

**COMMISSION IMPLEMENTING DECISION (EU) 2022/1513****of 7 September 2022****on the request for registration of the European citizens' initiative entitled 'Protect the EU's Rural Heritage, Food Security and Supply', pursuant to Regulation (EU) 2019/788 of the European Parliament and of the Council***(notified under document C(2022) 6193)***(Only the English text is authentic)**

THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION,

Having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union,

Having regard to Regulation (EU) 2019/788 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 April 2019 on the European citizens' initiative <sup>(1)</sup> and in particular Article 6(2) and (3) thereof,

Whereas:

- (1) A request for registration of a European citizens' initiative entitled 'Protect the EU's Rural Heritage, Food Security and Supply' was submitted to the Commission on 13 July 2022.
- (2) The objectives of the initiative are expressed by the organisers as follows: 'Europe's rural regions are losing their heritage, industries, populations, and values – threatening food security and supply across the EU. To preserve what makes these regions unique for future generations and ensure the longevity of the EU's food-producing communities, we need a renewed EU commitment to the promotion of regional heritage, rural sustainable growth and rising living standards. This European Citizens' Initiative asks the EU to modernise its rural commitments to take into consideration the need for greater food security, supply of agricultural materials and protection for the rural way of life – its people, their values and livelihoods.'
- (3) An annex to the initiative provides further details on the subject matter, objectives and background to the initiative, by setting out and detailing the reasons to support it. The organisers claim that 'rural sectors and those that work them face increasing pressure and diminishing incentives to continue, which, if, not addressed, will lead to the extinction of some of Europe's most foundational communities and values'. They request the Commission to submit a proposal, within the competences conferred on the Union by the Treaties, to strengthen and preserve regional heritages and industries throughout the Union in order to boost rural growth and promote rural job practices and activities. They further ask for recognition of food security and supply, such as fertiliser and biogas materials, to maintain a robust regional food supply in the Union. They invite the Commission to include the promotion of rural heritage and the recognition of food security and supply in the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development and they mention the need to increase the scope of the long-term vision for the Union's rural areas up to 2040, the Rural Pact as well as the EU Rural Action Plan <sup>(2)</sup>.
- (4) In line with the objectives of the common agricultural policy (CAP) established by Article 39 of the Treaty, the CAP strategic plans Regulation <sup>(3)</sup> pursues the general objectives of fostering a smart, competitive, resilient and diversified agricultural sector ensuring long-term food security, supporting and strengthen environmental protection and strengthening the socioeconomic fabric of rural areas <sup>(4)</sup>. To the extent that the initiative's objective of protection of the Union's rural heritage, food security and supply is not covered by Regulation (EU) 2021/2115, the Commission has the power to present a proposal for a legal act on the basis of Article 42 and Article 43(2) of the Treaty.

<sup>(1)</sup> OJ L 130, 17.5.2019, p. 55.

<sup>(2)</sup> In its Communication 'The long-term Vision for the EU's Rural Areas up to 2040' (COM/2021/345 final), presented on 30 June 2021, the Commission announced the Rural Pact and the Rural action Plan. More information about these actions can be found on: [https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/priorities-2019-2024/new-push-european-democracy/long-term-vision-rural-areas\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/priorities-2019-2024/new-push-european-democracy/long-term-vision-rural-areas_en).

<sup>(3)</sup> Regulation (EU) 2021/2115 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 2 December 2021 establishing rules on support for strategic plans to be drawn up by Member States under the common agricultural policy (CAP Strategic Plans) and financed by the European Agricultural Guarantee Fund (EAGF) and by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) and repealing Regulations (EU) No 1305/2013 and (EU) No 1307/2013 (OJ L 435, 6.12.2021, p. 1).

<sup>(4)</sup> Article 5 of Regulation (EU) 2021/2115.

- (5) For those reasons, none of the parts of the initiative manifestly fall outside the framework of the Commission's powers to submit a proposal for a legal act of the Union for the purpose of implementing the Treaties.
- (6) That conclusion is without prejudice to the assessment of whether the concrete substantive conditions required for the Commission to act, including compliance with the principles of proportionality and subsidiarity and compatibility with fundamental rights, would be met in this case.
- (7) The group of organisers has provided appropriate evidence that it fulfils the requirements laid down in Article 5(1) and (2) of Regulation (EU) 2019/788 and has designated the contact persons in accordance with Article 5(3), first subparagraph, of that Regulation.
- (8) The initiative is not manifestly abusive, frivolous or vexatious, nor is it manifestly contrary to the values of the Union as set out in Article 2 of the Treaty on European Union and rights enshrined in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union.
- (9) The initiative entitled 'Protect the EU's Rural Heritage, Food Security and Supply' should therefore be registered.
- (10) The conclusion that the conditions for registration under Article 6(3) of Regulation (EU) 2019/788 are fulfilled does not imply that the Commission in any way confirms the factual correctness of the content of the initiative, which is the sole responsibility of the group of organisers of the initiative. The content of the initiative only expresses the views of the group of organisers, and can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the Commission,

HAS ADOPTED THIS DECISION:

*Article 1*

The European citizens' initiative entitled 'Protect the EU's Rural Heritage, Food Security and Supply' shall be registered.

*Article 2*

This Decision is addressed to the group of organisers of the citizens' initiative entitled 'Protect the EU's Rural Heritage, Food Security and Supply', represented by Mr Česlovas TALLAT-KELPŠA and Mr Markus Valdemar SJÖHOLM acting as contact persons.

Done at Brussels, 7 September 2022.

*For the Commission*  
Věra JOUROVÁ  
*Vice-President*

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