

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-000716/25  
to the Commission**

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(17 February 2025)

*Subject:* EU-Mercosur trade agreement

With the Commission's decision on 6 December 2024 to conclude negotiations on a trade agreement between the Mercosur countries and the European Union, a number of issues need to be clarified with a view to ratification and potential implementation.

1. Regarding safeguard clauses, these essential mechanisms only offer protection if they are effective. How does the Commission intend to ensure they are activated and properly implemented in the event of market destabilisation?
2. Given that the agreement goes well beyond trade issues, which are inextricably linked to political and legal issues, what ratification procedure does the President of the European Commission intend to use?
3. How does the Commission intend to improve the traceability and ensure the conformity of agri-food products entering the European Union, and what implementation mechanisms does the Commission intend to put in place to strengthen controls on imported products to ensure systematic compliance with the health, environmental and quality standards required by the European Union?

Submitted: 17.2.2025

**Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the European Commission  
(24 April 2025)**

The safeguard provision in the EU-Mercosur Partnership Agreement is an effective tool to protect any EU sector affected by the Agreement in case it suffers serious injury due to increased imports. Under this provision, the Parties can suspend preferences for up to two years.

A request for a safeguard investigation could be made by one or several Member States on behalf of the EU sector or at the request of the domestic industry.

The Commission will make proposals for the signature and conclusion of the agreement in accordance with the Treaties. In that context, the Commission will present its proposal for the legal basis and architecture of the deal.

Any food product placed on the EU market, being domestically produced or imported from Mercosur countries, must comply with EU's sanitary requirements. These requirements are not negotiable and apply regardless of trade agreements concluded with third countries.

Official controls at EU borders are intended to verify whether EU food safety rules are respected. These controls are performed by the competent authorities of the Member States.

The Commission carries out audits in third countries to ensure that their control systems provide enough guarantees as to ensure that exports to the EU take place in conformity with EU safety standards. In case of non-compliances, trade-restrictive measures may be imposed, both by the trade partner or the EU.

In the framework of the communication on 'A Vision for Agriculture and Food Shaping together an attractive farming and agri-food sector for future generations' <sup>(1)</sup>, the Commission announced a dedicated task force to be established, which will pull expertise and forces from the Commission and Member States together to further strengthen the control on imports.

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<sup>(1)</sup> <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex:52025DC0075>