

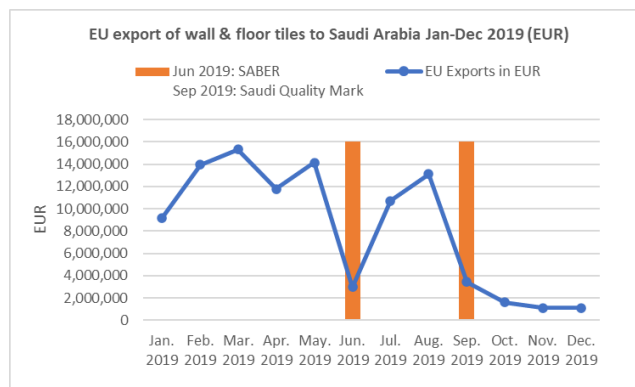


PRESS RELEASE

Commission launches an examination procedure against the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia on technical requirements affecting European ceramic tiles imports

24 June 2020, Brussels – The European Ceramic Industry Association welcomes [the initiation of the examination procedure](#) by the European Commission against two technical regulations applied by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia on ceramic imports which are undermining market access for ceramic tiles companies in the Saudi market.

Following a complaint lodged by the European ceramic industry pursuant Regulation 2015/1843 on Trade Barriers (TBR), on 23 April 2020, with the regard to the Saudi Quality Mark (SASO Quality Market) by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the European Commission has opened the examination procedure provided by art. 3 (1) of the Regulation. Since its implementation in September 2019, the SASO Quality Mark has compromised the access for European ceramic exporters, mostly composed of SMEs, to the Saudi Arabia market, leading to an average monthly loss of about 15 million euros.



Source: Eurostat

Cerame-Unie President Alain Delcourt highlights the importance of the Commission's decision to launch the investigation procedure, as it *“reinforces its commitment to safeguarding free trade, to making sure European SMEs fully benefit from international trade and to continue strengthening trade policy instruments, particularly necessary in times of rising protectionism and global economic crisis”*.

Interested parties can, as of today, submit written information related to the complaint and supporting evidence to the trade barrier issues raised by the complainant. A report from the European Commission will follow between five and seven months from the initiation of the examination procedure.

The European ceramic industry covers a wide range of products including abrasives, bricks & roof tiles, clay pipes, wall & floor tiles, refractories, sanitaryware, table- & ornamentalware, technical ceramics, expanded clay and flower pots. The industry generates over 200,000 direct jobs and a production value of €31 billion in the EU.

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