

# The Role of EU Associations in EU Trade Policy



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# A few things to know about EU Trade Policy from an advocacy perspective

- **Exclusive EU competence:** The EU, rather than individual Member States\*, legislates on trade matters and concludes international trade agreements.
- **Extended timelines:** Trade policy issues often involve extended timelines, sometimes taking years or decades, as seen with Free Trade Agreements (i.e. FTAs).
- **Decision-making process:** in trade policy, the decision-making process differs from many other policy areas (i.e. 'consent procedure')
- **Role of the European Commission:** particularly DG TRADE, which leads the implementation of trade policies in coordination with Member States

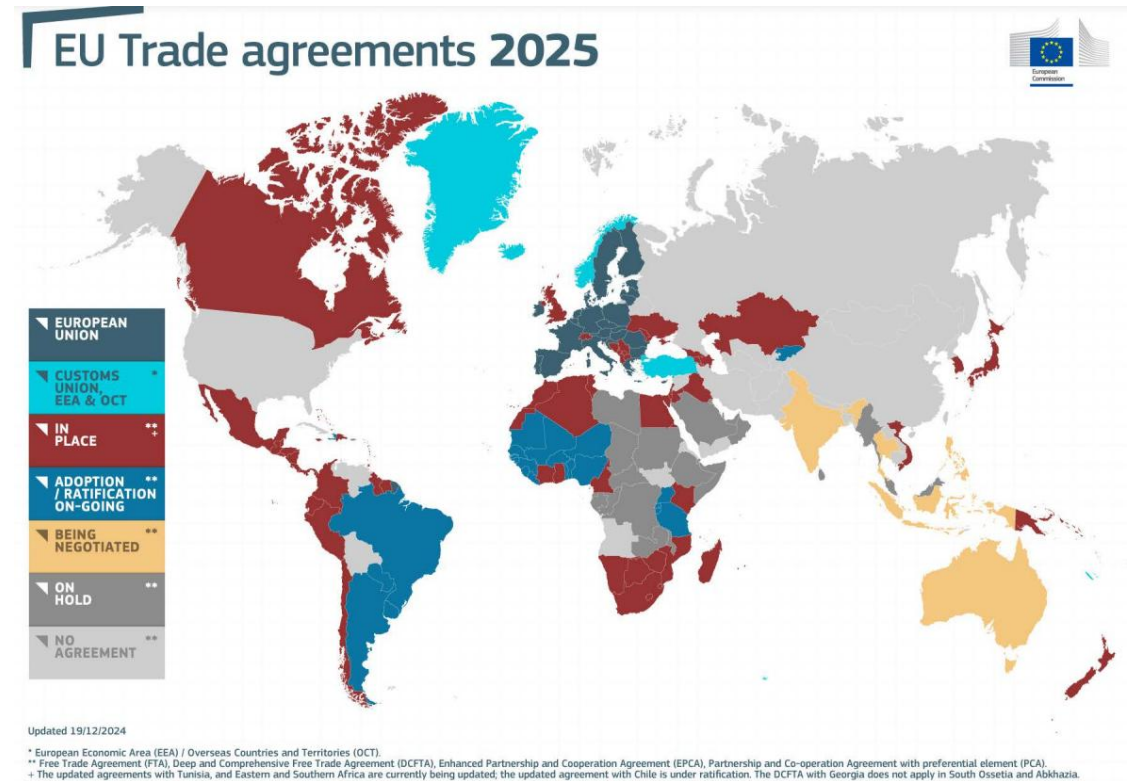


\*certain limitations apply

# Understanding today's EU Trade Policy: A historical perspective (1/2)

To understand today's EU trade policy, it is essential to look back at its evolution, which has been shaped by global economic shifts, internal political developments, and changing policy and political priorities. The periods are not distinct but rather evolutionary:

- WTO period: 1990s and early 2000s
  - Key events: creation of WTO in 1995, WTO accession of China in 2001, failure of the Doha round starting from 2005
  - Developments: Some early Free Trade Agreements (FTAs)
- Deep and comprehensive FTAs: From 2000s onwards
  - Slow progress at the WTO level and internal changes (Lisbon Treaty) moved the EU towards negotiating more bilateral trade deals that became increasingly more comprehensive in scope



# Understanding today's EU Trade Policy: A historical perspective (2/2)

- Trade &... : trade policy as part of Economic Security, Industrial Policy and Sustainability: as of 2020s
  - Trade policy increasingly interlinked with other policy areas:
    - Sustainability: implementation of external dimension of EU Green deal via i.e. CBAM (2023), EUDR (2023), CSDDD (2024) etc.
    - Security & Resilience: Increasing focus on economic security implications of trade policy due to increasing awareness about EU vulnerabilities due to interdependencies - expansion of EU Trade toolbox- i.e. IPI (2022), FSR(2023), ACI (2023) European Economic Security strategy (2023)
    - Industrial Policy: increasing interlinkage between industrial policy and trade policy – EU Chips Act (2023), CRMA (2024) & NZIA (2024), Ex-officio Antisubsidy Duties on Chinese EVs (2024), Draghi & Letta reports (2024) & Clean Industrial Deal (2025)

## The future of European competitiveness

Part A | A competitiveness strategy for Europe

SEPTEMBER 2024



# EU Trade policy tool box\*

## Offensive trade policy tools

- WTO
- Free Trade Agreements
- Sectoral initiatives, i.e. CTIPs
- Market access initiatives
- Regulatory cooperation
- Export promotion

## Defensive trade policy tools

- Anti-dumping (AD)
- Anti-subsidy (AS)
- Safeguards
- FSR
- IPI
- ACI
- Enforcement regulation



\* Not a comprehensive list