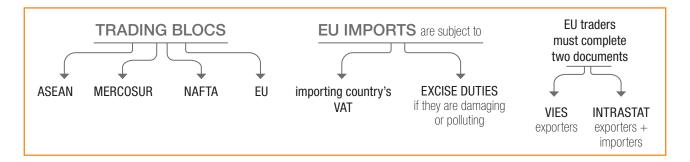
Trading procedures



owering trade barriers means encouraging trade, so, consequently, more and more neighbouring countries have opened their borders and formed multinational **trading blocs** to promote mutual economic and social interests and increase competition. There are four major world trade blocs: the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), the Mercado Comun del Cono Sur (MERCOSUR), the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and the European Union (EU).

All EU countries form a single territory for customs purposes, which means that complex and varied national laws are replaced by a single set of European trade rules that reduces costs and bureaucracy because:

- no restrictions or customs duties are imposed on goods moving between EU countries;
- common customs tariffs are levied on imports from outside the EU;
- goods can circulate freely within the EU with no customs checks.

Imports from a EU member state are usually called "acquisitions", while exports are named "dispatches". Acquisitions are subject to a **Value Added Tax (VAT)** to be paid at the rate of the



country of destination by the importer and goods that damage health or pollute the environment are also imposed **excise duties**.

Traders within the EU must complete two documents: VAT Information Exchange
System (VIES) and International Trade
Statistics (INTRASTAT). Exporters fill in the VIES to register the total amount of exports in euros. This allows tax authorities in each EU country to check the correct payment of VAT. Both importers and exporters must complete the INTRASTAT return form, if the value of their imports/exports exceeds the thresholds set for that year. This enables governments to collect statistics on intra-community trade.

A company which imports from a "third country", that is outside a trading bloc, is legally responsible to comply with the laws of his own country. Imports must be declared in an entry document, called **Single Administration Form** (SAD), which contains all the information required by the customs and assigns products a specific "class" or "commodity code" that corresponds to a tariff. This is usually completed, on behalf of exporters, by freight forwarders, who are also in charge of customs clearance and import formalities. When cleared, goods can be sold on the EU market. **ATA carnet**, or temporary admission transit document, must accompany goods imported temporarily, to be shown to customers or displayed in fairs. These aren't subject to duties, but must be re-imported in full.

Authorities may also require a **certificate of origin**, issued by the exporter's Chamber of Commerce, in case of quotas or special tariffs on goods from certain countries, and an **import/export licence**, issued by governments, to give permission to bring into a country or export products subject to restrictions.

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Country	Goods subject to excise duties	Goods subject to import duties	Goods subject to anti-dumping duties	Forbidden imports/ exports
Italy				
New Zealand				
Russia				
The Emirates				
The UK				
The USA				