

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Press release: EP vote on sugar quota prolongation is the wrong signal for Europe

European competitiveness at stake – Severe mistake must be corrected in upcoming negotiations say European Sugar Users

European Sugar Users, including thousands of SMEs, are deeply concerned about the short-sighted and unbalanced position the European Parliament adopted today.

“At a time when the European economy desperately needs clear policy decisions towards competitiveness and more jobs and growth, maintaining the disruptive sugar quotas until 2020 and potentially beyond is the wrong signal”, said Muriel Korter, Secretary General of the European Sugar Users association CIUS.

“This vote does not give us confidence that the European Parliament understands its key responsibility to promote a modern, competitive agricultural sector and food supply chain in Europe”, Korter continued.

“Today’s vote brings the EU back to outdated, protectionist policies of the past, which distort the market and jeopardize security of supply for the entire food chain”.

Already today, the EU sugar regime relies on emergency measures every year to ensure sufficient sugar is available in the internal market. Prolonging this regime even further, without a clear end date, will continue creating unnecessary supply constraints and insecurity that contribute to artificial price inflation. This may benefit a few, but is to the detriment of thousands of food producing companies and enterprises across the EU.

Today’s vote must be corrected during the upcoming negotiations between the European Parliament, EU Council and European Commission regarding the future of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP): European policy makers must stick to their former decisions to end sugar production quotas in 2015, on a clear route towards a modern, competitive and fair sugar market and food supply chain in Europe.

“The CAP reform must be a real reform. Today we went backwards”, Korter concluded.

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Notes for editors: CIUS is the Committee of European Sugar Users – representing the European sugar-using food and beverage industries. CIUS members purchase and use almost 70% of the European annual production of sugar for food use and provide direct employment for over 350,000 people.