

**Question for written answer E-002284/2022
to the Commission**
Rule 138
Sara Skyttedal (PPE)

Subject: The share of EU trade with third countries covered by free trade agreements

That the EU should be a world leader in free trade is frequently mentioned as a goal by leading EU representatives. Indeed, both Parliament and the Commission view the EU being a leader in free trade as an important part of the Union's image and appeal. However, as 15 EU ministers pointed out in a recent letter, only about a third of the EU's external trade is covered by free trade agreements. The corresponding figure for Japan is 80 %¹.

In the light of the above:

1. What is the Commission's long-term forecast for how this figure will develop over time?
2. What measures does the Commission intend to take to ensure that a larger share of EU trade is carried out without trade barriers?

¹ <https://www.government.se/statements/2022/06/joint-letter-to-executive-vice--president-dombrovskis/>