

## **Abstract**

This thesis investigates the determinants for the inclusion of non-trade policy objectives (NTPOs) in the European Union's (EU) trade agreements. By examining 15 trade agreements from distinct regions, this research identifies patterns and variations in the inclusion of NTPOs, concentrating on key areas such as trade and sustainable development, human rights, gender equality, and labour conditions. The study demonstrates the role of civil society organisations (CSOs) and the politicisation of trade policy in shaping trade policy. The results reveal that economic and geopolitical factors, as well as global standards, influence the inclusion of NTPO objectives in EU trade agreements. Furthermore, this research contributes to the understanding of EU trade policy-making, stressing the importance of normative values in trade relations and the impact of both internal and external dynamics on the policy-making process. Finally, the conclusions drawn provide insights for policymakers on improving the coherence of EU trade agreements.