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Non-Tariff Measures in ASEAN: Barriers to Intra-Regional Trade?

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October 27, 2011

Abstract:
This study seeks to investigate empirically the directional impacts of NTMs on intra-ASEAN exports given that not all NTMs pose constraints to trade. Though NTMs are found to be diverse and intense for specific bilateral pairs, there is no empirical evidence of adverse impacts of NTMs on intra-ASEAN exports. Instead, the findings of the study based on an augmented gravity model suggest that NTMs promote intra-regional exports, irrespective of broad commodity types. The popular perception of the pervasive nature of NTMs, based on the frequency and types of NTMs, is plausibly flawed as the export coverage of NTMs for the various bilateral pairs is not astoundingly high to deter intra-regional trade. This study therefore informs the policy debate on the non-issue of NTMs per se in posing any significant market access problems for intra-ASEAN trade.

Keywords: export coverage ratio, gravity model, ASEAN

JEL Classifications: F10, F13, F15

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