

ECONOMIC BULLETIN Q1 2026

Slight increase in production and turnover; decline in exports and imports

Food and drink industry

Slight increase in production and turnover

- In Q1 2026, EU food and drink industry's production increased by 1.1% compared to the previous quarter.
- EU food and drink industry turnover increased by 0.1% compared to the previous quarter.
- The year-on-year comparison shows a decline in total manufacturing production and an increase in food and drink industry production (-0.9% and 0.5% respectively), compared to Q1 2025. Turnover shows a decrease both in total manufacturing and in the food and drink industry, with -1.2% and -0.6% respectively, compared to Q1 2025.

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Employment up in food, down in drink and total manufacturing

- In Q1 2026, employment levels increased in the food industry (0.5%) while they declined in the drink industry (-0.7%) and in total manufacturing (-0.6%).
- Year-on-year, employment levels show an increase in both the food and drink industry (1.5% and 0.7% respectively) whereas they decreased in total manufacturing (-1.1%).

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Mixed confidence picture across food, drink and total manufacturing

- Compared to the previous quarter, confidence in the drink industry registered an increase in Q2 2026 (+3.5 points), whereas confidence in the food industry and in total manufacturing showed a moderate decline (-1.9 points and -0.2 points respectively).

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EU exports and imports decline year-on-year

- EU exports of food and drinks totalled €45.6 billion in Q1 2026 (Q1 2026/Q1 2025: -4.3%).
- The trade balance reached a surplus of €18.1 billion (Q1 2026/Q1 2025: -5.5%).

- The top 5 product categories by export value generated €22.5 billion in Q1 2026 (meat products, dairy products, other food products n.e.c. category, cocoa, chocolate and sugar confectionery, and processed and preserved fruit and vegetables).
- EU imports of food and drinks reached €27.5 billion (Q1 2026/Q1 2025: -3.5%).

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Agricultural commodities

Mostly downward year-on-year trends in agricultural commodity prices

- The FAO food price index increased by 0.6% in Q1 2026 compared to the previous quarter but was 0.1% lower than in Q1 2025.
- The year-on-year comparison shows a decline in most EU and world market agricultural commodity prices, with oils and oilseeds being the only commodities recording an upward trend.

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Retail

Mixed retail trade picture for foodstuffs

- Retail trade in foodstuffs slightly declined (-0.1%), while total retail trade increased in Q1 2026 (0.1%).
- The year-on-year comparison shows an increase of both retail trade in foodstuffs and total retail trade (0.9% and 2% respectively).

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Focus on ...

Latest Input Cost Bulletin

- Provides detailed information on cost pressures affecting energy, transport costs, packaging, processing machinery, labour, agricultural raw materials, animal feed and fertilisers.

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Methodology

- Except for imports and exports data which represent the evolution of the current quarter compared to the same quarter of the previous year, all other evolutions are primarily represented with respect to the previous quarter.
- EU refers to EU27 (excluding the UK) in the text, unless otherwise specified.
- The EU food and drink industry is identified by NACE Rev.2 codes C10 (manufacture of food products) and C11 (manufacture of beverages).

Sources

European Commission, Eurostat data and indices (production, turnover, retail trade, employment, prices)

<http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/home>

European Commission, Eurostat statistics explained

http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Main_Page

European Commission, Eurostat Easy Comext Trade Data (based on division 10 & 11 of the NACE Rev.2 classification), CPA 2.1

<https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/comext/newxtweb/>

European Commission, DG ECFIN business survey data

https://ec.europa.eu/info/business-economy-euro/indicators-statistics/economic-databases/business-and-consumer-surveys_en

FAO Food Price Index

<http://www.fao.org/worldfoodsituation/foodpricesindex/en/>

European Commission, DG Agriculture and Rural Development (DG AGRI)

<https://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/>

European Commission, DG Agriculture and Rural Development (DG AGRI), Agri-food data portal, Monthly market prices

<https://agridata.ec.europa.eu/extensions/DashboardPrice/DashboardMarketPrices.html>

European Commission, Eurostat News Release, 'Volume of retail trade down by 0.4% in the euro area and by 0.5% in the EU', 4 June 2026

<https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/en/web/products-euro-indicators/w/4-04062026-ap>

About the quarterly economic bulletin

FoodDrinkEurope's Economic Bulletin is published on a quarterly basis. It covers a set of key indicators which highlight the major economic trends in the European food and drink industry: production, turnover, employment, external trade, key raw material prices, and retail trade.

For more information on FoodDrinkEurope and its activities, please visit: www.fooddrink europe.eu

ECONOMIC BULLETIN Q1 2026

Annex

Production and turnover of the EU food and drink industry

Production index (2021=100)

	2025 Q1	2025 Q2	2025 Q3	2025 Q4	2026 Q1	y-o-y
Total manufacturing	101.1	100.9	101	101.2	100.2	
% change	2	-0.2	0.1	0.2	-1	-0.9
Food and drink industry	103	102.8	102.5	102.4	103.5	
% change	0.9	-0.2	-0.3	-0.1	1.1	0.5

Source: Eurostat

The industrial production index (also called industrial output index or industrial volume index) measures the changes in the price-adjusted output of industry.

