

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-004078/25
to the Commission
Anna Brylka (P/E)
(16 October 2025)**

Subject: EU-Mercosur free trade agreement, Part 1/2

In view of the ongoing negotiations on free trade agreements between the European Union and the Mercosur countries and India, I would be grateful if ythe Commission could provide information on the potential impact of these agreements on the European tobacco growing and processing sector.

Given the social and economic importance of this sector in certain regions of the EU, as well as the differences in labour costs, environmental standards and production regulations between the EU and its partner countries, I would ask the Commission to answer the following questions:

1. Can the Commission confirm that, under the trade agreement being negotiated between the EU and the Mercosur countries, tobacco and tobacco products will not be subject to trade liberalisation that could undermine the competitiveness of European tobacco producers?
2. How does the Commission intend to prevent a situation in which cheap tobacco imports from Brazil, Argentina or other Mercosur countries — where labour costs and environmental requirements are lower — replace European production, leading to a decline in farmers' incomes and job losses in the EU tobacco sector?
3. Does the Commission envisage reducing or abolishing customs duties on tobacco and tobacco products as part of the trade agreement being negotiated with India?

Submitted: 16.10.2025

**Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the European Commission
(17 November 2025)**

The free trade agreements with Mercosur and with India are crucial for strengthening the EU's trade relations with these key partners.

Under the EU-Mercosur Agreement ⁽¹⁾, tobacco and tobacco products are indeed subject to tariff liberalisation. However, the approach adopted is progressive, with a phased-out reduction in tariffs over a period of four to seven years.

This will grant the tobacco sector adequate time to adjust gradually to the changes, minimising disruption. Moreover, the EU-Mercosur agreement provides for bilateral safeguards protecting the agricultural sectors, including tobacco, in case of market disruptions.

The Commission is committed to ensuring that these measures do not compromise the competitiveness of European tobacco producers.

The Commission is aware of the social and economic significance of the tobacco industry in certain EU regions. In this respect, the Vision for Agriculture ⁽²⁾ pursues a number of initiatives to support agricultural sectors, including stronger alignment of certain production standards for imported products, in compliance with international rules and based on a thorough impact assessment. It also provides for support in case of disturbances of agricultural markets through the unity safety net ⁽³⁾.

As negotiations with India continue, the Commission remains committed to addressing the sensitivities of the EU, particularly concerning the tobacco sector.

Throughout these ongoing negotiations, the Commission aims to achieve balanced and equitable outcomes that take duly into account such sensitivities and serve the interests of all parties involved.

⁽¹⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52025PC0338&qid=1760605855352>.

⁽²⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex:52025DC0075>.

⁽³⁾ More info available here: https://agriculture.ec.europa.eu/common-agricultural-policy/cap-overview/cap-post-2027-next-eu-budget_en.