Mario Larch's Regional Trade Agreements Database

1. What are the main features?

This database includes all multilateral and bilateral regional trade agreements (RTA) as notified to the World Trade Organization for the 74 years from 1950 to 2023. The dataset includes 592 agreements (active and inactive) differentiated into seven categories. Additionally, the dataset includes variables indicating whether countries were founding members, joined later, or left the agreement.

2. What is the source used?

WTO's Regional Trade Agreements Gateway:
http://rtais.wto.org/UI/PublicMaintainRTAHome.aspx.

When necessary, details were unavailable in the main source (e.g. joining dates of certain members), we relied on Wikipedia and individual trade agreement websites to retrieve the information.

There are a few cases where the data notified to the WTO do not correspond to the actual existence of an RTA (as, for example, the Southern African Customs Union). This may be because some agreements or predecessors of agreements may not have been notified to the WTO. In such cases, we follow the information given on the WTO website.

Note that we do not include the Lomé Agreements and the Yaoundé Agreements. These agreements between the EC and groups of developing countries are listed as FTAs in WTO's database. They have a trade and aid aspect and typically include understandings to conclude further agreements. Hence, for this database, they seem to be a bit of outliers. Additionally, the most recent agreement in this tradition, the Cotonou agreement, is not in the WTO database and expired in February 2020. New agreements between EU and AKP are in negotiation.

Note also that we do include the agreement between the EU and the Overseas Countries and Territories of EU-Members, as this is classified by the WTO as an FTA and thus within the scope of this database.

3. What type of agreements are included?

According to the WTO, the member countries of an RTA can notify one of the following (combinations of) agreement types:

- Customs Union
- Free Trade Agreement
- Partial Scope Agreement
- Economic Integration Agreement
- Customs Union & Economic Integration Agreement
- Free Trade Agreement & Economic Integration Agreement
- Partial Scope & Economic Integration Agreement

There are four distinct (but not mutually exclusive) types of RTAs:

- A Customs Union (CU), as defined in Paragraph 8(a) of Article XXIV of GATT 1994;
- A Free Trade Agreement (FTA), as defined in Paragraph 8(b) of Article XXIV of GATT 1994;
- A "Partial Scope" Agreement (PS); "Partial Scope" which is not defined or referred to in the WTO Agreement, means that the agreement covers only certain products. Partial scope agreements are notified under paragraph 4(a) of the Enabling Clause.
- An Economic Integration Agreement (EIA), as defined in Article V of GATS.

Some agreements are goods and services agreements at the same time. Therefore, in the database, these RTA types are captured by the following RTA-type dummy variables:

- cu = Customs Union
- fta = Free Trade Agreement
- psa = Partial Scope Agreement
- eia = Economic Integration Agreement
- cueia = Customs Union & Economic Integration Agreement
- ftaeia = Free Trade & Economic Integration Agreement
- psaeia = Partial Scope & Economic Integration Agreement

From the 592 agreements, 26 are CUs, 317 are FTAs, 31 PSAs, 6 EIAs, 5 CU&EIAs, 206 FTA&EIAs, and 1 PSA&EIA.

In addition, there is the following RTA-type dummy variable that captures the combination of all RTA types:

- rta = Regional Trade Agreement, equal to 1 if any of the other RTA-type dummies is 1, otherwise 0.

For more information and definitions, see the WTO website:
http://rtais.wto.org/UserGuide/RTAIS_USER_GUIDE_EN.html

4. Are inactive agreements also included?

Yes, if they are listed by the WTO.

5. What is covered?

Time period: 1950 – 2023.

Country coverage: the underlying design dataset spans the bilateral relationship between 280 countries (some no longer existent, still spanned over the complete time horizon; when matching the data to any dataset those observations will be unused). Hence, there are 280*280*(2023-1950+1) = 5,801,600 observations, including many country pairs where there are no agreements in place for specific years.

6. When was the database last updated?

July 12th, 2024: concerning RTAs.

October 28th, 2024: corrections.

7. What are the available version of the database?

There are two versions in two file formats available:

- the essential database as Stata-dta-file (rta_20241028.dta) and as comma-separated file (rta_20241028.csv).
- the complete database as Stata-dta-file (rta_individual_agreements_20241028.dta) and as comma-separated file (rta_20241028.csv).

