

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-000961/26
to the Commission
Daniel Buda (PPE)
(9 March 2026)**

Subject: Need to stimulate internal sugar beet production

The price offered to sugar beet growers has decreased by 30% over the previous year, reflecting global market pressure. This decrease follows the record price levels recorded in the 2023-2024 season, when EU sugar production fell by around 1 million tonnes ⁽¹⁾.

In an attempt to boost internal production, the Commission has decided to suspend the inward processing mechanism, which temporarily abolishes duty-free imports from third countries of sugar for processing and subsequent export outside the EU.

1. Does the Commission think that limiting these imports will be enough to reduce pressure on the market and stabilise the EU sugar sector, while at the same time increasing the use of sugar produced in the EU?
2. Since 2017, 17 sugar factories have closed down in the EU ⁽²⁾. What measures is the Commission considering to incentivise and support sugar producers in the short, medium and long term?
3. Romania, for example, produces only 25% of its domestic consumption, due to the imbalance between production costs and the low sales price for sugar beet ⁽³⁾. How will greater attractiveness of sugar beet growers' incomes be ensured under the National and Regional Partnership Plans?

Submitted: 9.3.2026

**Answer given by Mr Hansen on behalf of the European Commission
(8 May 2026)**

1. The suspension of inward processing would address a short-term market disturbance. The Commission is assessing whether further action may be warranted to address potential structural challenges in the sugar sector. The Commission is conducting a 'health check' of the key markets, including sugar, which will inform these reflections.
2. Since the end of the quota regime in 2017, the sector has adjusted to a more market-oriented organisation by improving competitiveness and better aligning supply to demand. Without jeopardising the market-oriented nature of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), where necessary to respond to market disturbances or imbalances, the Commission may adopt appropriate measures within the framework of the common market Organisation. To address other challenges, such as high production costs, the EU offers investment and coupled income support, which may be included in Member States' CAP Strategic Plans to support sugar and sugar beet producers.
3. Under the future Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) 2027-2034, the proposed national and regional partnership (NRP) plans will continue to offer Member States the opportunity to support farmers depending on regional and national needs. Existing CAP policy instruments, such as income support, are maintained in the Commission proposal. In addition, the CAP and NRP Regulation proposals provide a complementary set of tools to alleviate pressure and reducing risk in farm operations. The EU facility under the NRP fund also provides a Unity Safety Net intended to help farmers cope with the impact of market disturbances.

¹ <https://agrointel.ro/346380/ue-suspenda-importul-de-zahar-fara-taxa-vamale>.

² <https://agrobiznes.ro/59583-cefs-17-fabrici-de-zahar-s-au-inchis-in-uniunea-europeana-din-2017/>.

³ <https://revista-ferma.ro/productia-de-zahar-in-declin-romania-mai-produce-doar-25-din-cat-consuma-restul-vine-din-import/>.