

Press release – Parliament closes legal loophole to stop excessive Ukrainian chicken imports



In a resolution adopted by 444 votes to 128 with 74 abstentions, MEPs called on Ukraine to respect the full trade agreement for good cooperation between the EU and Ukraine. Food safety and health standards apply to all products imported to the EU, they added.

One tariff line, duties above quota

The new poultry regime will handle boneless and bony chicken breasts on a single tariff line, and will raise the amounts that Ukraine is able to export to the EU without tariffs. Once Ukrainian exporters have exhausted the duty-free quota, they will have to pay duties on additional exports to the EU.

The change to the 2016 EU-Ukraine trade deal became necessary because a Ukrainian producer exploited a loophole in the trade deal to sell more duty-free chicken breast – a product considered vital for the livelihood of EU farmers. Although the EU had import quotas in place to shield EU farmers from excess imports, chicken breast with a piece of wing bone could legally be imported to the EU without restrictions.

Rapporteur [Enikő Győri](#) (EPP, HU)

“This modification ensures that EU producers will now be protected against unlimited imports of poultry meat. In the future, Ukraine should respect the spirit of faithful cooperation with the EU, while the EU should work to exclude loopholes. I call on Ukrainian exporters to abide by the provisions of the full trade agreement, including respecting sanitary and phytosanitary rules.”

Next steps

The modified regime will enter into force after Council's approval and when Ukraine has ratified the agreement.

Background

Imports of bony chicken breast from Ukraine rose almost fifteen-fold to 55,000 tons from 2016 to 2018, and were sold significantly more cheaply than similar EU products.

Ukraine accounts for 0.9% of the EU's total trade. In 2016 and 2017, poultry meat imported from Ukraine accounted for 1.1 percent of total EU poultry imports.

[EIB Investment Report 2019: Uncertainty weighing on EU firm investment](#)



(% net balance, % of firms expecting improvement minus % expecting deterioration)

Source: EIB Investment Survey 2019

EU climate investment not on track

The EIB Investment Report shows that, although substantial progress has been made, climate action investment in the EU is not yet on track. To achieve a net zero-carbon economy by 2050, the EU must raise total investment in its energy system and related infrastructure from 2% to 3% of GDP on average.

The European Union invested EUR 158 billion in climate change mitigation in 2018. At 1.2% of GDP, this is now marginally less than the United States (1.3%) and little over a third of China's performance (3.3% of GDP).

While the United States leads in climate-related R&D spending, China has recently quadrupled its spending, overtaking the EU. Europe's weak performance in climate-related R&D is a threat to its competitiveness, given the importance that still-immature technologies will have in the transition.

Slow adoption of digital technologies

The adoption of digital technologies in Europe is slow, with a growing digital divide among firms. Digital firms tend to invest more, innovate more and grow faster, enjoying first-mover advantage. However, only 58% of firms in Europe are digital compared to 69% in the US, with a particularly strong gap in the service sector (40% vs 61%). 30% of older (more than 10 years old) smaller and medium-sized companies in Europe are persistently non-digital.

Background information

The annual EIB Investment Report

The EIB annual report on Investment and Investment Finance is a product of the EIB Economics Department, providing a comprehensive overview of the developments and drivers of investment and its finance in the European Union. It combines an analysis and understanding of key market trends – in investment, infrastructure, innovation and climate change mitigation – with a more in-depth thematic focus, which this year is devoted to business dynamism and transformation, including an analysis of the start-up and scale-up process, business productivity and polarisation, as well as skills gaps. The report draws extensively on the results of the annual EIB Investment Survey (EIBIS). It complements internal EIB analysis with contributions from leading experts in the field. [EIB Investment Report 2019/2020](#)

The EIB Economics Department

The EIB Economics Department provides economic analyses and studies to support the Bank in its operations and in the definition of its positioning, strategy and policy. The Department, a team of 40 economists, is headed by Debora Revoltella, Director of Economics.

Press release – Carbon neutrality and funds for EU programmes are EP priorities for EU summit



On Tuesday morning, MEPs discussed their priorities for the upcoming December Summit with the Finnish Council Presidency's Tytti Tuppurainen and Commission First Vice-President Frans Timmermans.

Political group leaders representing a broad majority called for immediate progress on the negotiations for the next long-term EU investment budget (Multiannual Financial Framework 2021-2027). They highlighted the need for appropriate funding and policies to ensure EU citizens' economic prosperity and global leadership on climate change, innovation (especially in "green" technology) and just transition policies. Many speakers also warned that any further delay would disrupt EU-funded programmes, which would disproportionately harm citizens, regions, cities, farmers, researchers, students, NGOs and businesses. Read more about [Parliament's position](#).