The essential database "rta_20241028" includes all RTA-type dummies for "rta", "cu", "fta", "eia", "ps", "ftaeia", "cueia", and "psaeia". The summary statistic looks as follows:

Variable	Obs	Mean	Std. dev.	Min	Max
exporter	0				
importer	0				
year	5,801,600	1986.5	21.36001	1950	2023
rta	5,801,600	.0494639	.2168347	0	1
cu	5,801,600	.0070029	.0833898	0	1
fta	5,801,600	.0191854	.1371762	0	1
psa	5,801,600	.0145625	.1197934	0	1
eia	5,801,600	.004083	.0637679	0	1
cueia	5,801,600	.0043233	.0656095	0	1
ftaeia	5,801,600	.0072925	.085084	0	1
psaeia	5,801,600	.0000569	.0075417	0	1

Variable name	Storage type	Display format	Value label	Variable label
exporter	str3	%9s		
importer	str3	%9s		
year	int	%9.0g		
rta	byte	%9.0g		* Dummy variable equal to 1 for RTA. Please type 'notes' for details.
cu	byte	%9.0g		* Dummy variable equal to 1 for CU. Please type 'notes' for details.
fta	byte	%9.0g		* Dummy variable equal to 1 for FTA. Please type 'notes' for details.
psa	byte	%9.0g		* Dummy variable equal to 1 for PSA. Please type 'notes' for details.
eia	byte	%9.0g		* Dummy variable equal to 1 for EIA. Please type 'notes' for details.
cueia	byte	%9.0g		* Dummy variable equal to 1 for CU&EIA. Please type 'notes' for details..
ftaeia	byte	%9.0g		* Dummy variable equal to 1 for FTA&EIA. Please type 'notes' for details.
psaeia	byte	%9.0g		* Dummy variable equal to 1 for PSA&EIA. Please type 'notes' for details.
				* indicated variables have notes

Sorted by: exporter importer year

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. notes

rta:
  1.  "Dummy variable equal to 1 if any one of CU, FTA, PSA, EIA, CUEIA, FTAEIA, or PSEIA is in place, and 0 otherwise."

cu:
  1.  "Dummy variable equal to 1 if a Customs Union (CU) as defined in Paragraph 8(a) of Article XXIV of GATT 1994 is in place, and 0 otherwise."

fta:
  1.  "Dummy variable equal to 1 if a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) as defined in Paragraph 8(b) of Article XXIV of GATT 1994 is in place, and 0 otherwise."

psa:
  1.  "Dummy variable equal to 1 if a Partial Scope Agreement (PSA) is in place, and 0 otherwise. Partial Scope Agreements are notified under paragraph 4(a) of the Enabling Clause."

eia:
  1.  "Dummy variable equal to 1 if a Economic Integration Agreement (EIA), as defined in Article V of GATS is in place, and 0 otherwise."

cueia:
  1.  "Dummy variable equal to 1 if agreement is CU&EIA, and zero otherwise."

ftaeia:
  1.  "Dummy variable equal to 1 if agreement is FTA&EIA, and zero otherwise."

psaeia:
  1.  "Dummy variable equal to 1 if agreement is PSA&EIA, and zero otherwise."
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The complete database "rta_individual_agreements_20241028" includes three dummies for each of the 592 individual agreements, in addition to the RTA-type dummy variables included in the essential database:

- The first dummy is the overall agreement dummy, named after the agreement, or the 6-letter combination of the 3-letter iso3-country-codes of both of the member countries. It is equal to 1 from the year when the agreement entered into force until the end of the agreement, otherwise 0.
- The second dummy is the first one augmented with the suffix "_n" which is only equal to 1 in the year when the agreement was concluded, otherwise 0.
- The third dummy is the first one augmented with the suffix "_j" which is equal to 1 in all subsequent years but not the founding year, otherwise 0.
- If a country left an agreement, there is an additional dummy, which is the first one augmented with the suffix "_e" which is equal to 1 in the year when the country left the agreement, otherwise 0.

The second and third additional dummy variables allow distinguishing between the effects of forming and founding RTAs. The sum of the second and third dummies is the overall agreement dummy.