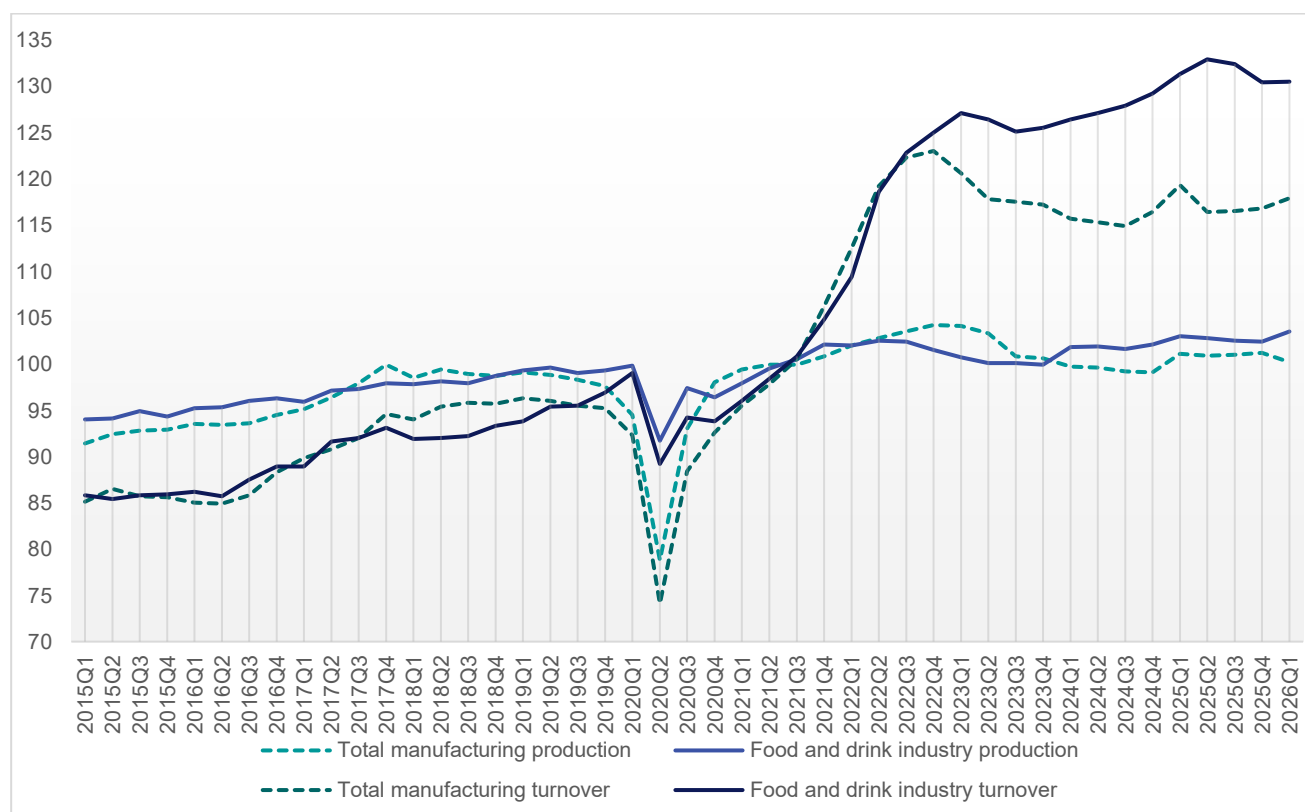
Turnover index (2021=100)

	2025 Q1	2025 Q2	2025 Q3	2025 Q4	2026 Q1	y-o-y
Total manufacturing	119.3	116.4	116.5	116.8	117.9	
% change	2.5	-2.4	0.1	0.3	0.9	-1.2
Food and drink industry	131.3	132.9	132.4	130.4	130.5	
% change	1.6	1.2	-0.4	-1.5	0.1	-0.6

Source: Eurostat

The index of industrial turnover measures the development of turnover (sales) in the European industry (it is influenced by changes in prices of the traded industrial goods and by changes of the traded volumes of goods).

EU quarterly manufacturing production and turnover, 2015-2026 (2021=100)



Source: Eurostat

Food and drink production by Member State

Member State	2025 Q4 / 2025 Q3 (% change)	2026 Q1 / 2025 Q4 (% change)	2026 Q1 / 2025 Q1 (% change)
EU	-0.1	1.1	0.5
Austria	-0.3	1.8	-0.8
Belgium	0.4	2.8	8.4
Bulgaria	0.7	2.4	-1.3
Czech Republic	4.8	1	1.7
Denmark	-2.2	-0.8	-1
Finland	1.1	1.6	3.3
France	0.1	0.1	-2.1
Germany	-0.4	2.9	1.2
Greece	1.9	2.9	6.2
Hungary	1.2	-0.8	1.1
Italy	-2.4	0.7	0.1
Latvia	2.2	-2	2.6
Lithuania	0.1	5.8	4.5
Poland	2.2	-0.2	4.6
Portugal	5	-1.9	-0.2
Romania	-0.4	5.4	2.2
Spain	-1	0.4	1.1

Source: Eurostat. No data available for Croatia, Cyprus, Estonia, Ireland, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden

Food and drink turnover by Member State

Member State	2025 Q4 / 2025 Q3 (% change)	2026 Q1 / 2025 Q4 (% change)	2026 Q1 / 2025 Q1 (% change)
EU	-1.5	0.1	-0.6
Austria	-3.6	3.5	1.3
Belgium	-6.1	-1.7	-3.2
Czech Republic	2.9	-1.6	-1.5
Denmark	0	-4	-2.8
Finland	1.1	1.2	3.3
France	-0.4	0.2	0.5
Germany	-1.6	-1.2	-0.7
Greece	-1.1	1.7	3.5
Hungary	-0.6	0.7	2.4
Italy	-0.4	-0.6	-1.8
Latvia	2	-0.2	2.3
Lithuania	-0.8	7.3	3.7
Poland	-0.5	-0.7	2.3
Romania	1.5	1.5	1.1
Spain	-2.7	3	-0.5

Source: Eurostat. No data available for Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Estonia, Ireland, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden

