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## **JRC STUDY CONFIRMS THE VULNERABILITY OF EU SUGAR**

### **CIBE AND CEFS CALL TO STOP EU SUGAR MARKET ACCESS CONCESSIONS**

Yesterday the Joint Research Council published a study assessing the cumulative impact of ten free trade agreements (recently concluded or currently under negotiation) on EU agriculture.

The study only confirms the vulnerability of the EU beet sugar sector. It confirms that the EU's trade policy is having systematic and significant negative impacts on EU beet sugar production and value. In other words: EU sugar is losing from the EU's Free Trade Agreements, as CIBE and CEFS have regularly stated.

These results may even be underestimated due to the methodology used in this study. Indeed, the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement (DCFTA) between the EU and Ukraine is included in the baseline projections until 2032 and takes into account the temporary trade liberalisations in place since June 2022. But EU sugar imports from Ukraine amounted to 7 times the quota set out in the DFCTA in 2022 and 22 times the quota in 2023, with imports potentially reaching similar levels in 2024.

Furthermore, Brexit is included in the baseline: the negative impacts of the EU-UK trade agreement on EU sugar exports to the UK have been already integrated into the results and are therefore hidden.

Finally, the increasing requirements of the EU Green Deal combined with the poor social and environmental conditions in the EU's trade partners are not considered. Nor are the impacts of trade-distorting subsidies, such as those in India that have been condemned by the World Trade Organisation. This increasing imbalance is creating an ever-more skewed global playing field.


The EU's trade policy needs fundamental change. Tariff-rate quotas do not provide effective protection for sensitive, strategic products such sugar. On the contrary, tariff-rate quotas are often used as bargaining chips to unlock concessions for the EU's industrial or processed food exports. Where no level playing field exists, only the complete exclusion of sugar from negotiations can provide adequate protection. This should be the case for the potential agreements with India and Thailand, among others.

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