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Minutes of 8th meeting of the Informal Working Group on Halloumi/Hellim
29 January 2025

The 8th meeting of the Informal Working Group on Halloumi/Hellim (WG), i.e. the first meeting of its new, second assembly, was held on 29 January 2025 in the Home4Cooperation in Nicosia. The meeting was chaired in person by DG REFORM in the presence of all 10 members of the WG. Relevant Commission services participated on-line in the meeting, including co-chair DG AGRI.

The meeting started with an introduction by the Chair, Ms. Jutta Pomoell-Segurola, recalling the aim of the working group and the importance of the pan-Cypriot Protected Designation of Origin (PDO) scheme on Halloumi/Hellim as a key economic opportunity and confidence-building measure.

The Working Group adopted the Draft agenda shared in advance of the meeting, as well as the draft Rules of procedures.

After a brief introduction by each participant, information on recent developments relevant for the work of the WG and expectations concerning the forthcoming work were shared. Members confirmed their commitment to work towards safeguarding the EU PDO Halloumi/Hellim quality scheme and sustaining production capacity for the PDO product. Several interventions emphasised the need to work across communities to strengthen the PDO scheme.

The timely and urgent delegation of all powers necessary to conduct relevant inspections and controls in the Turkish Cypriot community to Bureau Veritas France was raised as an important measure to enable the participation of Turkish Cypriot producers in the scheme.

Members proposed that the WG meets more frequently, ideally on a bi-monthly basis, and that meetings be used a platform to discuss common strategies and strengthen the bi-communal, joint ownership of the scheme. Members also identified that for the scheme to be feasible in the medium- to long-term, there needs to be common agreement on the product specifications and transparency and predictability over any possible changes.

Members agreed with the proposal by the Commission that representatives of Sustainable Food Systems Ireland, a platform of Irish government agencies, attend relevant meetings in the future as observers, given their support to the implementation of the PDO scheme particularly in the Turkish Cypriot community.

Ms. Pomoell-Segurola thanked members for their valuable contributions and cooperation.

The minutes will be posted on the Commission’s website.

Annex 1: List of members participating in the 8th meeting of the Informal Working Group on Halloumi/Hellim:

Working Group Members:

- Alexandrou, Nasia
- Andrea, Christo
- Andreou, Andreas
- Avunduk, Meriç
- Erel, Metehan
- Ergüven, Mustafa
- Konstantinou, Marios
- Naimoğulları, Mustafa
- Öztürk, Kemal
- Papademas, Photis

From the Commission:

- Pomoell-Segurola, Jutta, DG REFORM – Chair of meeting
- Castelló Corvillo, Javier DG REFORM
- Poirot, Julie, DG SANTE
- Cianfoni, Luca, DG AGRI – Co-chair (participating online)
- Karampella, Theodora, DG AGRI – (participating online)
- Buza-Vidas, Marina, DG REFORM

Electronically signed on 25/02/2025 15:44 (UTC+01) in accordance with Article 11 of Commission Decision (EU) 2021/2121