Employment in the EU food and drink industry

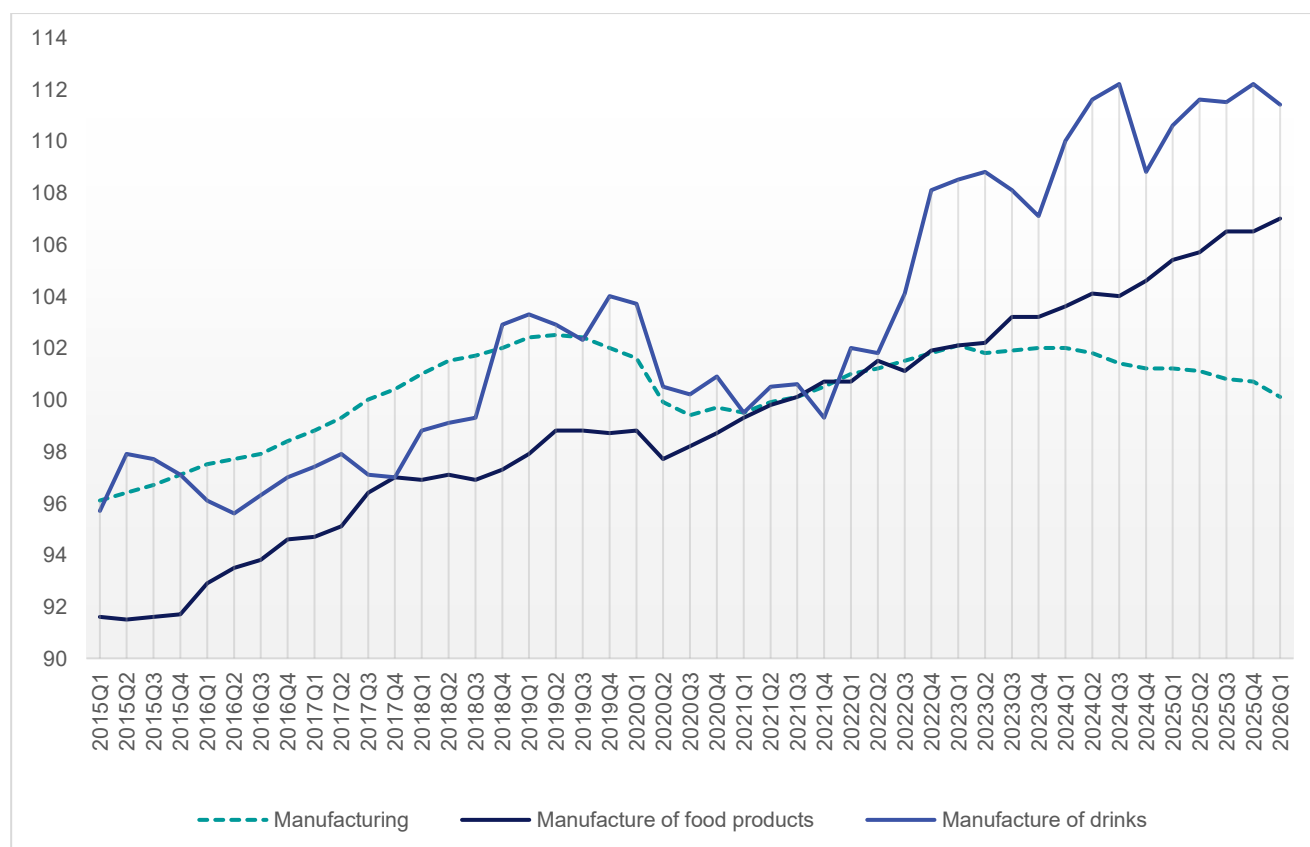
Employment index (2021=100)

Employment	2025 Q1	2025 Q2	2025 Q3	2025 Q4	2026 Q1	y-o-y
Total manufacturing	101.2	101.1	100.8	100.7	100.1	
% change	0	-0.1	-0.3	-0.1	-0.6	-1.1
Food industry	105.4	105.7	106.5	106.5	107	
% change	0.8	0.3	0.8	0	0.5	1.5
Drink industry	110.6	111.6	111.5	112.2	111.4	
% change	1.7	0.9	-0.1	0.6	-0.7	0.7

Source: Eurostat

The employment index measures the number of persons employed in the total manufacturing industry vs. the food and drink industry in the EU, seasonally adjusted.

Employment in the EU food and drink industry compared to manufacturing, 2015-2026 (2021=100)



Source: Eurostat

Food industry employment by Member State

Member State	2025 Q4 / 2025 Q3 (% change)	2026 Q1 / 2025 Q4 (% change)	2026 Q1 / 2025 Q1 (% change)
EU	0	0.5	1.6
Austria	-0.1	0	-0.7
Belgium	0.4	na	na
Croatia	0.6	-0.8	0.4
Czech Republic	0.4	0	1.8
Denmark	0.5	0.4	2.4
Finland	-8.3	0.1	-1.7
France	0.2	na	na
Germany	0.2	-0.9	-0.1
Ireland	1.1	-2.7	2.6
Italy	-0.1	0.6	1.6
Latvia	-2.5	2.6	3.6
Lithuania	0.8	0.6	1.3
Netherlands	0.3	na	na
Poland	0.2	-0.4	0.1
Portugal	0.7	0.1	2.1
Spain	-0.6	5.4	9.5
Sweden	-0.4	0.7	0.9

Source: Eurostat. No data available for Bulgaria, Cyprus, Estonia, Greece, Hungary, Luxembourg, Malta, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia

