



CIUS & ESRA in support of the conclusion of the Trade Agreement with Thailand

CIUS (Committee of European Sugar Users) and ESRA (European Sugar Refiners Association) support the conclusion of an ambitious and balanced EU–Thailand Free Trade Agreement, including enhanced market access for sugar. Such an agreement would contribute to supply diversification, strengthen the resilience of the European sugar value chain, and support the competitiveness of food and industrial users across the European Union.

As the negotiations unfold, we call on the European Commission to take into account the interests of the entire sugar supply chains, including the specific needs of downstream users and refiners who rely on secure, competitive and diversified supplies.

The EU sugar market is not a fully liberalized market, but a managed framework combining tariff protection, preferential arrangements and import mechanisms designed to balance domestic production and market requirements. Thailand is an important actor in the global sugar market, but it is not currently a dominant supplier to the EU. Any market opening agreed under an FTA would complement existing sources of supply rather than fundamentally alter the structure of the European market. Moreover, it should be reminded that all sugar imported into the EU remains subject to the Union’s food safety and phytosanitary requirements. As such, we view additional access for Thailand as a positive diversification of our trade flows.

CIUS and ESRA believe that trade policy should strike an appropriate balance between the interests of producers, refiners and users. A comprehensive EU–Thailand agreement would support competitiveness, resilience and strategic diversification, while ensuring that the European sugar sector remains integrated into a dynamic and increasingly interconnected global market.

CIUS represents more than 15 000 sugar-using companies, ranging from artisan, small and medium sized enterprises to multi-nationals. Together our members purchase about 70% of the EU’s annual production of sugar and provide direct employment to over 450.000 people in Europe. Products made by our members include fine bakery wares, chocolate, confectionery, soft drinks, canned fruits and jams.

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