8. How do I read the agreement abbreviations?

For bilateral (and sometimes trilateral) agreements the name of the agreement dummy is simply the combination of the iso3-country-codes of the member countries or the agreement name itself. For bigger agreements, the following list of shortcuts was used:

AA	Agadir Agreement
AFCM	African Common Market
AFTA	ASEAN Free Trade Area
APTA	Asia Pacific Trade Agreement
ARCM	Arab Common Market
ARUSHA	Arusha Agreement
BAFTA	Baltic Free Trade Area
CACM	Central American Common Market
CAFTA	Central American Free Trade Area
CAFTADR	Dominican Republic - Central America - United States Free Trade Agreement
CAN	Andean Community
CARICOM	Caribbean Community
CARIFORUM	Caribbean Forum of African, Caribbean and Pacific States
CARIFTA	Caribbean Free Trade Association
CEFTA	Central European Free Trade Agreement
CEMAC	Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa
CENTR	EU - Central America
CER	Australia New Zealand Closer Economic Agreement
CEZ	Common Economic Zone between Russia, Belarus and Kazakhstan
COMESA	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
CIS1	Commonwealth of Independent States Free Trade Agreement
CIS2	Treaty on a Free Trade Area between members of the Commonwealth of Independent States
CPTPP	Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership

CUSFTA	Canada – USA Agreement
DOMCENTR	DOM - Central America
DOMTRI	Colombia - Northern Triangle
EAC	East African Community
EACCUEIA	East African Community CU&EIA since 2010
EAEC	Eurasian Economic Community
EAEU	Eurasian Economic Union
ECO	Economic Cooperation Organization
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EEA	European Economic Area
EFTA	European Free Trade Association
EQCMR	Equatorial Customs Union - Cameroon Association
EU	European Union
EUCARIFORUM	EUCARIFORUM States EPA
EUESAG	EU - Eastern and Southern Africa States Interim EPA
GCC	Gulf Cooperation Council
GHABFA	Ghana-Upper Volta Agreement
GSTP	Global System of Trade Preferences among Developing Countries
GUAM	Organization for Democracy and Economic Development-GUAM
LAFTA	Latin American Free Trade Agreement
LAIA	Latin American Integration Association
MERCOSUR	Mercado Común del Sur - Common market of the south
MSG	Melanesian Spearhead Group
MEXCENTR	MEX - Central America
NAFTA	North American Free Trade Agreement
OCT	Overseas Countries and Territories
PA	Pacific Alliance
PACER Plus	Pacific Agreement on Closer Economic Relations Plus
PAFTA	Pan-Arab Free Trade Area
PATCRA	Australia - Papua New Guinea
PICTA	Pacific Island Countries Trade Agreement
PTN	Protocol on Trade Negotiations
SACU	Southern African Customs Union
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SAFTA	South Asian Free Trade Agreement
SAPTA	South Asian Preferential Trade Arrangement
SPARTECA	South Pacific Regional Trade and Economic Cooperation Agreement
TPSEP	Trans-Pacific Strategic Economic Partnership
TRIPARTITE	Tripartite Agreement
USMCA	United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement
WAEMU	West African Economic and Monetary Union

9. Which countries/country codes are included?

As noted for question 5, we use 280 countries in our database. The list can be found below.

Number	3-digit Code	Country name
1	ABW	Aruba
2	AFG	Afghanistan
3	AFI	French Afar and Issas
4	AGO	Angola
5	AIA	Anguilla
6	ALA	Aland Islands
7	ALB	Albania
8	AND	Andorra
9	ANT	Netherlands Antilles
10	ARE	United Arab Emirates
11	ARG	Argentina
12	ARM	Armenia
13	ASM	American Samoa
14	ATA	Antarctica
15	ATB	British Antarctic Territory
16	ATF	French Southern Territories
17	ATG	Antigua and Barbuda
18	ATN	Dronning Maud Land
19	AUS	Australia
20	AUT	Austria
21	AZE	Azerbaijan
22	BDI	Burundi
23	BEL	Belgium
24	BEN	Benin
25	BES	Bonaire, Sint Eustatius, Saba
26	BFA	Burkina Faso
27	BGD	Bangladesh
28	BGR	Bulgaria
29	BHR	Bahrain
30	BHS	Bahamas
31	BIH	Bosnia and Herzegovina
32	BLM	Saint-Barthélemy
33	BLR	Belarus
34	BLZ	Belize
35	BMU	Bermuda
36	BOL	Bolivia
37	BRA	Brazil
38	BRB	Barbados
39	BRN	Brunei Darussalam
40	BTN	Bhutan
41	BUR	Burma
42	BVT	Bouvet Island
43	BWA	Botswana
44	BYS	Byelorussian SSR Soviet Socialist Republic
45	CAF	Central African Republic
46	CAN	Canada

