

LE POLITICHE COMMERCIALI DELL'UNIONE EUROPEA E GLI ACCORDI PREFERENZIALI

BENIAMINO QUINTIERI¹

Università di Roma "Tor Vergata"

EU trade policies and preferential agreements

Since the collapse of the Doha Round and the limited prospects of the World Trade Organization, the weight of preferential trade agreements (PTA) has grown significantly in recent years on the international scene and today they are the most important tool for a further liberalization of world trade. Compared to the "old generation", most of the new PTAs are characterized by a greater degree of indepth analysis, since they govern a broad spectrum of economic relations between the subscribing countries. Today there is a large empirical literature that shows the expansive impact of these new agreements.

The European Union has been the main promoter of these treaties, also confirming, in a difficult context characterized by the crisis of multilateralism and the protectionist threats coming from the US, its attitude towards free trade. The UE in recent years has signed important agreements both for the relevance of the countries involved and for the number of topic covered. In addition to the one with South Korea signed in 2011, the most recent one signed with Canada (CETA) and with Japan are of special significance. The first results available for Canada and Japan and even more the consolidated results for South Korea show a significant increase in UE exports compared to the period prior to the entry into force of the agreements. The positive results in terms of greater export for European countries deriving from the numerous preferential agreements entered into in recent years, reinforce the idea that the EU is the only dimension capable of ensuring an effective defense capacity for the interests of individual European countries.

¹ Full Professor of International Economics at the University of Rome Tor Vergata and Chairman of the Manlio Masi Foundation, National Observatory for Internationalization and Trade. From June 2016 to December 2019 has been Chairman of SACE (the Italian Export Credit Agency); from 2001 to 2005 he served as President of the Italian Trade Agency (ICE) and he held the position of Italian Government's General Commissioner for the 2010 Shanghai Universal Exposition. He is the author or editor of 20 volumes and over 60 articles published in scientific journals on topics related to the international economy, public finance, labor economics, macroeconomics and applied economics. In 2005, President of the Republic Carlo Azeglio Ciampi awarded him the highest honour of Knight Grand Cross.