

EP approves suspending duties on Ukrainian exports of agricultural products

For another year

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USPA NEWS - European Parliament gave its green light to suspending EU import duties on Ukrainian exports of agricultural products for another year to support the country's economy. Also the Parliament decided on Tuesday to urgently deal with a draft bill to increase European production of ammunition and missiles.

MEPs approved on Tuesday, by 537 votes, with 42 against and 38 abstentions, a proposal to renew the suspension of import duties, anti-dumping duties and safeguards on Ukrainian exports to the European Union for another year, against the background of Russia's war of aggression that is hampering Ukraine's ability to trade with the rest of the world. The suspension of tariffs applies to fruits and vegetables subject to the entry price system, as well as agricultural products and processed agricultural products subject to tariff-rate quotas. Industrial products are subject to zero duties since January 1, 2023, under the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement, so they are not included in the new proposal.

"I strongly support renewing the trade-liberalization measures that currently help ensure Ukrainian trade can continue amidst the brutal war caused by Russia. These measures are pivotal to strengthening Ukraine's resilience, as we work to advance Ukraine's gradual integration into the EU internal market. Our solidarity with Ukraine is consistent, transparent, and rock-solid, and it has been further reinforced by Ukraine's EU candidate status. Ukraine's future is in the European Union," said rapporteur Sandra Kalniete (EPP, LV).

Relations between the EU and Ukraine are regulated by an Association Agreement. The Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area included in the agreement has ensured preferential access to the EU market for Ukrainian businesses since 2016. According to the Commission, the EU is Ukraine's largest trading partner, accounting for 39.5% of its trade in 2021. Ukraine is the EU's 15th biggest trading partner, accounting for around 1.2% of the EU's total trade.

Ammunition and missiles

Also MEPs agreed with 518 votes in favor to 59 against and 31 abstentions to trigger the urgent procedure to swiftly proceed with the legislative proposal on the Act in Support of Ammunition Production (ASAP), tabled by the European Commission on May 3. Parliament will appoint a negotiating team and proceed with the plenary vote on the bill during the next plenary session, to be held on May 31-June 1 in Brussels. MEPs will then start negotiations with Council, with the aim of reaching a political agreement, which MEPs would then vote on in plenary in July. MEPs held a debate with Commissioner Breton on the draft legislation on Monday.

The Act in Support of Ammunition Production (ASAP) aims to urgently deliver ammunition and missiles to Ukraine and to help member states refill their stocks. By introducing targeted measures including €500 million in financing, the Act aims to ramp up the EU's production capacity and address the current shortage of ammunition, missiles and their components.

In parallel, MEPs are working on European Defense Industrial Reinforcement through the common Procurement Act (EDIRPA), to support collaboration between member states in the procurement phase to fill the most urgent and critical gaps.

Article online:

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Editorial program service of General News Agency:

United Press Association, Inc.
3651 Lindell Road, Suite D168
Las Vegas, NV 89103, USA
(702) 943.0321 Local
(702) 943.0233 Facsimile
info@unitedpressassociation.org
info@gna24.com
www.gna24.com