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Answer given by Executive Vice-President Séjourné
on behalf of the European Commission
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1. According to Eurostat, beer ranks as the EU's third highest-value manufactured food and beverage product by production value¹. The brewing sector is connected to the European agri-food sector through its demand for agricultural raw materials, notably barley, wheat and hops. This demand supports agricultural production, malting, and other upstream and downstream activities, including in rural areas where many of these crops are grown and processed.

2. Small and medium-sized breweries can benefit from EU initiatives supporting small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), such as the Enterprise Europe Network, which can, among other things, help drive innovation through digital and sustainable solutions and facilitate access to EU funding². The Network has a dedicated Agri-Food Sector Group, composed of experienced advisors supporting SMEs in the food and beverage sector.

3. The innovative capacity of the sector can be supported through initiatives in areas such as the bioeconomy, including the Circular Bio-based Europe Joint Undertaking (CBE JU). A relevant project supported under the CBE JU is POLYMEER, which aims to valorise brewers' spent grain³. In addition, the sector's competitiveness can be strengthened through improved access to international markets. For example, the EU–India Free Trade Agreement will, once in force, reduce tariffs on beer from 110% to 50%⁴.

¹ <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/en/web/products-key-figures/w/ks-01-25-049>.

² <https://een.ec.europa.eu/>.

³ <https://www.cbe.europa.eu/projects/polymeer>.

⁴ https://policy.trade.ec.europa.eu/eu-trade-relationships-country-and-region/countries-and-regions/india/eu-india-agreements/factsheet-eu-india-free-trade-agreement-eu-agri-food-exports_en.