*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000235/26**
**to the Commission**
**Piotr Müller (ECR)**
*(21 January 2026)*

*Subject:* Agreement with India and the risk of deindustrialisation in Europe

The ongoing negotiations on a free trade agreement between the European Union and India are raising concerns among Europe's energy-intensive industries, in particular the steel, aluminium, metal alloys and ceramics industries.

These industries highlight the rapid expansion of production capacity in India, especially in high-emission sectors, which threatens to flood the EU market with cheap goods produced in conditions that deviate from European environmental and social standards.

Without effective protective mechanisms, there is a risk of further deindustrialisation in Europe, job losses and the weakening of strategic sectors of the economy, which are already struggling with high energy costs and strong competitive pressures from third countries. The unilateral opening up of Europe's markets without genuine safeguards will undermine the economic security of the EU as a whole.

There is also concern about working conditions in India, where standards of worker protection, health and safety, sanitation and enforcement of social rights are alarmingly low.

In connection with the above:

1. What sectoral safeguards for the most vulnerable industries does the Commission intend to incorporate into the agreement with India?

2. How does the Commission assess the impact of this agreement on the EU's industrial competitiveness and the risk that it will accelerate the process of deindustrialisation in the Member States?

3. What is the current state of play of negotiations on this agreement?

Submitted: 21.1.2026

**Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the European Commission**
*(4 March 2026)*

The negotiations of a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with India were finalised on 27 January 2026 during the 16th EU-India Summit.

The FTA will positively contribute to EU output and employment. EU gross domestic product is expected to grow by up to EUR 47.9 billion. EU exports will significantly expand, including in important sectors such as chemicals, electronics, machinery, transport equipment, beverages, textiles, minerals and metals ([1]).

The FTA includes safeguards allowing for the temporary suspension of tariff preferences in case of a sudden surge in imports that could harm the EU industry. Such bilateral safeguards may be introduced during a period of 22 years from the date of entry into force of the FTA.

The FTA fully preserves the possibility to apply trade defence measures against dumping, subsidised imports or import surges. Global safeguard measures such as those introduced in 2025 on ferroalloys will remain possible. It will not affect either the anti-dumping duties currently in place on ceramic tiles.

The FTA will be no obstacle to the introduction of a stricter import regime for steel as envisaged in the Commission's proposal of 7 October 2025 ([2]).

The Commission nonetheless acknowledges that energy-intensive industries face particular challenges that are independent of the EU's FTA policy. Those challenges require a multi-pronged strategy by public and private actors. The Commission's Clean Industrial Deal ([3]) and other EU competitiveness initiatives are important elements in that regard.

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([1]) Findings of the independent Sustainability Impact Assessment of 2023, available on https://policy.trade.ec.europa.eu/analysis-and-assessment/sustainability-impact-assessments_en.
([2]) https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52025PC0726.
([3]) https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52025DC0085.