

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-002629/24
to the Commission
Galato Alexandraki (ECR), Emmanouil Fragkos (ECR)
(22 November 2024)**

Subject: Impact of the EU-Mercosur trade agreement on agriculture, the economy and European consumers

The proposed trade agreement between the European Union and Mercosur is a matter of great concern for European farmers and consumers. While the aim is to create a free trade area encompassing 800 million people, the agreement may enable the import of cheaper agricultural products from Mercosur countries, where quality and health standards are well below European standards. This will undermine the competitiveness of European producers, while jeopardising the viability of family farms. At the same time, the lack of transparency in the labelling and traceability of imported products will open the door to the circulation of genetically modified or low-quality food products, limiting consumer choice.

Despite the strong concerns of producers and citizens alike, the EU is pressing on with negotiations, ignoring the consequences for agriculture and the economy. At the same time, the trade balance risks being disrupted to the detriment of European exports.

In view of the above, can the Commission answer the following:

1. What measures does it intend to take to protect European farmers from the unfair competition with Mercosur countries?
2. How will it ensure transparency in the labelling and traceability of imported products in order to protect consumer rights?
3. What does it plan to do to prevent a deterioration of the EU's trade balance as a result of the agreement?

Submitted: 22.11.2024

**Answer given by Mr Šeřčovič on behalf of the European Commission
(3 March 2025)**

The potential agreement with the Mercosur represents a key geostrategic and economic interest for the EU. This is all the more true under the current global context, in which geopolitical tensions among the different world powers risk to undermine EU exports, and hence the EU economy.

As regards the agri-food sector, it should be recalled that the EU is the largest global exporter, with EUR 229 billion exports and a trade surplus of EUR 70 billion in 2023.

The agreement will create new opportunities for the products of EU farmers in the highly protected Mercosur markets, by eliminating duties on key EU products, such as wine and other beverages, dairy products, olive oil and high-value processed products. Moreover, the agreement protects some 350 European geographical indications.

Furthermore, trade concessions for sensitive agricultural products are granted under the form of carefully calibrated tariff rate quotas, limited to a very small share of EU consumption. Economic studies carried out by the Commission confirm that the market impact of the Mercosur agreement for EU sensitive products would be very limited ⁽¹⁾.

The agreement also provides for safeguards in case of any adverse market effects, covering all products, even those not fully liberalised.

Finally, the agreement will have no impact on health standards or consumers' rights of EU citizens. Imported products, from Mercosur or from anywhere else, will always have to comply with the high EU health and sanitary standards, including with EU requirements concerning consumer information and traceability.

Such requirements are not negotiable, under any trade agreement.

⁽¹⁾ Sustainability Impact Assessment in support of the Association Agreement negotiations between the EU and Mercosur: https://policy.trade.ec.europa.eu/analysis-and-assessment/sustainability-impact-assessments_en; Cumulative economic impact of upcoming trade agreements on EU agriculture: <https://publications.jrc.ec.europa.eu/repository/handle/JRC135540>; Economic and Sustainability Impact Assessment for Ireland of the EU-Mercosur Trade Agreement: <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/1c8a6-economic-and-sustainability-impact-assessment-for-ireland-of-the-eu-mercotur-trade-agreement/>