) would like
to request authorisation for the following own-initiative report:

- *Unfair trading practices in the food supply chain*

This own-initiative report will fall under the category (c) Non-Legislative Reports (to
be authorised by the Conference of Presidents), and remaining within the ceiling of
six reports drafted simultaneously, pursuant to Article 1(2) and Article 3 of the
Decision of the Conference of Presidents of 12 December 2012.

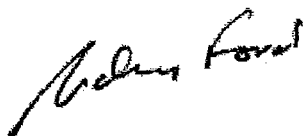
Justification:

In July 2014, the Commission presented a communication on Tackling unfair trading
practices (UTPs) in the business-to-business food supply chain, calling for continued
cooperation to address unbalances in trading relationships. The Communication
does not however foresee regulatory action at EU level and does not prescribe a
single solution to address the issue of UTPs, but rather encourages stakeholders
and Member States to tackle UTPs at their level. It encourages operators in the
European food supply chain to participate in voluntary schemes aiming at promoting
best practices and reducing UTPs; it also emphasises effective redress.

The current own-initiative report would provide Parliament's response to the Communication and, in particular, assess the proposed non-legislative approach.

I would appreciate if you could put this request on the agenda of the Conference of Committee Chairs and, following that, forward for authorisation to the Conference of Presidents, pursuant to Rule 52 of the Rules of Procedure.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Vicky Ford', written in a cursive style.

Vicky Ford



ЕВРОПЕЙСКИ ПАРЛАМЕНТ PARLAMENTO EUROPEO EVROPSKÝ PARLAMENT EUROPA-PARLAMENTET
EUROPÄISCHES PARLAMENT EUROOPA PARLAMENT ΕΥΡΩΠΑΪΚΟ ΚΟΙΝΟΒΟΥΛΙΟ EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT
PARLEMENT EUROPÉEN PARLAIMINT NA HEORPA PARLAMENTO EUROPEO EIROPAS PARLaments
EUROPOS PARLAMENTAS EURÓPAI PARLAMENT IL-PARLAMENT EWROPEW EUROPEES PARLEMENT
PARLAMENT EUROPEJSKI PARLAMENTO EUROPEU PARLAMENTUL EUROPEAN
EURÓPSKY PARLAMENT EVROPSKI PARLAMENT EUROOPAN PARLAMENTTI EUROPAPARLAMENTET

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT
THE CHAIRMAN

318509 13.11.2014

Mr. Jerzy Buzek
Chairman of the Conference of Committee Chairmen
European Parliament
PHS 8 B 046
Brussels

Ref.: IPOL-COM-AGRI D (2014)54051

Subject: Request for the application of the procedure with associated committee, under Rule 54 for the Own-Initiative report on "Unfair trading practices in the food supply chain".

Dear Mr Buzek,

On 5 November 2014, coordinators of the AGRI Committee unanimously decided to request the procedure with associated Committees under Rule 54 for the own-initiative report on "Unfair trading practices in the food supply chain". This report requested by the IMCO Committee is aimed to prepare the Parliament's response to the Commission Communication on "Tackling unfair trading practices in the business-to-business food supply chain" (COM(2014)472).

The Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development requests the application of the procedure with associated committee, under Rule 54 regarding the aspects of the Commission Communication which deal with agriculture.

In the introduction to its communication, the Commission notes that, within the food supply chain, "before a product reaches the consumer, a number of market participants (producers, processors, retailers, etc.) add to its impact and have an impact on the final price paid by the consumer". Indeed agricultural production, in its position at the source of the food supply chain, is an essential link in the chain.

Furthermore, the Commission also acknowledges in its introduction that "developments such as increased concentration and vertical integration of market participants [...] have contributed to significantly different levels of bargaining power and economic imbalances in individual trade relations between the actors of the chain [...] the abuse of such may sometimes lead to unfair trading practices". Although agricultural producers are not directly mentioned in this introduction, it is clear that they are implied to be among the victims of these unfair trading practices as a footnote to this paragraph refers back to Commission Communication COM(2009)591 on "A better functioning food supply chain in Europe" on which Parliament adopted a

resolution entitled "Fair revenues for farmers: a better food supply chain in Europe" on 7 September 2010.

