



Council of the
European Union

042245/EU XXV.GP
Eingelangt am 16/10/14

EN

12853/14

(OR. en)

PRESSE 456
PR CO 44

PRESS RELEASE

Extraordinary Council meeting

Agriculture and Fisheries

Brussels, 5 September 2014

President **Maurizio MARTINA**
Minister for Agricultural, Food and Forestry Policy

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Main results of the Council

Russian ban on EU products

Ministers debated today the impact and implications of the Russian ban on imports of EU agricultural products in place since 6 August this year.

Emergency market measures on fruit and vegetables and the milk sector have already been decided by the Commission. Most of the member states recognised the appropriateness of this support, while many called for the scope of the measures to be extended and the tools used to be diversified. Well targeted compensation measures for certain of the most affected producers were requested. Furthermore, the debate in the Council focused on medium and long term measures such as seeking new markets for EU products.

The Italian Minister for Agricultural, Food and Forestry Policy and president of the Council, Maurizio Martina said: "During this extraordinary meeting, ministers have confirmed the need for a coordinated, unanimous reply and with solidarity at EU level to tackle the negative effects linked to the Russian ban on EU agricultural products. A positive evaluation of the measures taken by the Commission has been confirmed, although we have stressed the need to continuously monitor the market evolution and to prepare every further and concrete tool for intervention towards the producers which have been penalised by the ban."

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- Where declarations, conclusions or resolutions have been formally adopted by the Council, this is indicated in the heading for the item concerned and the text is placed between quotation marks.
- Documents for which references are given in the text are available on the Council's Internet site (<http://www.consilium.europa.eu>).
- Acts adopted with statements for the Council minutes which may be released to the public are indicated by an asterisk; these statements are available on the Council's Internet site or may be obtained from the Press Office.

PARTICIPANTS

Belgium:

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Denmark:

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Estonia:

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Slovakia:

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Minister for Agriculture and Rural Development

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Sweden:

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State Secretary, Ministry of Rural Affairs

United Kingdom:

Ms Elizabeth TRUSS

Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

Ms Michelle O' NEILL

Minister for Agriculture and Rural Development

Mr Richard LOCHHEAD

Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and the Environment

Ms Rebecca EVANS

Deputy Minister for Agriculture and Fisheries

Commission:

Mr Dacian CIOLOȘ

Member

ITEMS DEBATED

Russian ban on EU products

Ministers debated today the impact and implications of the Russian ban on imports of EU agricultural products in place since early August this year.

The Council confirmed the need for an EU-wide, joint response to tackle the negative effects linked to the Russian ban on EU agricultural products.

Most of the member states recognised the appropriateness of the emergency market support measures decided by the Commission for fruit and vegetables and for the milk sector. However, many called for more to be done by extending the scope of those measures and diversifying the tools used. Ministers agreed that in this context, developments in the affected sectors should be closely monitored in light of possible further interventions on those markets. In addition, well-targeted compensation measures for certain of the most affected producers were requested.

The debate in the Council also focused on medium and long-term measures. Many delegations supported the increase in the promotion budget proposed by the Commission in the context of seeking new export markets for EU products. Several member states were in favour of strengthening the existing schemes to distribute fruit and vegetable and milk in school. The distribution of food products to the most deprived persons was also an option discussed in the Council. Other measures, such as export refunds, an increase of the intervention prices and the adjustment of the milk fat correction coefficients, were also discussed.

Several Council members, noting that this crisis was due to reasons not directly linked to the agricultural markets called for new resources to be made available for farmers in addition to those agreed under the agricultural budget. Others, however, stressed the need to respect the budgetary ceiling.

Some delegations also mentioned that Russia's import ban had repercussions on fisheries, in particular on the pelagic industries. The Commission said it was assessing how best to react to the temporary unavailability of this market.

Background

By decree of its President dated 6 August 2014 (No 560) "On the application of certain special economic measures to ensure the security of the Russian Federation", the Russian Federation banned, for a period of one year, imports of a number of agricultural products, raw materials and foodstuffs originating in the United States, countries of the European Union, Canada, Australia and the Kingdom of Norway, as a countermeasure to sanctions imposed on Russia because of the situation in Ukraine.