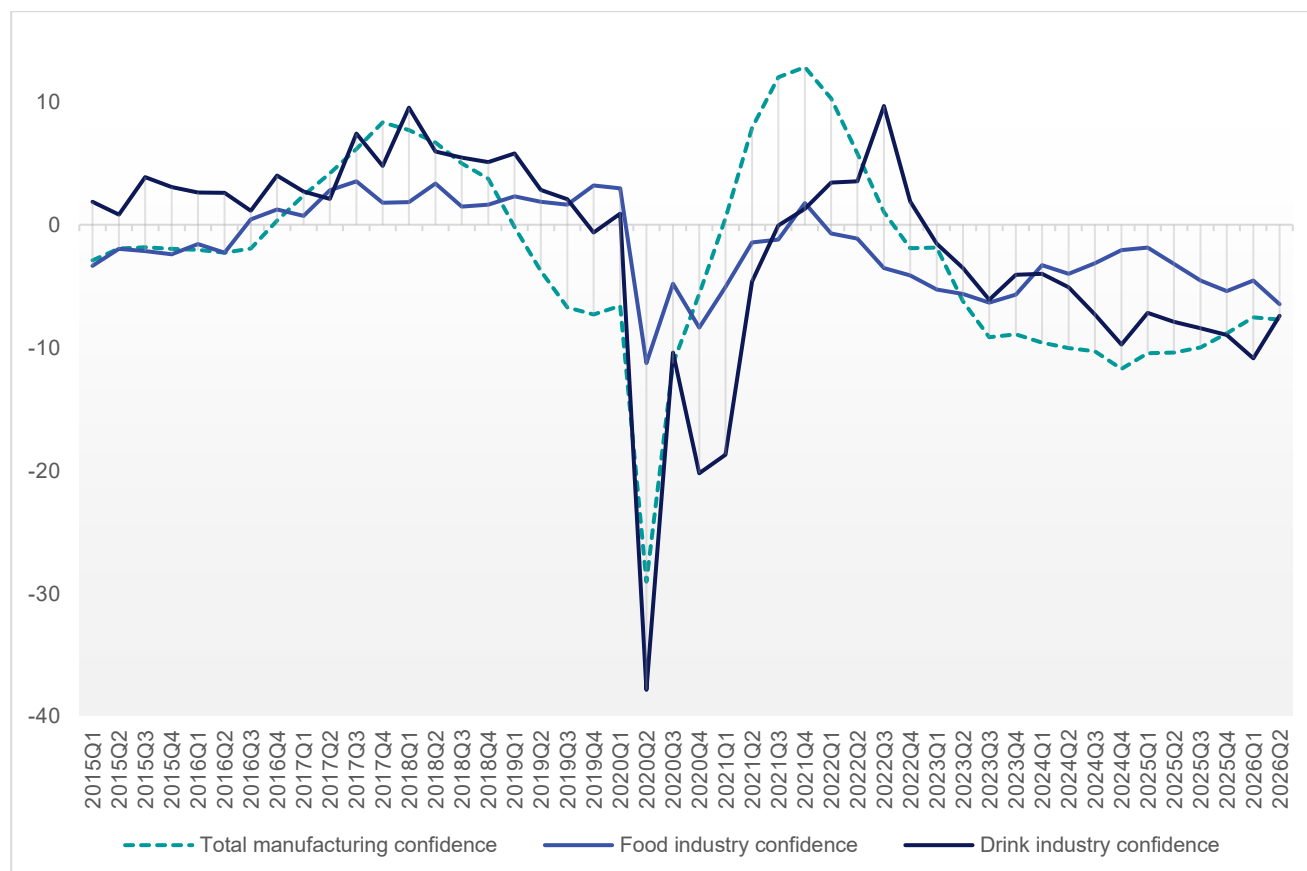
Drink industry employment by Member State

Member State	2025 Q4 / 2025 Q3 (% change)	2026 Q1 / 2025 Q4 (% change)	2026 Q1 / 2025 Q1 (% change)
EU	0.6	-0.5	0.9
Austria	-0.4	-1.6	-2.3
Belgium	-1.3	na	na
Croatia	1.6	0.5	2.7
Czech Republic	-1.4	1.8	1.2
Denmark	0.4	1.1	2.2
France	0.1	na	na
Germany	0.4	-0.4	2.2
Ireland	-3.9	-8.8	-3.2
Italy	3.3	-3.5	4.3
Latvia	-3.9	-21.1	-25.3
Lithuania	-0.5	-1.2	-3.8
Netherlands	0.3	na	na
Poland	0.8	-1.6	-0.6
Portugal	0.4	0.8	1.8
Spain	1.6	-0.2	-1.4
Sweden	-3.1	1	0.8

Source: Eurostat. No data available for Bulgaria, Cyprus, Estonia, Finland, Greece, Hungary, Luxembourg, Malta, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia

Confidence in the EU food and drink industry

EU quarterly manufacturing confidence indicators, 2015-2026



* Subsector level data (i.e. the divisions of NACE rev.2 at the 2-digit level) for the industry have not undergone a full validation process, hence their use and interpretation deserve more caution.

Source: European Commission, DG ECFIN business survey data, own calculations

The confidence indicator is a statistical indicator based on the results from business surveys interrogating enterprises on their current economic situation and their expectations about future developments. The indicator is calculated as the simple arithmetic average of the seasonally adjusted balances of positive and negative answers to specific questions, e.g. regarding economic expectations.