Other parts of the communication confirm that agricultural producers are directly concerned by unfair trading practices (UTPs) and are essential links of the food supply chain and 4 out of 5 chapters make direct or indirect reference to agricultural production, the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) or farmers:

On page 3, the Communication notes that "the new Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) [...] strengthen[s] the position of producers in the supply chain vis-à-vis downstream operators, notably by supporting the creation and development of producer organisations. The new single Common Market Organisation also includes elements which aim at reducing the bargaining power gap between farmers and other parties in the food supply chain in some selected sectors (milk, olive oil, beef and veal, arable crops). The new rules also provide Member States with the possibility to require compulsory written contracts in other agricultural sectors, subject to safeguards that ensure that such provisions do not impair the proper functioning of the internal market. The CAP reform, notably through the new single Common Market Organisation, includes elements which aim at reducing the bargaining power gap between farmers and other parties in the food supply chain". As you know, AGRI is the Committee responsible for the operation and development of the common agricultural policy under Annex VI of the Rules of procedure.

On page 4, the Commission further notes that "certain stakeholders – namely farmers and the meat processing industry – have not have joined [the] framework [on the Supply Chain Initiative] at EU level. While farmers are represented in national platforms in a few Member States, only four farming operations have registered so far in the framework at EU level. Moreover, the framework only binds those companies that decided to adhere to it. The result is that, today, there remains a wide divergence in the way UTP issues in food supply chains are addressed in the EU".

Still on page 4, the Commission makes reference to the Parliament's resolution of 19 January 2012 on "imbalances in the food supply chain" which "highlighted the European dimension of the imbalances in the food supply chain which can lead to unfair practices". Among other things, this resolution called on the Commission and Member States to "continue urgently to address the problem of unfair distribution of profits within the food chain, especially with regard to adequate incomes for farmers".

On page 5, the Communication refers to an "EU-wide survey among farmers and primary producers in the agri-food market" where "46% of the respondents to the survey found that UTPs have a negative effect on access to new markets or cross border activities".

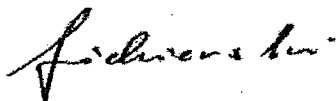
A further reference to the CAP reform is made on page 6 and on page 7, where the Communication notes that "farmers and SME suppliers emphasise that the existence of an administrative authority with the power to launch investigations and to accept confidential complaints on alleged UTPs would be crucial to tackling the issue of the fear factor described above. Most of these stakeholders call for the establishment of

an independent enforcement body at national level, because effective enforcement would be a key factor in reducing the occurrence of UTPs".

And finally, on page 8, the Commission notes that "notably, representatives of primary producers (i.e. farmers) and the meat processing industry have refrained from participating in the [Supply Chain Initiative]'s governance group at EU level. Although they agree with the principles, these stakeholders are concerned about the lack of independent and effective enforcement within the Supply Chain Initiative. Some of them do however participate at national level. The concerned stakeholders do not consider that the Supply Chain Initiative sufficiently addresses the aforementioned fear factor for economically dependent trading parties, notably because a company exposed to UTPs has no possibility to submit confidential complaints."

I should be grateful if, in consideration of the above arguments, you could accept the request of AGRI to be appointed as associated committee, under Rule 54 for the own-initiative report on "Unfair trading practices in the food supply chain".

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Czesław Adam SIEKIERSKI', written in a cursive style.

