



EU trade agreements continue to benefit European businesses *

Brussels, 28 September 2026

The EU's growing network of trade agreements helps European businesses to access new export markets and creates a more predictable trade and investment environment, according to a report published today. The sixth Annual Report on the Implementation and Enforcement of EU Trade and Economic Security Policy, covering the year 2025, concludes that EU trade agreements play a crucial role in increasing the resilience and competitiveness of EU operators.

Preferential trade works

- At the end of 2025, the EU had in place **44 preferential trade agreements with 76 countries**, representing 46.3% of the EU's external trade. Trade in goods with these partner countries grew faster than the EU's total trade with other third countries: 3.1% growth compared to 1.4%. In 2025, EU **agri-food exports** to countries with a trade agreement increased by 4.6%, while those to non-preferential partners fell by 3.6%.
- The **EU-Chile Interim Trade Agreement (ITA)** illustrates the immediate and positive impact that a new trade agreement can have. Total bilateral trade amounted to €20.8 billion in the first 11 months since its entry into force on 1 February 2025, 3% higher year-on-year. EU exports of machinery and appliances grew by 9%, chemical products by 8%, and optical and photographic instruments by 17%.
- Through a continued focus on the successful implementation of EU trade agreements, the Commission, in close cooperation with Member States and businesses, was able to get **20 barriers to trade fully or partially removed** in 14 partner countries. This helps to improve market access for EU operators.

Strengthening the EU's geopolitical presence

EU trade agreements continue to strengthen the EU's **geopolitical presence** in a challenging international environment. Over the reporting period, EU goods exports to FTA partners increased by €250 billion, helping to compensate for reduced exports of goods to **Russia**, which fell by €54.5 billion during that time.

In 2025, EU trade agreements again played a significant role in providing stable import sources of **raw materials** and **energy products** of strategic importance to the EU economy:

- Preferential partners supply a quarter of the EU's critical raw materials imports. For example, between 2024 and 2025, EU critical raw materials imports from **Canada** increased by 62% in value terms to reach €3.3 billion.
- The EU's trade agreements with resource-rich partners such as **Canada** and **Chile** have facilitated imports of mineral products. Between 2024 and 2025, imports of mineral products from **Canada** increased by 14% (in value terms) to reach €6.1 billion: continuing a trend observed since 2022. Over a quarter of the EU's mineral product imports now come from Canada. Since the entry into force of the EU-**Chile** ITA in February 2025, EU imports of mineral products have grown by 33%.

The EU currently has **45 trade agreements** in place, covering **80 preferential trade partners**.

Moreover, the EU continues to **expand its network of trade agreements**:

- 2025 and the first half of 2026 saw the EU conclude trade agreements with Mercosur (provisionally in force since 1 May 2026), Mexico, Indonesia, India, Australia, and the four Eastern and Southern African countries (Comoros, Madagascar, Mauritius, and Seychelles). Together, they will increase the EU's share of preferential trade to 53.3%.

- The EU is currently negotiating trade agreements with Malaysia, the [Philippines](#), Thailand, and the United Arab Emirates. Moreover, as well as seeking to widen its network of trade agreements in recent years the EU has pursued other forms of engagement with partner countries, notably digital trade agreements with Singapore and Korea, a Sustainable Investment Facilitation Agreement with Angola, and a Clean Trade and Investment Partnership with South Africa.

Background

This report on the implementation and enforcement of EU trade and economic security policy in 2025 provides an update on the EU's main activities and achievements, steered by the European Commission's Chief Trade Enforcement Officer. The report showcases the impacts of the removal of trade barriers and resolution of disputes in third-country trading partners, including with the help of dispute settlement and the EU's strengthened toolbox of autonomous enforcement instruments. It also highlights efforts to promote the advantages of EU trade agreements for key stakeholders such as small and medium-sized enterprises, notably through the [Access2Markets](#) portal.

For more information

[Report](#)

[Key facts](#)

[Brochure on the report](#)

[General trade statistics for FTA partners](#)

[Preference utilisation on EU imports 2023-2025](#)

[Preference utilisation and duty savings on EU exports 2023-2025](#)

[Utilisation rate of TRQs opened by the EU to third countries](#)

[Utilisation rate of TRQs opened by third countries to the EU](#)

[Barriers resolved in 2025](#)

[New barriers registered in 2025](#)

[FAQ on preference utilisation rates \(PUR\), duty savings and tariff rate quotas \(TQR\)](#)

[Previous versions of the EU's FTA implementation reports](#)

* Updated on 30/09/2026 at 10:13

IP/26/1983

Quote(s):

"For EU business, trade agreements, when effectively implemented and enforced, open new opportunities in some of the world's largest and fast-growing markets and make their supply chains more resilient. From a political perspective, these agreements are also a key element in pursuing the Union's economic security strategy, by securing access to critical inputs, such as energy and critical raw materials, and reducing our dependencies in times of rising geopolitical challenges. We currently have 45 trade agreements in place with 80 countries, and we are actively expanding our network in order to deliver even more benefits for our businesses and consumers."

Maroš Šefčovič, Commissioner for Trade and Economic Security; Interinstitutional Relations and Transparency - 28/09/2026

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