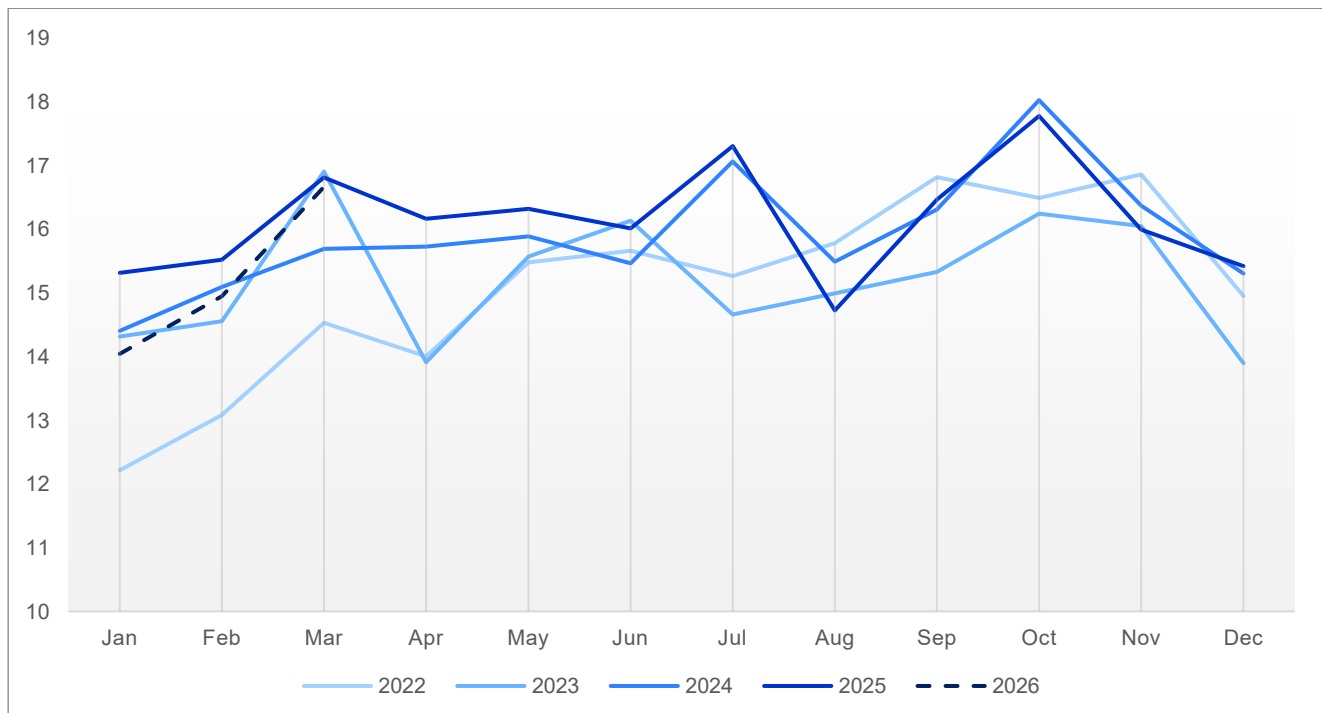
External trade

EU food and drink trade (€ billion)

	2025 Q1	2025 Q2	2025 Q3	2025 Q4	2026 Q1	y-o-y
Exports	47.7	48.4	48.5	49.2	45.6	-4.3
Imports	28.5	29	29.3	29.6	27.5	-3.5
Balance	19.2	19.4	19.3	19.6	18.1	-5.5

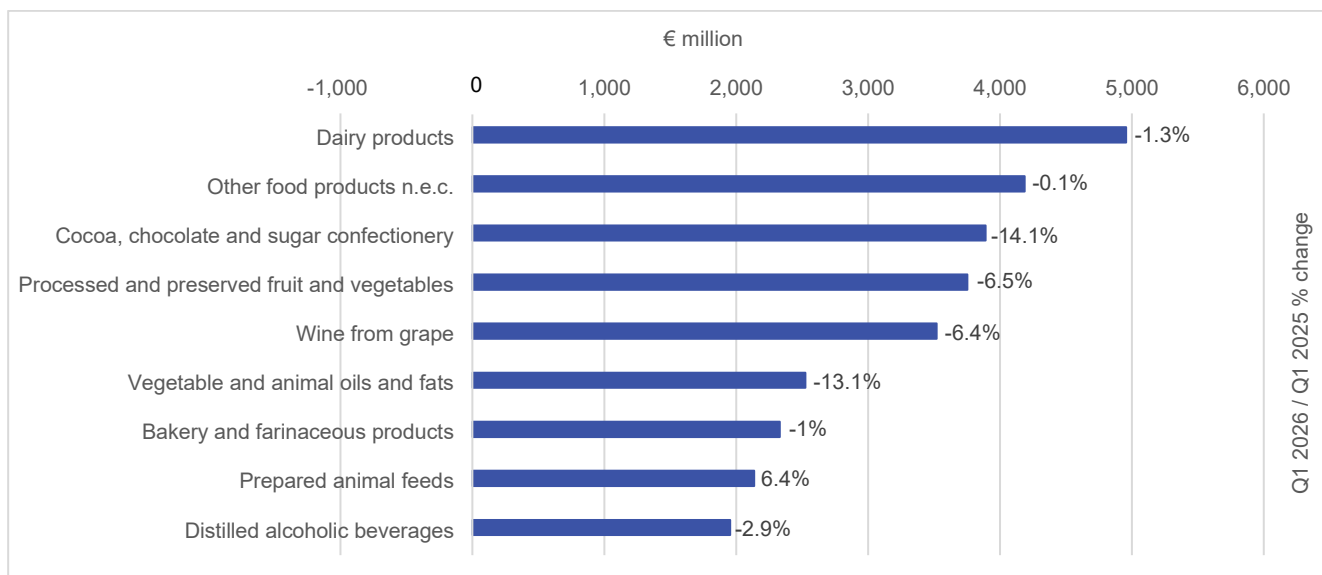
Source: Eurostat

EU food and drink exports, 2022-2026 (€ billion)