47	CCK	Cocos (Keeling) Islands
48	CHE	Switzerland
49	CHL	Chile
50	CHN	China
51	CIV	Côte d'Ivoire
52	CMR	Cameroon
53	COD	Congo, Democratic Republic of the
54	COG	Congo (Brazzaville)
55	COK	Cook Islands
56	COL	Colombia
57	COM	Comoros
58	CPV	Cape Verde
59	CRI	Costa Rica
60	CSK	Czechoslovakia
61	CTE	Canton and Enderbury Islands
62	CUB	Cuba
63	CUW	Curacao
64	CXR	Christmas Island
65	CYM	Cayman Islands
66	CYP	Cyprus
67	CZE	Czech Republic
68	DDR	German Democratic Republic
69	DEU	Germany
70	DHY	Dahomey
71	DJI	Djibouti
72	DMA	Dominica
73	DNK	Denmark
74	DOM	Dominican Republic
75	DZA	Algeria
76	ECU	Ecuador
77	EGY	Egypt
78	ERI	Eritrea
79	ESH	Western Sahara
80	ESP	Spain
81	EST	Estonia
82	ETH	Ethiopia
83	FIN	Finland
84	FJI	Fiji
85	FLK	Falkland Islands (Malvinas)
86	FRA	France
87	FRO	Faroe Islands
88	FSM	Micronesia, Federated States of
89	FXX	France, Metropolitan
90	GAB	Gabon
91	GBR	United Kingdom
92	GEL	Gilbert and Ellice Islands
93	GEO	Georgia

94	GGY	Guernsey
95	GHA	Ghana
96	GIB	Gibraltar
97	GIN	Guinea
98	GLP	Guadeloupe
99	GMB	The Gambia
100	GNB	Guinea-Bissau
101	GNQ	Equatorial Guinea
102	GRC	Greece
103	GRD	Grenada
104	GRL	Greenland
105	GTM	Guatemala
106	GUF	French Guiana
107	GUM	Guam
108	GUY	Guyana
109	HKG	Hong Kong, Special Administrative Region of China
110	HMD	Heard Island and Mcdonald Islands
111	HND	Honduras
112	HRV	Croatia
113	HTI	Haiti
114	HUN	Hungary
115	HVO	Upper Volta
116	IDN	Indonesia
117	IMN	Isle of Man
118	IND	India
119	IOT	British Indian Ocean Territory
120	IRL	Ireland
121	IRN	Iran, Islamic Republic of
122	IRQ	Iraq
123	ISL	Iceland
124	ISR	Israel
125	ITA	Italy
126	JAM	Jamaica
127	JEY	Jersey
128	JOR	Jordan
129	JPN	Japan
130	JTN	Johnston Island
131	KAZ	Kazakhstan
132	KEN	Kenya
133	KGZ	Kyrgyzstan
134	KHM	Cambodia
135	KIR	Kiribati
136	KNA	Saint Kitts and Nevis
137	KOR	Korea, Republic of
138	KWT	Kuwait
139	LAO	Lao PDR
140	LBN	Lebanon

141	LBR	Liberia
142	LBY	Libya
143	LCA	Saint Lucia
144	LIE	Liechtenstein
145	LKA	Sri Lanka
146	LSO	Lesotho
147	LTU	Lithuania
148	LUX	Luxembourg
149	LVA	Latvia
150	MAC	Macao, Special Administrative Region of China
151	MAF	Saint-Martin (French part)
152	MAR	Morocco
153	MCO	Monaco
154	MDA	Moldova
155	MDG	Madagascar
156	MDV	Maldives
157	MEX	Mexico
158	MHL	Marshall Islands
159	MID	Midway Islands
160	MKD	Macedonia, Republic of
161	MLI	Mali
162	MLT	Malta
163	MMR	Myanmar
164	MNE	Montenegro
165	MNG	Mongolia
166	MNP	Northern Mariana Islands
167	MOZ	Mozambique
168	MRT	Mauritania
169	MSR	Montserrat
170	MTQ	Martinique
171	MUS	Mauritius
172	MWI	Malawi
173	MYS	Malaysia
174	MYT	Mayotte
175	NAM	Namibia
176	NCL	New Caledonia
177	NER	Niger
178	NFK	Norfolk Island
179	NGA	Nigeria
180	NHB	New Hebrides
181	NIC	Nicaragua
182	NIU	Niue
183	NLD	Netherlands
184	NOR	Norway
185	NPL	Nepal
186	NRU	Nauru
187	NTZ	Neutral Zone

