

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-000356/26
to the Commission
Leire Pajín (S&D), Sandra Gómez López (S&D)
(28 January 2026)**

Subject: EU-India agreement and protection measures for the ceramics industry

The announcement of the conclusion of trade negotiations between the European Union and India highlights the urgent need to respond to the concerns of Spanish industry, particularly the ceramics sector, which is key to employment and competitiveness in Europe and the Autonomous Community of Valencia.

While the agreement that has been announced is a positive outcome overall, it does not include the demands put forward by the ceramics sector for measures such as transitional periods, limited quotas and enhanced safeguards.

It should be noted that measures currently in force, such as anti-dumping measures for Indian ceramics, energy subsidies and CO₂ cost compensation mechanisms, protect the industry from international competition and enable progress to be made in the transition to sustainable production models. However, there is a legitimate fear that they will not be sufficient for a sector as key and sensitive as ceramics.

In this context:

What specific measures does the Commission envisage to protect the ceramics industry in the EU-India Agreement and to enable the industry to benefit from trade openness, without compromising its competitiveness, sustainability or employment?

Submitted: 28.1.2026

**Priority question for written answer P-000406/26
to the Commission
Dariusz Joński (PPE)
(2 February 2026)**

Subject: Impact of the EU-India trade agreement on the European ceramics industry

In connection with the ongoing work on the EU-India trade agreement, I would like to ask about the agreement's impact on the European ceramics industry, which is a key and strategic industry in many Member States.

Even under current trade conditions, with relatively low customs duties, the competitiveness of European ceramics producers is significantly weakened. This is due, among other things, to substantial differences in energy costs, labour costs, environmental standards and regulatory requirements for companies in the EU. In practice, it means that European companies operate under significantly higher burdens than their potential Indian competitors.

The introduction of further trade liberalisation under the EU-India agreement, without adequate safeguards, could lead to a loss of competitiveness for many European ceramics companies, resulting in job losses, regional deindustrialisation and a weakening of the EU's strategic industrial autonomy.

In the light of the above, I would like to ask the following:

1. Is it envisaged that the EU-India agreement under negotiation will include specific safeguard clauses or safeguard mechanisms for the ceramics industry?
2. Has the Commission carried out, or is it planning to carry out, a detailed assessment of the impact of this agreement on the ceramics sector in the EU?
3. How does the Commission intend to ensure a level playing field for European producers given the differences in production standards and operating costs?

Submitted: 2.2.2026

**Joint answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the European Commission
(20 February 2026)**

The Free Trade Agreement (FTA) negotiated with India is not expected to have a major impact on the competitive situation on the EU market for ceramic products, while opening up new export opportunities for EU companies.

The current EU import duties on ceramic tiles of heading 6907 of the Harmonised System are low (5%) and will be lifted at entry into force of the FTA or phased out within 5 years, depending on the tariff line. Indian duties are significantly higher (16.5%) and will also be phased out, thus levelling the playing field in terms of import conditions.

At the same time, the FTA fully preserves the possibility to apply trade defence measures. Imports of ceramic tiles from India are currently subject to antidumping duties (6.7% to 8.7%); those duties are not affected by the FTA and can be renewed if the conditions set in the relevant EU regulation are met.

In addition, the FTA envisages the possibility of suspending tariff preferences temporarily in case of a sudden surge in imports that could cause injury to 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 Commission stands ready to monitor the implementation of the FTA in close cooperation with EU industries and, in respect specifically to the ceramics sector, to appraise the existing trade defence measures against the background of the envisaged elimination of import duties.

The Commission acknowledges the fact that energy-intensive industries face particular challenges independently of the EU's trade policy.

Those challenges require a multi-pronged strategy by public and private actors. The Commission's Clean Industrial Deal ⁽¹⁾ and other EU competitiveness initiatives are important elements in that regard.

⁽¹⁾ The Clean Industrial Deal: A joint roadmap for competitiveness and decarbonisation; Brussels, 26.2.2025; COM(2025) 85 final; <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex:52025DC0085>.