Source: Eurostat

Export performance by sector



Source: Eurostat - COMEXT, Nace Rev.2, Divisions 10 & 11

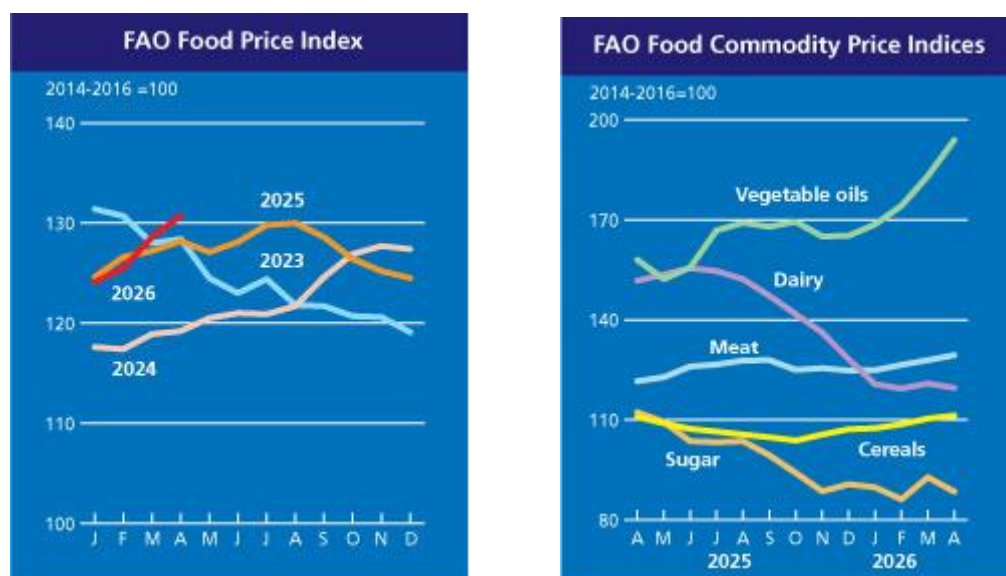
EU food and drink trade by sector

Sector / Period	Exports			Imports			Balance		
	Q1 2025	Q1 2026	change	Q1 2025	Q1 2026	change	Q1 2025	Q1 2026	change
	€ million		%	€ million		%	€ million		%
Food and drinks	47,695	45,641	-4.3%	28,538	27,538	-3.5%	19,158	18,102	-5.5%
10 Food products	38,956	37,315	-4.2%	26,620	25,634	-3.7%	12,336	11,681	-5.3%
11 Beverages	8,739	8,326	-4.7%	1,918	1,905	-0.7%	6,821	6,421	-5.9%
101 Preserved meat and meat products	5,954	5,679	-4.6%	2,328	2,594	11.4%	3,626	3,085	-14.9%
1011 Processed and preserved meat	3,566	3,365	-5.6%	1,498	1,775	18.4%	2,068	1,590	-23.1%
1012 Processed and preserved poultry meat	928	918	-1%	333	300	-10.1%	594	619	4.1%
1013 Meat and poultry meat products	1,460	1,395	-4.4%	496	520	4.7%	964	876	-9.1%
102 Processed and preserved fish, crustaceans and molluscs	1,513	1,571	3.8%	5,661	5,479	-3.2%	-4,148	-3,909	-5.8%
103 Processed and preserved fruit and vegetables	4,011	3,752	-6.5%	4,844	4,771	-1.5%	-832	-1,018	22.4%
1031 Processed and preserved potatoes	1,081	899	-16.8%	47	45	-5.9%	1,034	855	-17.3%
1032 Fruit and vegetable juices	564	531	-5.8%	707	694	-2%	-144	-163	13.1%
1039 Other processed and preserved fruit and vegetables	2,367	2,322	-1.9%	4,089	4,033	-1.4%	-1,722	-1,710	-0.7%
104 Vegetable and animal oils and fats	2,903	2,524	-13.1%	5,036	4,788	-4.9%	-2,132	-2,264	6.2%
1041 Oils and fats	2,668	2,277	-14.6%	4,940	4,724	-4.4%	-2,272	-2,447	7.7%
1042 Margarine and similar edible fats	236	247	4.8%	96	64	-33.2%	140	183	30.7%
105 Dairy products	5,023	4,956	-1.3%	719	633	-12%	4,304	4,323	0.4%
1051 Dairy and cheese products	4,735	4,650	-1.8%	659	567	-14%	4,076	4,083	0.2%
1052 Ice cream	288	306	6.2%	60	66	10.8%	228	240	5%
106 Grain mill products, starches and starch products	1,674	1,550	-7.4%	945	816	-13.6%	729	734	0.7%
1061 Grain mill products	904	849	-6%	792	665	-16%	112	184	64.1%
1062 Starches and starch products	771	701	-9%	154	151	-1.6%	617	550	-10.8%
107 Bakery and farinaceous products	2,344	2,330	-0.6%	508	482	-5.1%	1,836	1,848	0.7%
1071 Bread; fresh pastry goods and cakes	670	684	2%	163	159	-3%	507	525	3.6%
1072 Rusks and biscuits; preserved pastry goods and cakes	1,187	1,180	-0.6%	295	279	-5.4%	892	901	1%
1073 Macaroni, noodles, couscous and similar farinaceous products	486	466	-4.1%	49	44	-10.2%	437	422	-3.4%
108 Other food products	13,431	12,723	-5.3%	5,857	5,413	-7.6%	7,574	7,309	-3.5%
1081 Sugar	380	306	-19.7%	252	286	13.3%	128	20	-84.4%
1082 Cocoa, chocolate and sugar confectionery	4,528	3,890	-14.1%	2,644	2,176	-17.7%	1,884	1,714	-9.0%
1083 Processed tea and coffee	1,250	1,339	7.1%	771	794	3.1%	479	544	13.6%
1084 Condiments and seasonings	1,004	999	-0.5%	438	417	-4.9%	565	582	2.9%
1085 Prepared meals and dishes	766	748	-2.4%	360	335	-6.9%	406	413	1.7%
1086 Homogenised food preparations and dietetic food	1,308	1,253	-4.2%	16	13	-20.1%	1,292	1,241	-4%
1089 Other food products n.e.c.	4,194	4,188	-0.1%	1,375	1,391	1.2%	2,820	2,797	-0.8%
109 Prepared animal feeds	2,009	2,138	6.4%	717	652	-9%	1,292	1,486	15.0%
1091 Prepared feeds for farm animals	1,013	1,059	4.5%	281	255	-9.3%	732	804	9.8%
1092 Prepared pet foods	996	1,079	8.4%	435	397	-8.9%	560	682	21.8%
110 Beverages	8,738	8,326	-4.7%	1,918	1,903	-0.7%	6,820	6,423	-5.8%
1101 Distilled alcoholic beverages	2,011	1,953	-2.9%	994	995	0.1%	1,017	959	-5.8%
1102 Wine from grape	3,763	3,520	-6.4%	319	307	-3.7%	3,444	3,213	-6.7%
1103 Cider and other fruit wines	116	100	-13.2%	14	13	-7%	102	87	-14.1%
1104 Other non-distilled fermented beverages	58	56	-3.5%	1	2	70%	56	53	-5.2%
1105 Beer	823	745	-9.4%	153	157	2.8%	669	588	-12.2%
1106 Malt	345	306	-11.1%	7	6	-19.3%	338	301	-10.9%
1107 Soft drinks; mineral waters and other bottled waters	1,624	1,645	1.3%	429	423	-1.4%	1,194	1,222	2.3%

