

18 March 2024

Dear Madam, Dear Sir,

On 13th of March 2024, the European Parliament voted very narrowly to amend the Commission's proposal to suspend import duties and quotas on Ukrainian agricultural exports to the EU. (block tabled by EPP MEPs, passed with 296 for, 270 against, and 12 abstentions)

"The amendment would not just limit imports, it would result in a drastic cut of imports and undermine prospects for Ukraine's economic future, given the importance of agriculture in its economy. For sugar, we see no justification for drastically reducing imports from Ukraine. The EU has a chronic sugar deficit and needs to import between 2 and 3 million tonnes annually to meet demand " explains Yuriy Sharanov, President of CIUS.

We respectfully suggest reconsideration of the proposed amendments by the European Parliament.

The current unbalanced EU sugar market does not warrant limiting duty-free sugar imports from Ukraine. **Slashing imports from Ukraine will pose challenges to food production, employment, and the broader economy in both the EU and Ukraine.** Any compromise considered during **the Trilogue must keep in mind stakeholders from both Europe and Ukraine**, and therefore CIUS fully support **the statement** of the Ukraine Agribusiness club (UCAB).

To introduce an earlier reference period would **cut imports even more than under the Commission's proposal, with no credible justification. The EU has a chronic sugar deficit, so imports from Ukraine are needed and provide a vital contribution to the European food industry and economy.** Without them the EU's strong export surplus in high value added sugar containing products is undermined as well as the Ukrainian economy. The annual sugar import need is between 2 and 3.5 million tonnes of sugar each year (explained in slides [here](#)). Imports from Ukraine in the marketing year 2022/2023 amounted to 400 000 tonnes. **The Commission's proposal would already significantly reduce sugar imports from Ukraine for the 2024/25 marketing year, with estimates suggesting a reduction of 3-4 times compared to the previous years of 2022/23 and 2023/24. The European Parliament's recommendations would slash this further towards the derisory pre-war TRQ levels.**

It is hard to see how European sugar producers have been harmed by the increase of imports of sugar from Ukraine, given that **EU sugar prices are at historically high levels and far above World Market sugar prices which are also trading at decade highs.** (Latest EU data is on [DG AGRI page dedicated to the sugar market](#)) EU sugar producers have benefited from double digit profit increases and EU beet prices increased by 50-100%— and all this during the period in which the EU was benefiting from much needed imports from Ukraine.

We believe in the importance of a balanced approach that considers the needs of all stakeholders, including sugar producers, users, and consumers. Dialogue and cooperation are essential in crafting policies that ensure the availability of resources, support sustainable agriculture, and promote economic stability across Europe and its trading partners.

Kind regards,



Muriel Korter
CIUS Director General



Marc Vermeulen
EFG Sector Group Manager



Dr. Alex Lissitsa
President, Ukrainian
Agribusiness Club (UCAB)

The Committee of European Sugar Users (CIUS) represents more than 15 000 sugar using companies, ranging from artisan, small and medium sized enterprises to multi-nationals. Together our members purchase about 70% of the EU's annual production of sugar and provide direct employment to over 700.000 people in Europe. Products made by our members include fine bakery wares, chocolate, confectionery, soft drinks, canned fruits and jams.

The European Fermentation Group (EFG) is the voice of the European fermentation industry vis-à-vis EU institutions, national governments, and civil society. The main objective of the EFG is to ensure that EU policies promote the competitiveness of the fermentation industry contributing to the development of a sustainable European bioeconomy. EFG Members have 19 industrial plants in 11 European countries (7,065 direct jobs and around 25,000 direct and indirect jobs)

The Ukrainian Agribusiness Club (UCAB) is a business association which represents interests of leading companies of the Ukrainian agro-food sector. In 2024, UCAB kept hold of the status Association No.1 in the agricultural sector of Ukraine, consolidating more than 190 important representatives of the industry: agriproducers and input suppliers, aimed at further agricultural business development in Ukraine.