

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

2024/0028(COD) - 23/04/2024 - Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 428 votes to 131, with 44 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 Ukrainian products under the Association Agreement between the European Union and the European Atomic Energy Community and their Member States, of the one part, and Ukraine, of the other part.

The European Parliament adopted its position at first reading under the ordinary legislative procedure.

Parliament supports the proposal for a regulation extending the suspension of import duties and quotas on Ukrainian agricultural products for a further year, until 5 June 2025, in order to support the country in the context of Russia's war of aggression.

The preferential arrangements established by this Regulation should also be conditional upon Ukraine abstaining from introducing new duties or charges having equivalent effect and new quantitative restrictions or measures having equivalent effect, from increasing existing levels of duties or charges, or from introducing any other restrictions on trade with the Union, unless clearly justified in the context of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine.

Ukraine's respect for democratic principles, human rights and fundamental freedoms and respect for the principle of the rule of law as well as continued and sustained efforts with regard to the fight against corruption, and illegal activities.

Under the new regulation, the Commission should take swift action and impose any measures it deems necessary in the event of major disruption to the European market or to one or more EU Member States as a result of Ukrainian imports (in the case of wheat, for example).

As part of the enhanced protection measures designed to protect European farmers, the Commission should activate emergency measures for particularly sensitive agricultural products, such as **poultry, eggs, sugar, oats, oatmeal, maize and honey**. If, during the period 6 June to 31 December 2024, cumulative import volumes of eggs, poultry, sugar, oats, maize, groats or honey since 1 January 2024 reach the respective arithmetic mean of import volumes recorded in the period from 1 July to 31 December 2021, in 2022 and in 2023, the Commission should, within 14 days and after informing the Committee on Safeguards:

- reintroduce for that product the corresponding tariff-rate quota suspended under this Regulation until 31 December 2024; and

- introduce from 1 January 2025 either a tariff-rate quota equal to five twelfths of that arithmetic mean or the corresponding tariff-rate quota suspended by this Regulation whichever is higher.

Statements

The Commission is committed to supporting Ukraine while also preserving the interest of the EU grain producers and ensuring a proper functioning of the grain market in the EU. Given the importance of grain production and grain markets, the Commission will pay particular attention to the monitoring of imports of grain, in particular wheat, and notably to the concentration of such imports in Member States neighbouring Ukraine.

For products covered by autonomous trade measures, the Commission recalls that the Regulation also provides for a reinforced safeguard mechanism. For the first time, the Commission has introduced the possibility and is ready to activate this mechanism in the event of adverse effects on the market of one or several Member States and not only for the EU market as a whole. In this regard, the Commission will use to the full extent its powers to initiate ex officio the reinforced safeguard mechanism for imports of wheat from Ukraine.

The Commission also confirms that, as soon as the new autonomous trade measures have been adopted by the co-legislators, it will take the necessary steps under the Association Agreement to continue, through consultations with Ukraine, the process of reciprocal tariff liberalisation. The Commission will closely involve the European Parliament and keep it informed of the progress of the negotiations.