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The Art of the Mini-Deals: The Invisible Part of EU Trade Policy

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Brussels, 9 October 2023 - In his latest policy brief titled "The Art of the Mini-Deals: The Invisible Part of EU Trade Policy," Lucian Cernat challenges conventional European Union (EU) trade policy perceptions. His work delves into the world of trade mini-deals, shedding light on these lesser-known instruments poised to shape the EU's future trade landscape significantly.

"Trade policy is usually defined by the kinds of deals it can strike," says Cernat. "Typically, the attention is focused on big multilateral trade rounds or bilateral free trade agreements (FTAs). However, this policy brief goes beyond the conventional wisdom and sheds light on other trade agreements (trade mini-deals), which were less in the focus of EU trade experts and academics."

The author's comprehensive analysis offers a preliminary assessment and a taxonomy of these trade mini-deals. By taking a systematic look, he reveals that FTAs represent merely the tip of the trade policy iceberg. Beyond FTAs, the EU has entered into many trade mini-deals, each with its unique implications for EU trade.

The paper concludes by briefly assessing the evolving role that such mini-deals could play in the future. As trade policy objectives shift and international trade negotiations become increasingly complex, these lesser-known instruments may be key to unlocking new opportunities and addressing emerging challenges.

**Disclaimer: The opinions expressed herein are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect an official position of the European Commission*

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