Source: Eurostat - COMEXT, Nace Rev.2, Divisions 10 & 11

Prices of agricultural commodities

FAO Food Price Index



Source: FAO Food Price Index

Main agricultural commodity prices

Agricultural commodity	EU			WORLD		
	Q1 2026 average	Q1 2026/ Q4 2025	Q1 2026/ Q1 2025	Q1 2026 average	Q1 2026/ Q4 2025	Q1 2026/ Q1 2025
	EUR/T	% change	% change	EUR/T	% change	% change
CEREALS						
Maize	204	0	7.7	177	2.2	-14.1
Soft wheat	200	0.7	-12.1	197	5.5	-12.2
DAIRY						
SMP	2,313	9.3	-8.8	2,471	11.9	-10.5
WMP	3,203	-4.5	-26.4	2,988	-0.6	-21.9
SUGAR						
White sugar	515	-1.9	-6.4	355	-3.7	-29.1
				USD/T	% change	% change
OILS AND OIL CROPS						
Soybean oil				1,310	16.4	25.6
Soybean				452	5.2	10.8
Soybean meal				393	1.2	7.8
Rapeseed				578	4.3	5.9
Rape oil				1272	0.7	11.5
Palm oil				1,051	5	-1.6
COFFEE AND COCOA						
Cocoa				3,934	-32	-58.7
Coffee				6,159	-12.8	-17.2

Sources: World prices: FAO (cereals and oils), CIAL (dairy), USDA (sugar), ICCO (cocoa), ICO (coffee), World Bank (oils); EU prices: DG AGRI; own calculations

Retail trade

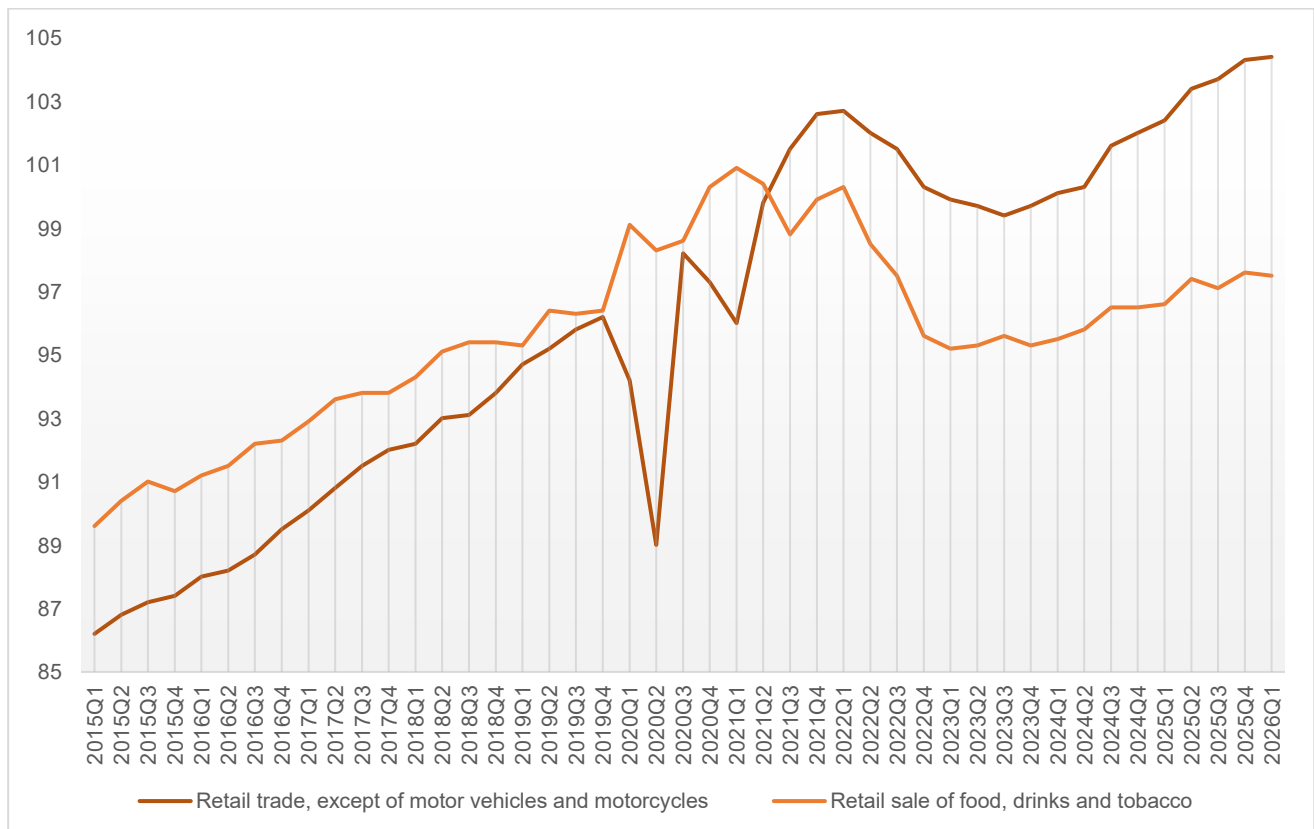
Retail sales index (2021=100)

	2025 Q1	2025 Q2	2025 Q3	2025 Q4	2026 Q1	y-o-y
Total retail trade	102.4	103.4	103.7	104.3	104.4	
% change	0.4	1	0.3	0.6	0.1	2
Food, drinks and tobacco	96.6	97.4	97.1	97.6	97.5	
% change	0.1	0.8	-0.3	0.5	-0.1	0.9

Source: Eurostat

The index of the volume of retail trade measures the evolution of the turnover in retail trade, adjusted for price changes (deflated), i.e. the evolution of the total amount of goods sold, based on data adjusted for calendar and seasonal effects.

