

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-001286/26
to the Commission
Andi Cristea (S&D)
(26 March 2026)**

Subject: Safeguard activation thresholds for highly sensitive products under the GSP revision

The ongoing revision of the EU's generalised scheme of preferences (GSP) proposes lowering safeguard activation thresholds for highly sensitive products. While this is a step forward, concerns remain that the lower thresholds may still fail to prevent sudden, disruptive import surges in particularly vulnerable sectors such as poultry meat.

Recent developments, including increased imports from Ukraine, have shown how rapidly trade flows can shift and potentially disrupt the EU market. While support for Ukraine remains essential, these imports have intensified pressure on EU producers, who must comply with strict animal welfare, environmental and food safety standards.

This is particularly relevant for Member States with significant poultry production, including Romania, where the sector contributes to rural employment and economic stability.

In this context:

1. Has the Commission assessed whether the use of an activation threshold is sufficient to prevent serious market disturbances in the poultry meat sector?
2. Has it evaluated the economic and social impact of such thresholds, including on Member States with significant poultry production, such as Romania?
3. Would it consider introducing lower thresholds or additional safeguards for products proven vulnerable to import surges, such as poultry meat?

Submitted: 26.3.2026

**Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the European Commission
(13 May 2026)**

The co-legislators agreed on the political elements of the new Generalised Scheme of Preferences (GSP) in December 2025 ⁽¹⁾. The negotiations on the Commission legislative proposal of 2021 ⁽²⁾ lasted more than four years, during which the co-legislators never tabled the possible introduction of automatic safeguards for the poultry meat sector.

However, once the new GSP rules are in place, the EU agricultural sector, including the poultry meat sector, will have more tools to protect its interests in the GSP context, in recognition of its sensitivity and importance: (i) poultry is defined as a sensitive product, without tariff preferences for all standard GSP and GSP+ beneficiaries; (ii) there will be three safeguard mechanisms (general safeguards, special safeguards and the new special surveillance) which apply also to the poultry sector.

The Commission systematically treats poultry meat as a sensitive product in trade negotiations with third countries. Currently, poultry imports under GSP are negligible, and the sector is covered by three GSP safeguard mechanisms. All these measures allow the EU to counter potential threats to domestic markets.

Moreover, poultry meat may only be imported into the EU from third countries listed by the Commission. These lists ensure compliance with, among others, EU public health standards.

Food businesses, both in the EU and in approved third countries, must guarantee compliance with food hygiene rules ⁽³⁾ to ensure food safety and protect consumers.

⁽¹⁾ GSP Review: <https://gsphub.eu/about-gsp/gsp-review>.

⁽²⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=COM:2021:0579:FIN>.

⁽³⁾ Regulation (EC) No 853/2004: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32004R0852>; Regulation (EC) No 853/2004: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32004R0853>.