188	NZL	New Zealand
189	OMN	Oman
190	PAK	Pakistan
191	PAN	Panama
192	PCI	Pacific Islands, Trust Territory of the
193	PCN	Pitcairn
194	PCZ	Panama Canal Zone
195	PER	Peru
196	PHL	Philippines
197	PLW	Palau
198	PNG	Papua New Guinea
199	POL	Poland
200	PRI	Puerto Rico
201	PRK	Korea, Democratic People's Republic of
202	PRT	Portugal
203	PRY	Paraguay
204	PSE	Palestinian Territory, Occupied
205	PUS	U.S. Miscellaneous Pacific Islands
206	PYF	French Polynesia
207	QAT	Qatar
208	REU	Réunion
209	RHO	Southern Rhodesia
210	ROM	Romania, Socialist Republic of
211	ROU	Romania
212	RUS	Russian Federation
213	RWA	Rwanda
214	SAU	Saudi Arabia
215	SCG	Serbia, Montenegro
216	SDN	Sudan
217	SEN	Senegal
218	SGP	Singapore
219	SGS	South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands
220	SHN	Saint Helena
221	SJM	Svalbard and Jan Mayen Islands
222	SKM	Sikkim
223	SLB	Solomon Islands
224	SLE	Sierra Leone
225	SLV	El Salvador
226	SMR	San Marino
227	SOM	Somalia
228	SPM	Saint Pierre and Miquelon
229	SRB	Serbia
230	SSD	South Sudan
231	STP	Sao Tome and Principe
232	SUN	USSR
233	SUR	Suriname
234	SVK	Slovakia

235	SVN	Slovenia
236	SWE	Sweden
237	SWZ	Swaziland
238	SXM	Sint Maarten (Dutch part)
239	SYC	Seychelles
240	SYR	Syrian Arab Republic (Syria)
241	TCA	Turks and Caicos Islands
242	TCD	Chad
243	TGO	Togo
244	THA	Thailand
245	TJK	Tajikistan
246	TKL	Tokelau
247	TKM	Turkmenistan
248	TLS	Timor-Leste
249	TMP	Portuguese Timor
250	TON	Tonga
251	TTO	Trinidad and Tobago
252	TUN	Tunisia
253	TUR	Turkey
254	TUV	Tuvalu
255	TWN	Taiwan, Republic of China
256	TZA	Tanzania, United Republic of
257	UGA	Uganda
258	UKR	Ukraine
259	UMI	United States Minor Outlying Islands
260	URY	Uruguay
261	USA	United States of America
262	UZB	Uzbekistan
263	VAT	Holy See (Vatican City State)
264	VCT	Saint Vincent and Grenadines
265	VDR	Viet-Nam, Democratic Republic of
266	VEN	Venezuela, Bolivarian Republic of
267	VGB	British Virgin Islands
268	VIR	Virgin Islands, US
269	VNM	Vietnam
270	VUT	Vanuatu
271	WAK	Wake Island
272	WLF	Wallis and Futuna Islands
273	WSM	Samoa
274	YDM	Yemen, Democratic
275	YEM	Yemen
276	YUG	Yugoslavia, Socialist Federal Republic of
277	ZAF	South Africa
278	ZAR	Zaire
279	ZMB	Zambia
280	ZWE	Zimbabwe

10. Are there still mistakes in the file?

The underlying do-files have passed several rounds of debugging. However, in case you find content- or typo-related errors, we would be very thankful if you let us know.

11. How can you cite the database?

In case you use our data, we would kindly like to ask you to refer to the data as:

"Mario Larch's Regional Trade Agreements Database from Egger and Larch (2008)" where Egger and Larch (2008) refers to the following paper:

Egger, Peter H. and Mario Larch (2008), Interdependent Preferential Trade Agreement Memberships: An Empirical Analysis, **Journal of International Economics** 76(2), pp. 384-399.

12. Selected Papers using this database

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17. Cyrus, Teresa L. (2021), Why Do Countries Form Regional Trade Agreements? A Discrete-Time Survival Analysis, **Open Economies Review** *32*(2), pp. 417-434.

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19. Larch, Mario, Aiko Schmeißer and Joshka Wanner (2021), A Tale of (almost) 1001 Coefficients: The Deep and Heterogeneous Effects of the EU-Turkey Customs Union, **Journal of Common Market Studies** *59*(2), pp. 242-260.

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