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Proliferation of Non-Tariff Measures in China – Their Relevance for ASEAN

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July 5, 2011

Abstract:
This paper explores the various non-tariff measures (NTMs) that co-exist in China and that directly influence imports into the country. Given the intensity and scope of technical measures imposed by China, the directional impacts of technical barriers to trade (TBTs) on bilateral ASEAN-China exports are investigated empirically using an augmented gravity model. The results imply that Chinese TBTs do have some trade depressing effects from the ASEAN perspective. However, sectoral trade effects of TBTs are important as dual effects exist within some TBT intensive product groups. This informs the policy debate on the effects of NTMs from the ASEAN-China perspective more specifically, and the “South-South” context more generally on two fronts. First, the identification of specific trade restricting measures for the affected sectors will assist in determining policy priorities within the ASEAN-China context. Second, trade facilitation measures that increase the business costs to the ASEAN exporters also warrant attention in addressing the scale of market access issues in China.

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