

**Question for written answer E-009578/2016
to the Commission**
Rule 130
Nicola Caputo (S&D)

Subject: Sugar refining sector post-quota

The current European sugar-beet quota regime is due to be abolished in October 2017. Yet European cane sugar refineries will continue to struggle with artificially high raw material prices, under a policy which imposes high taxes on imports and limits the sources of raw cane sugar. Access to raw materials at fair and competitive prices is essential to ensure the viability of the sector and establish fair competition on the market.

In addition, the survival of refineries is essential for consumer protection, keeping food product prices in check, and ensuring consumer choice and market supply. Furthermore, around 5 000 jobs have been created in the sector Europe-wide. By way of an example, SRB S.p.A., the only refiner in Italy, has created around 200 jobs, both directly and indirectly, in an area where unemployment is particularly high.

What steps has the Commission taken:

- to ensure that the cane sugar refining sector in Italy and across Europe will not suffer as a result of the abolition of sugar-beet quotas after 2017;
- to protect consumers and the jobs created by the sugar refining sector?