

Sugar sector: Council agrees on the reimbursement of excess levies between 1999 and 2001

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On 19 February 2018 the Council decided on a recalculation of the sugar production levies for the years 1999/2000 and 2000/2001. The objective of the adopted regulation is to comply with a judgment of the European Court of Justice (ECJ) from February 2017, which ruled that the production levies for the sugar sector between 1999 and 2001 had been wrongly calculated, resulting in sugar producers being over-charged.

I am pleased to announce that today's decision enables us to put right the wrongs of the past and ensure that those sugar producers who were over-charged are fully refunded.

Rumen Porodzanov, Minister of agriculture, food and forestry of the Republic of Bulgaria and President of the Council

In order to comply with the ECJ judgment, the regulation adopted by the Council provides for sugar producers and beet growers to be reimbursed for the excess sums unduly paid between 1999 and 2001.

The overall impact to the EU budget has been calculated at €195.3 million, out of which €93.1 million for the levies and €102.2 million for the estimated interest costs.

The common market organisation (CMO) in the sugar sector was set up in 1968 with the aim of ensuring a fair income for EU producers and self supply of the EU market, and since then it has been periodically reviewed. In order to support European growers and processors, the sugar sector was originally subject to price support and production quotas, that were ended on 30 September 2017.

Sugar levies were inherently linked to the sugar quota regime. Under the CMO rules, producers overshooting their quota had to pay a surplus levy on such quantities. These levies were then paid into the EU budget.

The adopted regulation will enter into force on the day following its

publication and shall apply from:

- 13 October 2000, as regards the 1999/2000 marketing year
- 12 October 2001, as regards the 2000/2001 marketing year

[Visit the meeting page](#) [Download as pdf](#)

Change of EUIPO bank account

February 17, 2018 [About the EUIPO](#)

Change of EUIPO bank account

As from 17 February 2018, one of the two bank accounts used by EUIPO to which users may transfer fees, current account replenishments and charges will change.

On that date the BBVA bank account previously used by the Office will be replaced by one with Banco Santander.



This change does not affect the bank account held by the Office at CaixaBank, which remains unchanged.

Therefore, as from 17 February 2018, the two bank accounts in use for the payment of fees, charges and current account replenishments at EUIPO are:

BANK	LOGO	ADDRESS	BANK ACCOUNT (IBAN)	BIC
CaixaBank		Alicante (Spain)	ES03 2100 2353 0107 0000 0888	CAIXESBBXXX
Banco Santander		Alicante (Spain)	ES08 0049 6659 0121 1622 4792	BSCHEMMXXX

EUIPO's online e-filing application has already been fully updated with the details of the new bank account number.

What happens when I pay by bank transfer?

As and from 17 February 2018, users will see the following message in the e-filing system:

Payment

Secure payment

Purchase information

Total 850.00 €

Payment description	Amount
EFEM201800001625950	850.00 €


Credit/debit card payment (CC)

Bank transfer (BT)


EUIPO current account (CA)

You are required to make a transaction for 850.00 € to one of the following EUIPO bank accounts\:

Bank	Account number	Address	BIC code	IBAN
La Caixa	2100-2353-01-0700000888	Alicante (Spain)	CAIXESBBXXX	ES03 2100 2353 0107 0000 0888
Santander	0049-6659-01-2116224792	Alicante (Spain)	BSCHEMMXXX	ES08 0049 6659 0121 1622 4792



ATTENTION - CHANGE OF BANK ACCOUNTS
For more information consult the Office's Webpage <https://euiipo.europa.eu/ohimportal>



YES, I commit to:

- pay the amount mentioned under the "fees" section by a bank transfer that I will order immediately after submitting this application.

I understand that:

- it is recommended to submit a separate bank transfer for each trade mark application.
- I will indicate the Payment Transaction Code in the transfer: **183TTTW0**
- A payment confirmation copy does NOT need to be sent to the Office.
- My bank may charge me for this service, if so I will include this fee when making the payment.

Cancel

Confirm payment

The previous bank account, operated by BBVA, has been removed from the options list. Users should choose one of the two account options shown.

Does the way I top up my current account with the Office change?

Yes; you will no longer be able to use the BBVA account after 17 February

2018 when topping up your current account. You should use either the Banco Santander or the Caixabank account.

I have already paid my fee via the BBVA account – what do I do?

Any transfer to the BBVA account before the changeover date of 17 February 2018 will be processed as before.

After the changeover date of 17 February 2018, users are asked to use either the Banco Santander or the CaixaBank account when paying via bank transfer. The Office will temporarily continue to accept transfers sent to the BBVA account for a period of several weeks after 17 February 2018, to allow for a smooth transition.

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fast track

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Main topics and media events 19 February – 4 March 2018

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Overview of the main subjects to be discussed at meetings of the Council of the EU over the next two weeks.

