

**Question for written answer E-007726/2017
to the Commission**
Rule 130
Francisco Assis (S&D)

Subject: European offer on beef in the negotiations on the EU-Mercosur agreement

It has recently been reported that the sticking point hindering the conclusion of the association agreement between the EU and Mercosur is the percentage of beef produced in the South American bloc that can benefit from reduced tariffs. As I indicated in my recent letter to Commissioner Phil Hogan, I believe that it would be incomprehensible if the EU failed to conclude such a significant, wished-for but long-delayed association agreement owing to resistance to accommodating a request by Mercosur that corresponds to little more than 1% of the total volume of beef produced in the European bloc.

News from the most recent negotiating round shows that the EU did not improve its offer on beef, as Mercosur had been expecting. It should be pointed out that this offer has already been reduced several times from the figure discussed in 2004.

Is the Commission prepared to improve its proposal on beef?

Which will the Commission put first in the next stage of the negotiating process: the interest of the European Union as a whole, or the sectoral interests of some Member States?