MEPs highlighted that the European Council discussion on an EU long-term climate strategy and on how to achieve climate neutrality by 2050 will take place only a few days after the 2019 UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP25). Stressing that climate change is an absolute priority, MEPs called for immediate, concrete action to be taken. Most speakers commented on the climate neutrality objectives set for 2050, with many urging for even

more ambitious targets to be set.

Other topics raised include the accession of North Macedonia and Albania, cohesion and agriculture policies, defence and security, migration, global instability, and the protection of European common values, including the rule of law.

[Opening statements](#) by Tytti Tuppurainen and Frans Timmermans.

[MEPs debate, first round](#) – to view video replays of statements by specific speakers, click on a name.

[Closing statements](#) by Tytti Tuppurainen and Frans Timmermans.

You can catch up with the full debate [here](#).

[Spain: EIB and ICO make EUR 1 billion available to small businesses to boost employment](#)



- Agreement will enable lending on favourable terms to small businesses

- **Employment impact: initiative will help safeguard 100 000 jobs**

The European Investment Bank (EIB) and the Instituto de Crédito Oficial (ICO) are making available EUR 1 billion to Spanish SMEs to finance their investments and provide them with liquidity. Specifically, the EU bank has granted a loan of EUR 500 million to ICO, which will match this with the same amount, meaning that under the agreement a total of EUR 1 billion will be channelled to small businesses via the *Líneas ICO* product. EIB Vice-President Emma Navarro and ICO Chairman José Carlos García Quevedo signed the agreement in Madrid today.

According to European Commission data, SMEs account for more than 72% of job creation in Spain. This new EIB-ICO agreement is designed to help generate and safeguard jobs in Spain by supporting firms that have problems accessing finance owing to their small size or type of business. The EIB estimates that this agreement will serve to safeguard 100 000 jobs.

Upon signing the agreement, EIB Vice-President Emma Navarro said: *“Spanish SMEs are key drivers of economic growth and employment. Ensuring that they have the necessary financial resources at all stages of their development is one of the EIB Group’s top priorities. We are very pleased with this new agreement with ICO, which will allow us to join forces to bring the advantages of EU bank financing to those Spanish firms that find it most difficult to carry out their investments, thereby boosting business competitiveness, wealth generation and job creation.”*

ICO Chairman José Carlos García de Quevedo added: *“This operation represents a further demonstration of the common objective of supporting the Spanish business fabric that unites our two institutions and will strengthen ICO’s role as the go-to institution for financing the projects of sole traders and small businesses to promote growth. It is worth pointing out that, up to November 2019, 98% of all loans granted under the *Líneas ICO* banner went to SMEs, 64% of which were microfirms with fewer than ten employees.”*

This is the ninth agreement between the EIB and ICO aimed at strengthening the job creation capacity of Spanish SMEs. According to EIB estimates, the various lines of financing for small businesses launched jointly by the two institutions have helped to safeguard around a million jobs in Spain.

[Press release – MEPs choose Wiewiórowski to be the EU’s data protection watchdog](#)



MEPs chose their order of preference of the candidates for the position of European Data Protection Supervisor (EDPS) in a secret ballot on Tuesday morning:

Wojciech Wiewiórowski from Poland was selected as the top candidate with 36 votes,

Yann Padova from France gained 25 votes and

Endre Szabó from Hungary obtained 3 votes.

Yesterday, the Civil Liberties Committee quizzed the three candidates in [a public hearing](#) to evaluate their suitability for the post. More information about the hearing and the EDPS candidates' answers to written questions posed by the Civil Liberties Committee are available [here](#).

Next steps

The European Data Protection Supervisor will be jointly appointed by common accord of the European Parliament and the Council for a term of five years.

The Civil Liberties Committee Chair will convey the outcome of the Civil Liberties Committee vote to the Conference of Presidents (EP President and the leaders of the political groups). Following their confirmation, the Parliament and the Council will proceed to formally appoint the new European Data Protection Supervisor.

Background information on the European Data Protection Supervisor

[The European Data Protection Supervisor](#) is the EU's independent data protection authority. It supervises how the EU institutions and bodies process personal data to ensure compliance with privacy rules and advises them on all aspects of personal data processing and related policies and legislation. The EDPS also works with the national authorities of EU countries to ensure consistency in data protection.