



International Market Access

No referendum against free trade agreement with India - entry into force possible on October 1

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At a glance

- No referendum has been held against the free trade agreement between the EFTA states and India. Entry into force is therefore possible on October 1, 2025.
- In view of the difficult international economic environment, the agreement has come at just the right time for the Swiss economy.
- Thanks to significant tariff reductions, an ambitious investment chapter and improved protection of intellectual property, Swiss companies will benefit directly from India's growth.

The 100-day referendum deadline for the Trade and Economic Partnership Agreement between the EFTA states and India (TEPA) expired today. No referendum was held during this period.

Widespread recognition of the agreement

The absence of a referendum underlines the strong performance of the Swiss negotiating delegation. It shows that the importance of the agreement is recognized by the general public. When EFTA signed the agreement in March 2024, it was the first European partner of India with such a treaty. The United Kingdom has since followed suit, while the EU continues to negotiate.

Expected to enter into force on October 1, 2025

Provided that all contracting parties notify the completion of their internal ratification by the end of July, the agreement could enter into force as early as October 1, 2025. Iceland and Norway have already notified. Switzerland, Liechtenstein and India are also expected to take this step soon.

economiesuisse expressly supports a rapid entry into force. The Swiss export industry is currently facing geopolitical tensions and trade policy uncertainties. A free trade agreement with the world's most populous country - and forecast annual growth rates of between six and nine percent - therefore comes at exactly the right time.

Progress on tariffs, investment, intellectual property and sustainability

India previously levied high tariffs on imported products. When the agreement comes into force, around 95% of customs duties on Swiss industrial exports will be eliminated immediately or gradually. In the long term, this is expected to save Swiss companies up to 166 million francs annually.

Thanks to lower import duties, India will also become more attractive for Swiss direct investments. The agreement contains a new investment chapter that defines a target of 100 billion US dollars in investments and one million new jobs over the next 15 years. In return, India undertakes to create and maintain an investment-friendly environment.

Improvements have also been achieved in the protection of intellectual property - particularly with regard to patents and trademark rights. This is a step forward for the innovation-based Swiss export industry.

The chapter on sustainability is also a plus point of the agreement and underlines its economic, social and ecological dimension. The chapter obliges the parties to comply with environmental and labor standards and provides for the establishment of a subcommittee. EFTA is the first partner with which India has agreed such a chapter.



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