

MARKET ACCESS

Business needs market access. Due to low growth in Europe, business has to export and invest in high growth markets. To maintain their competitive edge in global markets, all European businesses, especially SMEs, needs all obstacles to trade to be reduced or eliminated.

Securing real market access in third countries. The EU must continue to take ambitious positions regarding tariffs, non-trade barriers, services, geographical indications and rules (especially antidumping disciplines) within the DDA. Addressing non-tariff barriers to EU exports and investments is a priority for the future. Tariff reductions are of limited use if markets remain closed by restrictive practices (“shadow barriers”). Most emerging countries combine high growth rate with high barriers against EU trade and investment. Those barriers are technically challenging and complicated to detect and to remove.

For example, many sectors are protected from FDI (regulatory shelters, authorisation regimes, limitations to capitals); restrictions and exports taxes on raw materials are detrimental to trade and put investment and competitiveness at risk; subsidies and unfair trade practices continue to have negative influence on trade and investment.

Confindustria urges the European Commission to be proactive in both preventing the risk of growing protectionism and the introduction of new restrictions on raw materials or investments. We ask the European Commission to monitor and react to protectionist measures and to intervene with important trading partners when new measures are proposed and to take appropriate legal measures when the proposed measures are in violation of WTO or other international trade agreements.

Free Trade Agreements - FTAs.

Bilateral negotiations are ongoing between the EU and key trading partners such as India, Korea, Gulf States, ASEAN¹ and Ukraine, where Italian companies have strong interests. Confindustria fully agrees with the strategy outlined in the Communication “Global Europe, competing in the world” that bilateral agreements have to be complementary – never alternative or substitutive – to the WTO. Our belief is that bilateral and regional agreements should always be drafted with the clear objective supporting the multilateral framework, not with the aim of limiting its powers.

We also agree that bilateral FTAs should provide a wide coverage, including all initial chapters of the WTO agenda that were dropped in Cancun (2003): investment, competition, public procurement, and push for an enhanced enforcement of Intellectual Property Rights.

But, looking from a WTO perspective, the proliferation of regional agreements must be carefully monitored, for the sake of a more balanced global development of trade and investments. We insist this process must deliver mutual benefit and full reciprocal market access. The final agreements must provide real and effective new market access for European business.

¹ Brunei, Cambogia, Indonesia, Laos, Malesia, Birmania, Filippine, Singapore, Tailandia, Vietnam

Trade Defence Instruments - TDIs

To Confindustria, trade defense ensures fair conditions to all international trading parties. We do not see any other objective for those tools. The import of dumped goods cannot be in Europe's interest. Unfair, sometimes predatory, behaviours lead to market distortions and drive efficient and fair-playing European industry out of the market. TDIs are key to an international rules-based trading system. Companies rely on them to reduce unfair trade practices negatively affecting EU industry growth and employment. The EU market is the most open in the world, governed by strong competition rules that ensure fair and open competition, whereas dumped or subsidized products often originate from third countries with closed markets, lacking free competition. In absence of international competition rules, TDIs are essential. This is neither protectionism nor a shield for "weak" or "inefficient" industries. Simply put, open trade must be conducted fairly.

Origin Marking – "MADE IN"

Confindustria is fully committed to the most positive outcome of the "Made in" adoption process. This dossier is important for us and it has an enormous symbolic value. The legal services of the EU have carried out extensive analyses that have proven that the provision would be fully compatible with the WTO, not costly, and not protectionist, since it is applied by the US, Canada, Japan, China and many other countries. Also, the European Parliament unanimously supports the initiative. However, and quite regrettably, since December 2005 the European Council has been discussing the proposal without finding the way out of the decision making process because the Member States are divided.