Council of the European Union
General Secretariat

PUBLIC

Interinstitutional files:
2021/0297 (COD)

Brussels, 14 October 2025

WK 13647/2025 INIT

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WORKING DOCUMENT

From:	Presidency
To:	Trade Policy Committee (Generalised System of Preferences)
Subject:	Review of the GSP Regulation - Presidency Paper on Options for an Automatic TRQ Mechanism to Protect EU Rice Farmers

Options on an automatic TRQ Mechanism to Protect EU Rice Farmers

(GSP trilogue negotiations)

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Latest developments

On 2nd of October 2025, we had an interinstitutional technical meeting ("ITM") with the European Parliament.

We moved forward on many aspects but have determined that more time is needed at technical level before going to Coreper and also before having a final political trilogue.

In terms of the outstanding issues on rice, the Danish Presidency emphasised that we do not yet have a clear mandate from Council on rice and that it would be a big compromise for the Council to agree to something that is automatic, rice-specific and targets LDCs.

It is our assessment that the European Parliament were inclined to accept several aspects of our presidency proposal as set out in WK 12313/25 with the following parameters:

- a threshold/TRQ based on a three-year average,
- a de minimis provision set at 6% of total EU imports of rice, and
- the duration of the safeguard whereby MFN duties would be applied until the end of the year when the safeguard measure is triggered and a TRQ would be applied for the one calendar year following.

However, we could not agree on determining the percentage of the surge required to trigger the safeguard mechanism, the baseline import volume, or how often the thresholds should be adapted to reflect changes to market conditions. The European Parliament proposed a surge of 20% and a review of the volume and the surge every five years regardless of market developments (i.e., once in the lifetime of the GSP Regulation). The Danish Presidency Proposal suggested the possibility of a review as often as necessary according to changes in the market conditions and assumed a high enough surge above the standard year on year change.

Different options were suggested by both parties and we have tried to detail them below. The objective would be to use the Working Party of 15 October 2025 to go through these options and ask delegations to signal their preferred option or any potential red lines[1].

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Option 1

The Danish Presidency Proposal with:

- an initial threshold that is calculated on the basis of a three-year average (2022-2024) and also includes a high surge (in the range of 30-55 percent), aiming to ensure that the

[1] For definitions of concepts such as surge, threshold etc. – please refer to WK 11561/2025 INIT

instrument is only triggered in exceptional circumstances while preserving historical volumes of imports.

- A general review clause to allow the Commission **when it judged it appropriate** to update the threshold/TRQ for each beneficiary (based on the 3-year average) and the surge figure.

Option 2

- During the ITM on 2 October, the European Parliament developed an option based on the Danish Presidency Proposal (WK 12313/25), accepting volumes based on a three-year average, but proposing a low import surge of 20 percent.
- The value of the import volume and surge could be reviewed only after five years, hence without the possibility to react to e.g., market developments or other major events.

Option 3

- Developing the EP proposal during the ITM of 2 October (Option 2) with the inclusion of a price indicator to account for the low surge number.
- If we include a price indicator, both the surge and the price indicator would have to be met in order to trigger the TRQ.
- This option was suggested by the Commission during the ITM on 2 October in order to increase the legal soundness of the instrument and to ensure it is triggered in exceptional circumstances.

Option 4

The Danish Presidency Proposal with:

- The import value as a rolling average calculated on the basis of the last three available calendar years.
- The average calculated for the first time when the new regulation enters into force (approx. January 2027) and updated regularly by the Commission (i.e., every year, every two years or every three years as in the product graduation).
- Since fluctuations in the market are partly reflected in the rolling average, the surge value could possibly be closer to the EP proposal (a surge figure of 20% at least - depending on what is negotiable with the Parliament).
- A review clause similar to the Danish Presidency Proposal (WK 12313/25) that would empower the Commission to amend the surge level, taking into account significant developments in the rice market, including import levels to the EU, or relevant changes related to the beneficiary countries.

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