



Attn: Commissioner Maroš Šefčovič
European Commission
Rue de la Loi 200
1049 Brussels, Belgium

Brussels, 9 February 2026

Dear Commissioner Šefčovič,

Re: Request for the exclusion of sugar from the EU-Australia FTA

On behalf of **CEFS** and **CIBE**, representing European sugar manufacturers and beet growers, and with the support of the **ACP/LDC Sugarcane Industries Group**, we are writing to express our profound concern regarding the ongoing FTA negotiations with Australia. Given the saturation of the European market and the crisis facing our growers and processors, we urge the Commission to **exclude sugar from the scope of these negotiations**.

Currently, the EU provides duty-free or low-duty access for approximately 1.6 million tonnes of sugar annually, equivalent to 12% of our total consumption. This volume is the cumulative result of an expansive trade agenda that includes duty-free access for Central America, Ukraine, and Andean countries, among others. Such a trade policy, which consists in granting additional import TRQs, is increasingly inconsistent with the Commission's own analyses of the EU sugar market¹. With the further addition of duty-free quotas for Brazil under the EU-Mercosur agreement, our domestic market is facing an unsustainable structural surplus.

Introducing Australian sugar into this environment would compromise the viability of our sector, which is already under immense pressure to adjust to a structural decreasing domestic demand. With EU white sugar prices down 40% in two years, five EU sugar factories have closed their doors in the last year alone. The announcement last week of a further closure in your homeland² underscores the urgency of this crisis. The fate of two additional factories also remains uncertain in the short-term and further factories are at risk on the medium-term.

¹ EC (2025), EU agricultural outlook, 2025-2035

² "Strategic transformation: Nordzucker ends sugar production in Slovakia", 5 February 2026
<https://www.nordzucker.com/en/news/strategic-transformation-nordzucker-ends-sugar-production-in-slovakia/>



Given these circumstances, we urge the Commission to take a decisive stand for European agriculture by excluding sugar from the negotiations with Australia or in any subsequent trade negotiation with other sugar-producing countries. We must protect the viability of sugar beet cultivation and the tens of thousands of jobs that depend on a stable, domestic sugar sector.

Kind regards,

[E-SIGNED]

Marie-Christine Ribera

Director General, CEFS

[E-SIGNED]

Elisabeth Lacoste

Director, CIBE

[E-SIGNED]

Julian Price

Executive Director,
ACP/LDC Sugarcane
Industries Group