

Agriculture ministers fail to adopt new sugar regime

In short:

Agriculture ministers have failed to agree on the proposed reform of the EU sugar sector. The timetable and the stages proposed for reducing the intervention price are among the main sticking points.

Brief news:

EU agriculture ministers have failed to adopt the proposed reform of the sugar sector as presented on 14 July by Agriculture Commissioner Franz Fischler (see [EurActiv](#), 15 July 2004).

Meeting in Brussels on 19 July, the ministers largely acknowledged the need for a reform but they failed to agree on the schedule proposed by commissioner Fischler. The levels and the stages proposed for reducing the intervention price for sugar as well as the minimum price of beet were among the main sticking points. Concerns were also raised about the proposed reform of the quota system and the transfer of quotas between Member States. Several ministers also raised the issue of the compensation level for price cuts by the introduction of payments decoupled from the level of production.

The ministers asked a special committee of agricultural experts to conduct a thorough examination of all the issues and to report back to them at a later stage. A meeting with representatives of ACP countries on the impact of the reform may also be organised in the future.

Links:

Official documents:

- Council: [2599th Council Meeting, Agriculture and Fisheries, Provisional version](#) (19 July 2004)
- Commission Communication: [accomplishing a sustainable agricultural model for Europe through the reformed CAP – sugar sector reform](#), COM(2004) 499final (14 July 2004)
- Commission press release: [Sugar: Commission proposes more market-, consumer- and trade-friendly regime](#) [FR] [DE] (14 July 2004)
- Commission Memo: [EU sugar sector: Facts and figures](#) (14 July 2004)
- Commission: [Speech by Dr. Franz Fischler on the reform of the sugar sector](#) [FR] [DE] (14 July 2004)
- Commission/DG Agriculture: [Reforming the European Union's sugar policy - Summary of impact assessment work](#), SEC(2003)
- Commission/DG Agriculture: [Common organisation of the sugar market - Description](#) [FR]
- Commission/DG Agriculture: [Sugar: International analysis - Production structures within the EU](#) (22 Sept. 2003)
- Commission/DG Agriculture: [Statistics on sugar \(year 2003\)](#)

EU Actors' positions:

- Comité européen des fabricants de sucre (CEFS): [First reaction of CEFS to the Commission Communication on the COM in sugar reform](#) (14 July 2004)
- Comité européen des fabricants de sucre (CEFS): [CEFS communiqué on the sugar reform](#) (11 June 2004)
- Committee of Industrial Users of Sugar (CIUS): Press release: [European Sugar Users encouraged by Commission Communication on Reform of the EU Sugar Regime](#) (14 July 2004)
- Committee of Industrial Users of Sugar (CIUS): [Reform of the EU sugar regime](#) (Dec. 2003)
- BEUC Press release: [Sugar reform](#) [FR] (14 July 2004)
- Ofam-WWF press release: [WWF and Oxfam: European Commission's sugar plan will not end destructive regime](#) (14 July 2004)
- Oxfam-WWF briefing: [European sugar reform: what when and why it matters](#) (July 2004)
- Oxfam international: [Dumping on the world - How EU sugar policies hurt poor countries](#) (March 2004)
- Greens/EFA: [EU sugar market reform not going far enough say Greens](#) (29 June 2004)
- Deutscher Bauerverband (DBV): [Existenzgefährdende Vorschläge der EU-Kommission zur Zuckermarktordnung](#) (14 July 2004)
- COPA-COGECA press release: [COPA and COGECA call upon Commissioner Fischler to remain on the offensive in the WTO negotiations](#) (9 July 2004)
- CAOBISCO: press release: [Reform of EU sugar regime: CAOBISCO welcomes first steps by European Commission](#) (25 Sept. 2003)

