



European Sugar Users Request a Balanced Approach to EU-Ukraine Sugar Trade

Brussels, 5 March 2024– Last week the European Parliament’s AGRI Committee voted and published its opinion on the renewal of Ukraine ATM (Autonomous Trade Measures which provide duty and quota free access for Ukrainian exports to the EU market to help Ukraine). The Committee's recommendations, include an adjustment to the reference years for triggering the “emergency safeguard measure” proposed by the Commission to cap imports of “sensitive” products. Such a change of reference period would mean slashing imports from Ukraine, when European cultivation of sugar beets has for years been insufficient to supply European consumers and industry.

CIUS understand the farmer’s fears of a crash in prices as a result of increased imports. However the facts are that for sugar the opposite has been the case over the last 2 years when both imports and prices have gone up. “*We have at no point been able to see any harm resulting from white sugar imports from Ukraine. On the contrary these imports have provided much needed revenue to the Ukrainian economy and supply of sugar to European food producers*”, says Yury Sharanov, President of CIUS. EU sugar prices have more or less doubled over the last couple years.

The current unbalanced EU sugar market does not warrant limiting duty-free sugar imports from Ukraine — especially not to the extent proposed by the AGRI Committee. Slashing imports from Ukraine will pose challenges to food production, employment, and the broader economy in both the EU and Ukraine.

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 AGRI committee recommendations would cut them to 40 000 tonnes. The Commission’s proposal would cut them to 140 000 tonnes.

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](#)) - and all this during the period in which the EU was benefiting from much needed imports from Ukraine.

We ask members of the INTA Committee, to consider the position of European sugar users when voting on March 7th.

***AIBI** is the International Association of large plant bakers. Through its Member Associations, it represents over 500 bakers from industrial / multinational companies to those operating centralized/regional workshops, in the European Union and Ukraine, producing over 35 Mio tpa of bread/bakery products. Their wide diversity of products include bread, specialty bread, fine bakery and pastries, which are delivered in finished, bake-off and frozen form. AIBI is the interface between its members and the institutional and non-institutional stakeholders at EU and international level.*

***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)*

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