

Temporary trade-liberalisation measures supplementing trade concessions applicable to Moldovan products under the EU/Euratom /Moldova Association Agreement

2024/0029(COD) - 13/03/2024 - Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 459 votes to 65, with 57 abstentions, a legislative resolution on the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on temporary trade-liberalisation measures supplementing trade concessions applicable to products from the Republic of Moldova under the Association Agreement between the European Union and the European Atomic Energy Community and their Member States, of the one part, and the Republic of Moldova, of the other part.

The European Parliament adopted its position at first reading under the ordinary legislative procedure by taking over the Commission proposal.

Russia's unprovoked and unjustified war of aggression against Ukraine since 24 February 2022, has had a profoundly negative impact on the ability of the Republic of Moldova to trade with the rest of the world, in particular because exports from the Republic of Moldova rely on transit via Ukrainian territory and on Ukrainian infrastructure, which are currently largely unavailable.

In 2022, the European Parliament and the Council adopted Regulation (EU) 2022/1279, which puts in place temporary trade-liberalisation measures supplementing trade concessions applicable to products from Moldova under the EU-Moldova Association Agreement.

The present legislative proposal aims to once again renew these trade-liberalisation measures for a period of one year as of the date on which the current measures expire (i.e., as of 25 July 2024). Under the proposed regulation, all outstanding tariffs under Title V of the Association Agreement will be suspended. This concerns fruits and vegetables subject to the entry-price system and tariff-rate quotas, namely tomatoes, garlic, table grapes, apples, cherries, plums and grape juice. Most Moldovan exports already benefit from duty-free access to the EU market under the Association Agreement.

The proposal introduces a strengthened safeguard mechanism to prevent and counteract adverse market effects in the EU Member States. The Commission can take any necessary measures, including the reintroduction of customs duties if it finds that imports of a specific product covered by this regulation leads to market disturbances in the EU or any of its Member States. The Commission will regularly monitor the impact of the trade-liberalisation measures in terms of import volumes and prices.

Trade liberalisation measures are subject to Moldova's compliance with democratic principles, human rights and fundamental freedoms as well as the countering of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, related materials and their means of delivery; respect for the principles of the rule of law and good governance, the fight against corruption, criminal activities, organised or otherwise, including those of transnational character, and terrorism, and the respect for the principles of sustainable development and effective multilateralism.