OPINION

of the Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development

for the Committee on International Trade


Rapporteur: Laurențiu Rebega
SHORT JUSTIFICATION

Amending Council Regulation (EC) No 55/2008 which introduces new three tariff quotas with exemption of duties for fresh apples, fresh table grapes and fresh plums, is a support measure for the Republic of Moldova in its difficult social and financial context.

We support the Commission’s proposal because:

- the financial impact on the Union market is very limited compared to the benefits that this exemption could bring its financial recovery;
- it will support the actual reform process in agriculture in Republic of Moldova that is trying to approach European standards increasingly more;
- it improves trade relations between the Union and the Republic of Moldova.

We appreciate that the quantities that will be subject to preferential arrangement trade will not create an additional pressure to similar products on the Union market.

For example, for fresh grapes, the data from customs authority indicate that only 575 tonnes (32 trucks) were exported to Romania. Similar for plums and apples, from the existing preferential quota only 650 tons of plums (36 trucks) and 59 tons of apples (3 trucks) were exported to Romania. Moreover, the total use of these quotas is not expected to increase in the next period.

Given also that we refer to fresh fruit, these products cannot be transported over long distances. Relatively small distances allow a flow of fresh merchandise on the market in the short and very short term. The products from Moldova will arrive in neighbouring countries, and not on the most important fresh-fruit producing countries markets which were directly affected by the Russian embargo.

We are aware of the situation of the Union producers of fruits and vegetables, but by accepting this amendment, which will have a minimal impact on the Union's own resources we prove that the Union is able to maintain its commitments to the Republic of Moldova. Even if the context of the Union market of fruits and vegetables is changed, the Union will help Moldovan farmers.

This change will also have a social impact, especially for Moldovan producers who cultivate these products in small and medium family farms and which are more affected from a while by the national economic situation. These farmers, thanks to changes that we support, will be able to keep their jobs and provide the necessary financial resources in agriculture business for the following year.

The Union market acceptance of this proposal amending Regulation (EC) No 55/2008 allows in the future, also the creation of new trade opportunities with Republic of Moldova for other community products.

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The Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development calls on the Committee on International Trade, as the committee responsible, to propose that Parliament adopts its position at first reading taking over the Commission proposal.
## PROCEDURE

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Autonomous trade preferences for the Republic of Moldova</th>
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<tr>
<td>Committee responsible</td>
<td>INTA 15.9.2014</td>
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<tr>
<td>Opinion by</td>
<td>AGRI 15.9.2014</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rapporteur</td>
<td>Laurențiu Rebega 6.10.2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date adopted</td>
<td>3.12.2014</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| Result of final vote | +: 35  
  −: 5  
  0: 2 |
| Members present for the final vote | John Stuart Agnew, Clara Eugenia Aguilera García, Eric Andrieu, Richard Ashworth, José Bové, Paul Brannen, Daniel Buda, Nicola Caputo, Viorica Dăncilă, Michel Dantin, Paolo De Castro, Albert Deß, Diane Dodds, Herbert Dorfmann, Norbert Erdös, Edouard Ferrand, Beata Gosiewska, Martin Häusling, Anja Hazekamp, Esther Herranz Garcia, Jan Huitema, Peter Jahr, Jarosław Kalinowski, Elisabeth Köstinger, Zbigniew Kuźmiuk, Mairead McGuinness, Giulia Moi, Ulrike Müller, James Nicholson, Maria Noichl, Marit Paulsen, Laurențiu Rebega, Jens Rohde, Bronis Ropé, Jordi Sebastià, Lidia Senra Rodríguez, Czesław Adam Siekierski, Marc Tarabella, Marco Zullo |
| Substitutes present for the final vote | Gianluca Buonanno, Norbert Lins, Sofia Ribeiro, Annie Schreijer-Pierik |