

Trade with Australia and New Zealand: negotiating directives made public

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On 25 June, the Council decided to publish the mandates given to the Commission on 22 May to negotiate trade agreements with Australia and New Zealand.

Trade agreements with both countries would aim primarily at **further reducing existing barriers to trade**, removing custom duties on goods, and giving better access for services and public procurement in Australia and New Zealand. The sectors likely to benefit the most from the FTAs are **motor equipment, machinery, chemicals, processed foods and services**.

The negotiating directives are particularly concerned to **protect vulnerable sectors such as agriculture** by maximising the benefits of market opening without harming local producers. The mandates do not envisage full liberalisation of trade in agricultural products, which are foreseen as benefiting from specific treatment.

The mandates also provide for a comprehensive and modern framework, based on the **highest standards of labour, safety, environment, climate and consumer protection**.

The Commission officially launched the trade negotiations with Australia and New Zealand, respectively on 18 and 21 June. A first round of talks is expected to take place in the course of July.

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