

Question for written answer E-002482/2024
to the Commission
Rule 144
César Luena (S&D)

Subject: Ruling against 'Viñedos de Álava' being registered as an EU protected designation of origin

The High Court of Justice of the Basque Country has annulled the application for 'Viñedos de Álava' to be registered and protected by the EU as a protected designation of origin (PDO). This seems to put paid to the hopes of the Association of Rioja Alavesa Wineries (ABRA) and puts a question mark over the application continuing at EU level. According to the ruling, the Basque government's proposal, made at ABRA's request, does not meet the requirements under EU law for creating a separate PDO. Basing its ruling on the report drawn up by the Spanish Ministry of Agriculture, the High Court ruled that the 'Viñedos de Álava' designation has no distinguishing features compared to the existing Rioja qualified designation of origin and found that it would be to the consumer's detriment to have two separate designations for products with a similar origin and similar characteristics. In the light of the above:

1. Given this ruling and that a PDO can be registered only if there is concrete evidence of the product's distinctiveness and quality (which has not been demonstrated), will the Commission follow the ruling and shelve this application?
2. Does the Commission have any instruments with which to make good the reputational and economic damage suffered by the Rioja qualified designation of origin during the 'Viñedos de Álava' PDO application process?

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