

Question for written answer E-004396/2025

to the Commission

Rule 144

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Subject: EU-India Free Trade Agreement: sugar sector in deep water

The resumption of the negotiations for a free trade agreement with India in 2022 poses a direct threat to the competitiveness of European beet growers and the sugar cane industry in the outermost regions.

India already exports sugar to the EU under preferential access arrangements. An agreement would further destabilise a sugar industry that has already been weakened by competition from Ukraine and Mercosur, and by the Green Deal's constraints. Meanwhile, yields have been declining in France since the neonicotinoid pesticide ban.

India, the world's second-largest producer at 33 million tonnes, could flood the European market if tariffs were reduced or even removed. Once again, agriculture is being used as a pawn to gain wider leverage in the EU's trade negotiations.

1. Given the sharp drop in beet prices since 2021 and the increased competition in the sugar sector, is the Commission aware of the major risk that a free trade agreement with India would pose to European beet growers and to the sugar cane industry of the already fragile outermost regions?
2. Has it examined the cumulative effects on the European sugar market of the various existing tariff quotas and those envisaged with other third countries?

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¹ This question is supported by a Member other than the authors: Jean-Paul Garraud (PfE).