Agriculture and Fisheries Council, 19 February 2018

The Council will have exchanges of views on “The Future of Food and Farming” and the revision of the EU bioeconomy strategy, and will be informed about the EU protein plan.

Economic and Financial Affairs council, 20 February 2018

The Council will discuss sustainable finance, issues related to the EU budget and the role of public procurement in investment and innovation.

Informal meeting of the 27 heads of state or government, 23 February 2018

On 23 February EU leaders will meet informally in Brussels under the Leaders’ Agenda to discuss institutional issues and the political priorities for the next multiannual financial framework.

Foreign Affairs Council, 26 February 2018

The Council will debate and adopt conclusions on the Republic of Moldova. Foreign ministers will discuss Venezuela, review prospects for the Middle East Peace Process, and prepare for a lunch with representatives of the League of Arab States (LAS). The lunch will be an opportunity to discuss how to pursue further options aimed at achieving a two-state solution jointly with the LAS.

General Affairs Council, 27 February 2018

The Council will begin preparations of the March European Council. The

Commission will present its reasoned proposal under Article 7(1)TEU regarding the rule of law in Poland.

General Affairs (Art. 50) Council, 27 February 2018

The Council, in EU27 format, will be informed by the Commission's chief negotiator Michel Barnier about the state of play of the Brexit negotiations with the UK, and will consider a draft annotated agenda for the next European Council (Article 50).

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Gli insegnamenti tratti dall'austerità rendono obbligatorio un cambiamento di politica

The EESC presents measures to avoid the severity of austerity in the future and to mitigate the negative effects of previous crisis management

Future crisis management should strive for a better balance between fiscal and social objectives to avoid adverse effects on the economic capacities, labour markets and social protection systems of the countries concerned. Instead of restrictive austerity, the EU institutions should in future crisis situations implement policies in pursuit of economic cooperation, growth and solidarity.

These objectives should be anchored in the treaties of the European Union, urges the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) in its own-initiative opinion on [Lessons learned for avoiding the severity of austerity policies in the EU](#), which was presented and adopted at the EESC plenary session on Wednesday.

Future crisis management must be more sustainable and in line with EU objectives

"In future, the EU institutions should be solely responsible for developing and implementing the necessary adjustment programmes in the EU, even if partnerships with external institutions are established", said rapporteur **José Leirião** (Various Interests). "This is of utmost importance as they have to be in line with our common values and objectives and avoid the inconsistencies and shortcomings that have arisen in the past."

By taking over the leadership of future adjustment programmes, the EU institutions should ensure that the social partners and representatives of civil society are involved on an equal footing with the EU institutions, the

European Central Bank and other bodies in the setting-up, periodic monitoring and assessment of these programmes.

The EESC opinion makes further proposals to improve EU crisis management. It suggests to the European Commission that the following be created:

- a European Credit Rating Agency;
- an independent international body to evaluate the credibility and impartiality of the adequacy evaluations conducted.

Based on the experience of the most recent crisis, the Committee welcomes the aims of the Commission to reform the euro in key aspects by abandoning austerity policies and deepening the Economic and Monetary Union (EMU). The EESC considers that a reformed and completed EMU will make the EU more resistant to asymmetric shocks and help prevent future crises.

Negative effects of austerity must be offset to prevent future crises

The EESC urges the Commission to design **supplementary programmes for the economic and social recovery** of countries which were/are subject to austerity. These programmes should be applied at the same time as, or at the end of, an adjustment programme. The European Commission should also develop a European strategy to eradicate poverty.

Although the impact of austerity measures differs between countries, dramatic consequences for cohesion and inclusion policies have arisen all too often, causing amongst other things negative GDP growth, increasing unemployment and public deficits, and decreasing public investment and social protection.

The rapporteur, **José Leirião**, suggested the setting up of: “specific funds for job creation in sectors such as science, engineering and health which have been hit hard by the brain drain. We believe that these funds could help encourage migrants to return and build up their country’s competitiveness”.

In view of current and upcoming labour market challenges, the EESC believes that the Commission should propose measures to tackle, on an EU level and in line with the European Pillar of Social Rights, the increase in poverty and to preserve social protection. Member States should consider introducing a common *universal, basic unemployment insurance scheme* and a *minimum living income*.

Finally, the Committee calls on the Commission to follow up on the conclusions of the High Level Group on the mutualisation of debt and euro debt securities.

Background:

The opinion is based on fact-finding missions to Portugal, Greece and Ireland, which gathered in-depth, first-hand information about local experience of crisis management and adjustment programmes and their impact, while it also builds on the conclusions of a public hearing involving the European Commission, the European Central Bank, the International Monetary Fund and representatives of civil society organisations. The programmes have

led to severe socio-economic problems in these countries and have affected the poorest people the most, reducing their access to the basic necessities. The statistical data and reports of the missions can be found in the [Committee's opinion](#).