Abstract
This article examines the hypothesis that preferential rules of origin have a protectionist character. Aimed at this, the analytical capacity of the two variables ignored by the standard argument is substantiated. a) the wage and its predominance in the explanation of the replacement of suppliers of labor-intensive products. and b) the administrative cost caused by the superimposition of rules of origin. In each case the extensions are formalized and their theoretical consequences marked out.

Keywords
Rule of origin, trade protection, wage disparities, administrative cost, preferential trade.