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Answer given by Mr Hansen
on behalf of the European Commission
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A free trade agreement with India would be an important element to strengthen the EU's trade relations with a key partner.

The sensitivity of the EU sugar sector has long been recognised. In 2019, the High-Level Group (HLG) on Sugar recommended that sugar continue to be treated as a sensitive product in trade negotiations with major sugar-producing countries, in order to safeguard the competitiveness and resilience of the EU sugar sector.

In 2023, the Commission conducted a 'Trade Sustainability Impact Assessment (SIA)', including a dedicated case study to analyse the impact of a future EU-INDIA Free Trade Agreement (FTA) on employment and respect for labour and environmental standards in agriculture, notably in the sugar sector.

Moreover, the Commission updated in 2024 its study presenting the cumulative impact on the EU agricultural markets of a series of FTAs concluded or under negotiation between the EU and nine countries, including India¹. The study emphasises the sensitivity of some products, such as sugar.

EU sugar producers also expressed their serious concerns regarding the possible inclusion of sugar in the ongoing EU-India trade negotiations.

Based on the conclusions and recommendations of the HLG on Sugar and the SIA, as well as the study on the cumulative impact, and the concerns raised by the sector, the Commission has given due care to the sensitivity of the sugar sector in line with its commitment to address the specific sensitivities of the EU sugar sector in all its FTA negotiations.

¹ https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_24_1001.