



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR TRADE AND ECONOMIC SECURITY

The Director-General

Brussels
TRADE/SW/PG Ares (2026) 643382

Dear Petitioners,

Thank you for sharing your Petition on the EU-Mercosur Agreement.

I recognize the significance of the turnout in Athlone, where over 30,000 individuals expressed their concerns about potential impacts on public health and agriculture. Their engagement and active involvement underscore a strong interest in dialogue, which the Commission is committed to addressing with due diligence.

The EU-Mercosur Agreement represents a significant milestone in enhancing trade relations between Europe and South America. By facilitating trade and investment, the agreement is poised to create new economic opportunities, granting EU businesses and farmers access to one of the largest markets worldwide. This opens avenues for increased export potential and supports job growth within the Union. Specifically, Irish firms and small businesses will find it much easier to do business in Mercosur countries, making it simpler and cheaper to offer their services. The agreement will eliminate tariffs on 91% of all products, benefiting virtually all Irish exports, including machinery, chemicals, and pharmaceuticals. Irish producers and farmers can increase their exports, particularly in the agri-food sector, where tariffs of up to 55% currently hinder market access. With the removal of these tariffs, Irish products can sell at premium prices in Mercosur, further boosting the Irish economy. Furthermore, the protection of distinctive Irish food and drink products, such as Irish Cream and Irish Whiskey, from imitation in Mercosur countries will help sell more at higher prices.

At the same time, we are providing all the necessary guarantees to protect Irish farmers and producers, ensuring their interests are safeguarded against market disturbances. Measures include carefully calibrated quotas on imports, unprecedented safeguards to protect against sudden import surges, and substantial support in the unlikely event of market disruption.

Regarding public health, allow me to reassure you that the Commission is determined to continue upholding the existing stringent sanitary and phytosanitary standards. All agricultural imports, including meat, must comply with EU standards to ensure the health and safety of all EU citizens. The EU's framework includes rigorous import controls and audits, with stringent measures in place to guarantee that any food products entering the

market are fully compliant. The EU-Mercosur Agreement does not modify nor weaken in any way the EU standards and regulations.

Commissioner Oliver Várhelyi recently announced further and enhanced controls on food, animal, and plant products entering the EU. These measures are designed to strengthen controls at EU borders and in third countries, ensuring EU citizens continue to benefit from the highest levels of food safety, while EU producers enjoy a level playing field with their global competitors.

Moreover, the Commission recently announced that it would conduct impact assessments on a stronger alignment of the EU's production standards concerning the most hazardous pesticides with the requirements applicable to imported products. The Joint Research Centre has launched a study on the matter. This study will provide the basis for a thorough evaluation of the potential impacts of closer alignment of standards.

Regarding agricultural and employment concerns, the EU-Mercosur Agreement includes safeguards for sensitive agricultural sectors. Calibrated quotas limit the imports of sensitive products, and a safeguard mechanism allows for swift action if import volumes increase or prices drop, causing harm to EU producers. The Bilateral Safeguards Regulation specifically designed for the EU-Mercosur Agreement ensures the fastest procedures ever for launching investigations and permits the temporary suspension of tariff preferences when necessary. It includes an indicative threshold to trigger investigations with a 5% change in import prices or volumes, enabling quick responses to any serious injury or threat to Union industry, such as decreases in production or sales. This is designed to address concerns swiftly, ensuring any potential risks to Union industry are promptly mitigated.

The upcoming Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) also includes a crisis reserve of €6.3 billion to address market disruptions and effectively support our farmers. Furthermore, on 7 January, the EU Ministers of Agriculture met with Commissioners Hansen, Šefčovič, and Várhelyi, who strongly reaffirmed the Commission's commitment to supporting farmers and rural communities. Notably, the Commission will do this by securing CAP support and funding, with an additional €45 billion available from the start of the next MFF period. In addition, there are ongoing efforts to enhance fertilizer access and affordability through exceptional measures, including a proposed tariff suspension on key fertilizers like ammonia and urea.

The Commission is committed to maintaining an open dialogue and addressing concerns constructively as we advance the process to implement the EU-Mercosur Agreement. Citizens' concerns remain integral to such dialogue.

Yours sincerely,



Sabine WEYAND