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Subject : What European strategy to strengthen the EU's agricultural sovereignty while stimulating sustainable production methods?

Bulgaria is a parliamentary republic whose president is Rumen Radev, a member of the socialist party, and has been president since January 2017. Bulgaria is a country of almost 7 million inhabitants. Bulgaria is a country whose agriculture was for a long time one of the major parts of the country's economy and then when it joined the European Union it adopted the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) in 2007 which is an important step as agriculture plays an essential role in this country. Currently with the EU it seeks to regain agricultural sovereignty and that is why we will ask the following question:

What European strategy to strengthen the EU's agricultural sovereignty while stimulating sustainable production methods?

Since the beginning of the Russian-Ukrainian conflict on 14 February 2022, Europe has been experiencing an economic, political and commercial crisis. Before the war, Ukraine was one of the largest maize and wheat exporting countries in Europe and the world. According to the United States Department of Agriculture, Russia and Ukraine account for 19% of world maize exports and 29% of wheat exports. And since the war, wheat and corn production has fallen sharply with the destruction of agricultural land and the rest that could be produced is blocked in Ukraine without being able to export it. Thus, Europe is affected by a food crisis and the price of cereals is rising, which shows the dependence of other countries and makes us think about the agricultural power of the European Union countries, which includes Bulgaria.

During the Soviet era Bulgaria had a monopoly on agricultural exports and imports, its trade was mainly linked to the Eastern Bloc countries. During the 1970s Bulgaria was one of the world's largest exporters of essential rose oil, tobacco and fruit and vegetables or other meat products. But following the fall of the Soviet Union in 1989 Bulgaria experienced a sharp drop in agricultural exports, which only accounted for 20% of total exports in 1989. Then the changes in the agricultural commodity measures between 1991 and 1998 caused difficulties for the producers. In 2007, with the integration of Bulgaria into the European Union, it received European funds for its agricultural and rural development, which allowed the development of the agricultural sector and its modernisation. In 2005, it adopted a law supplementing the 1998 law, which encourages the use of agricultural land and the development of agricultural production in disadvantaged regions. Finally, it has a cooperation with France which is being structured following the CAP 2020, but Bulgaria is far from becoming a world exporter again. The Community Agricultural Policy (CAP) establishes common rules and support mechanisms for the agricultural sector throughout the EU. This sector is of strategic importance, has particular production conditions, and also contributes to the protection of the environment. It has 9 objectives which are to guarantee a fair income for farmers, increase competitiveness, rebalance power in the food chain, act against climate change, protect the environment, preserve landscapes and biodiversity, support generational renewal, maintain rural areas.

Currently Bulgaria has not established solutions to improve its production and strengthen its national sovereignty. One of the concerns of agricultural production in Bulgaria and in Europe is water. There are not enough water resources for agricultural production, which delays production. But we could propose different solutions, for example we could use methods such as regenerative agriculture, which consists in enriching the soil. We could also reduce water consumption by using techniques such as aquaponics, raising aquatic animals while growing

plants is a clean and environmentally friendly way to produce food., in which we can save 90% of water by combining aquaculture and hydroponics, or by using tensiometry monitoring, which will allow agriculture to control the amount of water used and to irrigate the right amount at the right time. This would allow a reduction in consumption and even better production.

Finally, Bulgaria has long been a country of great importance in the world of agricultural exports, so it is very important for the country to strengthen its national sovereignty and as a European country to strengthen agricultural production in Europe.