The ban covers a list of specific products over several sectors:

- Fruit and vegetables, except prepared products.
- Dairy products: milk, dairy products (notably cheese, skimmed-milk powder, butter, whey powder, fresh products, whole-milk powder, condensed milk), and some food preparations containing milk components.
- Meat: meat of bovine animals, swine and poultry (whether fresh, chilled or frozen), as well as meat salted, in brine, dried or smoked, sausages and similar products.

Exceptions are introduced for goods intended for baby food, certain animal products (fat, meat offal) and live animals, as well as preparations in the fruit and vegetables sector (such as fruit juices, canned fruit or prepared vegetables). Since 20 August, lactose-free milk and milk products, seed potatoes, onion sets, hybrid sweet corn and nutritional supplements have also been removed from the ban.

On 15 August 2014, an extraordinary meeting of the Foreign Affairs Council discussed the situation in Ukraine and regretted the Russian Federation's announcement of measures targeting imports of certain agricultural products originating in the EU. It also confirmed the intention of the Italian Presidency to convene an extraordinary meeting of the Agriculture and Fisheries Council to assess the impact of those measures and the appropriate response.

Following the implementation of the ban, the Commission convened different meetings of the Management Committee to discuss the market situation for products affected by the Russian ban. In the light of those discussions, the Commission decided on 18 August to trigger Common Agriculture Policy (CAP) emergency measures to reduce the overall supply of a number of perishable fruit and vegetables products on the European market (market withdrawals, compensation for non-harvesting and green harvesting). These measures will apply until the end of November with an expected budget of EUR 125 million (the products concerned are the following: tomatoes, carrots, white cabbage, peppers, cauliflowers, cucumbers, and gherkins, mushrooms, apples, pear, red fruits, table grapes and kiwis). Emergency support measures for peaches and nectarines had already been announced on 11 August (EUR 29.7 million for withdrawals and €3 million for promotion). Emergency market support measures for certain dairy products have also been decided. As far as the dairy sector is concerned, on 28 August, the Commission announced that it would open private storage aid for butter, skimmed milk powder (SMP) and certain cheeses. The Commission also confirmed that the period for public intervention of butter and SMP would be extended until the end of the year. Finally, on 3 September, the Commission confirmed its intention to provide an additional EUR 30 million of EU funding for CAP promotion programmes starting in 2015, on top of the EUR 60 million that is provided annually in the CAP budget.

On 30 August 2014, the European Council welcomed the exceptional measures taken by the Commission and invited the Commission to monitor the situation and to consider adopting any further measures, as appropriate.

OTHER ITEMS APPROVED**DECISIONS TAKEN BY WRITTEN PROCEDURE****Energy**

On 30 July 2014, the Council established the EU position with a view to the Ministerial Council of the [Energy Community](#) due to take place in Kiev, Ukraine, on 23 September 2014.

Public access to Council documents

On 28 July 2014, the Council approved the replies to the following confirmatory applications:

- 17/c/01/14: Denmark, Estonia, Lithuania, Slovenia, Finland and Sweden voted against the draft reply and made statements ([11045/14](#)). Hungary voted in favour and made a statement ([11045/14](#)). Italy abstained from voting.
- 19/c/01/14, 20/c/02/14, 21/c/01/14, 22/c/02/14, 23/c/03/14, 24/c/01/14 and 25/c/02/14: all delegations voted in favour of the draft replies ([11386/14](#), [11410/14](#), [11544/14](#), [11549/14](#), [11563/14](#), [11629/14](#) and [11657/14](#), respectively).

Appointments: European Economic and Social Committee - Committee of the Regions

On 30 July 2014, the Council appointed Mr Raymond COUMONT (Belgium) ([11832/14](#)) and Mr Peter SCHMIDT (Germany) ([11837/14](#)) as members of the European Economic and Social Committee for the remainder of the current term of office, which runs until 20 September 2015.

On 30 July 2014, the Council appointed Mr Karl-Heinz LAMBERTZ (Belgium) ([11884/14](#));

Mr Valter FLEGO and Mr Željko TURK (Croatia) ([11900/14](#)); Mr Jess V. LAURSEN (Denmark) ([11918/14](#)); Ms Maria BYRNE, Mr Eamon DOOLEY, Ms Mary FREEHILL and Mr Neale RICHMOND (Ireland) ([11988/14](#)) and Mr Ignazio MARINO, Ms Micaela FANELLI and Mr Roberto PELLA (Italy) ([11991/14](#)), as members of the Committee of the Regions for the remainder of the current term of office, which runs until 25 January 2015.