Czesław Adam SIEKIERSKI



ЕВРОПЕЙСКИ ПАРЛАМЕНТ PARLAMENTO EUROPEO EVROPSKÝ PARLAMENT EUROPA-PARLAMENTET
EUROPÄISCHES PARLAMENT EUROOPA PARLAMENT ΕΥΡΩΠΑΪΚΟ ΚΟΙΝΟΒΟΥΛΙΟ EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT
PARLEMENT EUROPÉEN PARLAIMINT NA HEORPA PARLAMENTO EUROPEO EIROPAS PARLaments
EUROPOS PARLAMENTAS EURÓPAI PARLAMENT IL-PARLAMENT EWROPEW EUROPEES PARLEMENT
PARLAMENT EUROPEJSKI PARLAMENTO EUROPEU PARLAMENTUL EUROPEAN
EURÓPSKY PARLAMENT EVROPSKI PARLAMENT EUROOPAN PARLAMENTTI EUROOPAPARLAMENTET

Committee on the Internal Market and Consumer Protection
The Chairman

JF/ic
D(2015)4461

302102 06.02.2015

Jerzy Buzek
Chairman
Conference of Committee Chairs
European Parliament
PHS 8B46

Subject: IMCO's request for authorisation of a non-legislative own-initiative report on the Commission's Communication on Unfair Commercial Trading Practices in the food supply chain (UTP) (2014/0472(COD)) – request for a 'strategic' report and cooperation with AGRI Committee

Dear Chair,

On 15 July 2014, the European Commission adopted a Communication on Unfair Commercial Trading Practices in the food supply chain (UTP) (2014/0472(COD))¹.

This Communication ties in with other Commission initiatives within IMCO's remit contributing to a European legal framework for retail services in the Internal Market, such as the EU Services Directive, the Retail Action Plan, the Retail Roundtable and the EU Directive on Unfair Trading Practices.

The Communication was allocated by Parliament's services to the IMCO committee. Subsequent to this allocation, on 23 October 2014 IMCO requested authorisation to draw up an own-initiative report. On 13 November 2014 the allocation of this INI report was challenged by the AGRI Committee, which requested association under Article 54 of the Rules of Procedure. Since then, discussions have been on-going between the two Committees on how to set up a workable cooperation agreement.

A Strategic Report

Broadly speaking, Unfair Trading Practices (UTPs) can be defined as practices that grossly deviate from good commercial conduct, are contrary to good faith and fair dealing, and are unilaterally imposed by one trading partner on its counterparty. Usually, UTPs reflect imbalances in commercial relationships where one trading partner has significantly greater bargaining power than its counterparty. While such differences in bargaining power are common and legitimate, they should not be abused; this has however often been observed by businesses in the food supply chain. The Commission Communication stresses three areas for action in order to tackle UTPs: support for the voluntary 'Supply Chain Initiative' which brings together all market operators of the sector; the exchange of best practices

¹ Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions: Tackling unfair trading practices in the business-to-business food supply chain, COM (2014)0472 final

between the Member States and, the promotion of non-judicial complaint and redress mechanisms.

In this context, and following upon my initial request for authorisation, I would like to suggest qualifying the requested INI report on unfair trading practices in the food supply chain as a **"strategic report"**. Whilst it is a non-legislative report, the preparation of the Commission Communication on the topic has proven very controversial and the various involved services have taken starkly different positions on the regulatory course to follow, including instruments ranging from a non-binding Communication to a proposal for a Directive. As has become clear in IMCO's on-going preparatory work, Parliament should thoroughly review the basic nature of the proposed policy approach, in particular, whether the suggested voluntary initiatives are sufficient or if further binding legislative steps should be considered to effectively address the issues identified.

Tackling unfair trade practices clearly links to priority 4 of the 2015 Commission Work programme 'A deeper and fairer Internal Market with a strengthened industrial base' and its action 7 'A strategy for a renewed and integrated approach for the Single Market', which seeks to deliver further integration in key sectors where the economic potential is greatest, e.g. inter alia construction and retail, and which focuses on SMEs.

Proposal for Rule 53+ (enhanced cooperation) agreement IMCO – AGRI

There are different strands in the proposal which touch upon the competences of various committees, in addition to IMCO, such as AGRI. However, under Annex VI to the Rules of Procedure, IMCO has an overall coordination role "at Union level of national legislation in the sphere of the internal market". It should consequently exercise such a role in the context of this proposal.