EU turnover in retail trade by economic activity, 2015-2026 (2021=100)



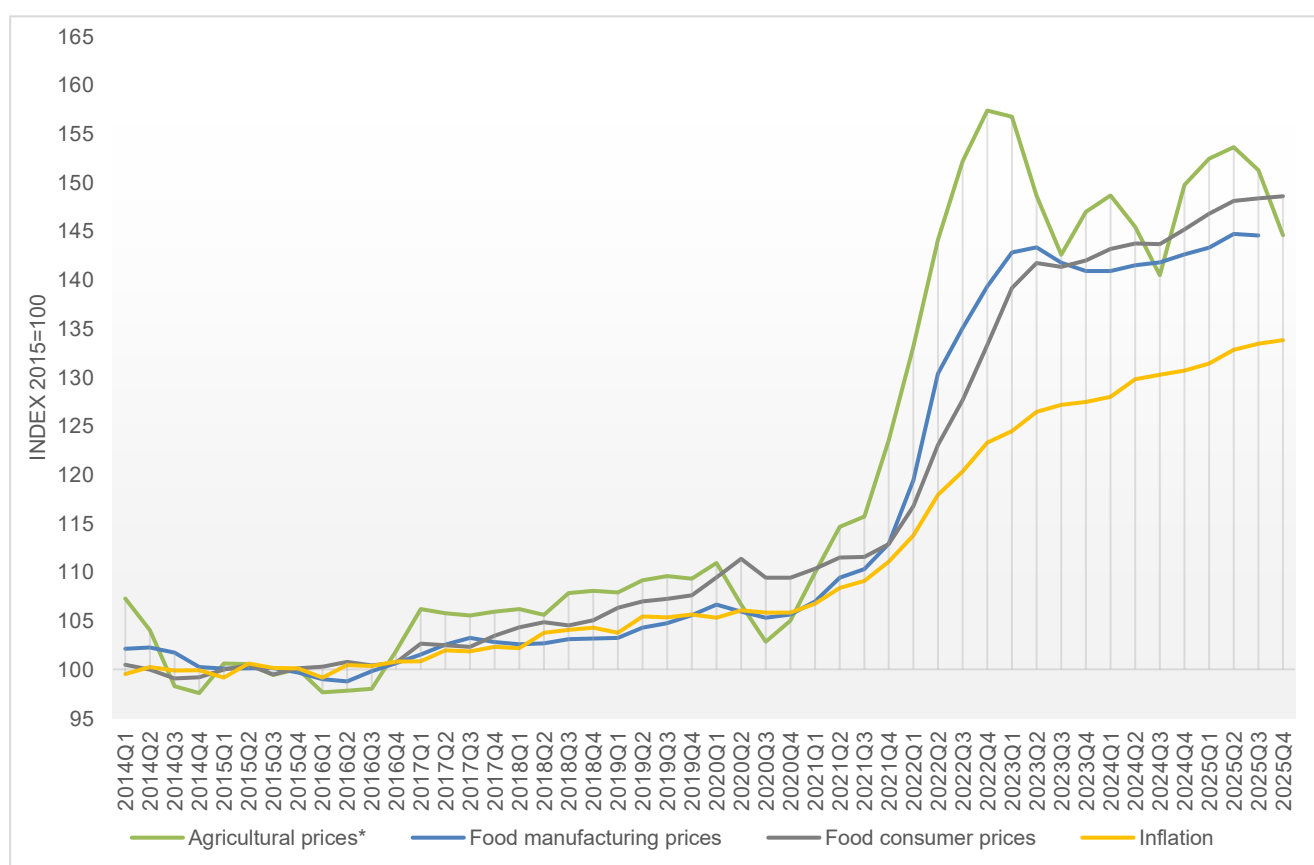
Source: Eurostat

Price developments along the EU food chain

Data availability: The table and chart below show the latest available figures. More recent data cannot currently be retrieved from the European Commission's data source. The Commission is working on a technical solution to restore access, but the timing of its deployment has not yet been confirmed.

Price developments (% change)

	2024Q4	2025Q1	2025Q2	2025Q3	2025Q4	y-o-y
Agricultural prices*	6.6	1.8	0.8	-1.5	-4.4	-3.4
Food manufacturing prices	0.6	0.5	1	-0.1	na	na
Food consumer prices	1	1.1	0.9	0.2	0.1	2.4
Inflation	0.3	0.6	1.1	0.5	0.3	2.4



* The European Statistics Office Eurostat computes these indices since 2015 on the basis of a weighted basket taking the 12 months of the 2015 as a basis. Historic farmer prices for the period 2007-2014 were estimated by experts at DG AGRI.

Sources: Eurostat and DG Agriculture and Rural Development; own calculations

Focus on ...



July 2026

INPUT COST BULLETIN Q1 2026

Food and drink producer prices, consumer prices and inflation

- In March 2026, EU food and drink producer prices decreased by 1.5% compared to March 2025.
- Consumer food prices increased by 2.1% over the same period.
- Inflation was up by 2.8% in March 2026 compared to March 2025.

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Energy prices

Crude oil and natural gas

- In March 2026, average crude oil prices were up 39% compared to March 2025.
- EU natural gas prices were up 35% compared to March 2025.

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Transport costs

Global shipping and air freight

- The world container freight rate index decreased by 8.7% between March 2025 and March 2026.
- Air freight rates increased by 2% compared to March 2025.

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Packaging

Wood and paper

- In March 2026, the producer price index of wooden containers increased by 4% compared with March 2025.
- Producer price indices of pulp, paper and paperboard decreased by 6% compared to March 2025.

Plastics and metal

- The producer price index of plastic packing goods decreased by 1% compared to March 2025.

- The producer price index of light metal packaging increased by 1% compared to March 2025.

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Machinery for processing

- The producer price index of machinery for food and drink processing increased by 2% compared to March 2025.

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Labour

Manufacturing job vacancy rate declining

- The EU manufacturing job vacancy rate declined by 12% year-on-year in Q4 2025.
- In Q4 2025, variations in the job vacancy rate ranged from 3.7% in the Netherlands to 0.4% in Romania.

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Agricultural raw materials

- The FAO food price index was 1.1% higher than in March 2025.
- For further details, please see the [table](#) under this section.

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Animal feed

- In March 2026, the producer price index of prepared animal feeds was down 4% compared to March 2025.

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Fertilizers

- In March 2026, diammonium phosphate, triple superphosphate and urea prices were respectively 7%, 17% and 84% higher than a year earlier.

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