As a general matter, it is vital that IMCO take a central role in coordinating Union policy on retail services and supply chain issues, including redress, in order to unlock the potential of those markets for businesses and consumers. On a technical level, the areas for action highlighted by the Communication fundamentally relate to the subject-matters of retail services, competition, consumer protection and enforcement of Single Market rules, all of which fall squarely within IMCO competence.

I would like to recall that IMCO issued two recent Resolutions *"A more efficient and fairer retail market"* (2010/2109(INI)) and a *"European Retail Action Plan for the benefit of all actors"* (2013/2093(INI)) that examined, inter alia, the issue of UTPs in the food supply chain; presently, IMCO is preparing a study on unfair trading practices in franchising, as a basis for a possible INI report to be drafted at a later stage.

As a matter of principle, IMCO welcomes a strong contribution from the AGRI committee to this file, as it will help to clarify the situation of farmers as prime producers of food products and first link in the increasingly complex food supply chain. AGRI justifies its request for association under Rule 54 by reference to its previous work highlighting certain difficulties and low revenues of farmers generally. These structural economic problems are not however, and cannot be, the prime objective to be solved by rules on unfair commercial trading practices. Furthermore the Communication aims to identify and to prevent certain business practices which may be prevalent, but are certainly not exclusive to, the food retailing industry. Farmers are only one group amongst others that are affected by unfair trading practices. Any initiative on UTPs will have an impact on the interface between the various market actors involved, including producers, wholesale operators and distributive traders, retailers as well as consumers, for whom IMCO has a general competence. Whereas more fundamental measures addressing structural imbalances in the agricultural sector have been taken in the framework of the Common Agricultural Policy, such as

strengthening the representation of farmers in their market organisations, these are clearly outside the scope of the present instrument. Finally, any envisaged regulation on unfair trading practices should be horizontal in nature.

For the reasons above, and in a spirit of good cooperation, in November 2014 the IMCO Rapporteur proposed to AGRI an enhanced cooperation arrangement under "Rule 53+". The purpose of the Rule 53+ arrangement would be to facilitate committee cooperation on documents – a Commission Communication and an INI - whose structure does not lend itself easily to an exact splitting of competences compared to that of e.g. a legislative proposal, and where different technical areas may be mentioned in the same context.

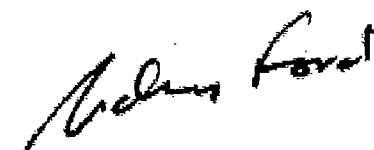
More specifically, the Rule 53+ arrangement would confer the right on the Rapporteur for Opinion to systematically attend and speak at all meetings, events and shadow meetings of the lead committee, and to hold regular bilateral meetings with the lead Rapporteur regarding their respective specific interests and concerns. This way the AGRI drafts person could actively influence the file, and would be kept informed of all relevant developments. This would also facilitate efficient and constructive input by AGRI on all points raised either in the communication or complementing it, rather than having to resort to an artificial and possibly unproductive ex ante division of competences. IMCO has had positive experiences in using such arrangements for legislative reports, being itself the associated committee, for example with ENVI ("medical devices regulation") or TRAN ("air passenger rights directive") as this working method gives more weight to cooperative elements than the Rule 54 approach and facilitates the establishment of a compromise between the two committees. This arrangement was first accepted by the AGRI Rapporteur for Opinion, and later revoked, without however providing at any stage any clear indication as to what should be the focus of AGRI's contribution on the substance of the INI.

Conclusions

In the light of all of the above, IMCO requests this file to be qualified as 'strategic' and to be allocated to it as the lead committee, with AGRI providing an opinion under a Rule 53+ enhanced cooperation agreement, to ensure a close, continuous and efficient cooperation between the two committees.

I trust that you will carefully consider these arguments when looking into this request, and remain at your disposal for any further clarifications you might need.

Yours sincerely,



Wicky Ford