

FASTER CUSTOMS, FASTER TRADE

USING TECHNOLOGY FOR TRADE FACILITATION



Faster customs, faster trade

Using technology for trade facilitation

About the paper

This report offers policy advice to explore synergies between the WTO Trade Facilitation and Information Technology Agreements. These agreements reinforce each other, and can boost trade. Used well, policymakers can set in motion technology-based national trade facilitation reforms, especially for customs processes.

ITC produced this report in cooperation with Huawei Technologies. It encourages the use of ICT tools and schemes such as the Authorized Economic Operator. These reduce costs and time for small firms, and help them be competitive in regional and global markets.

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Foreword

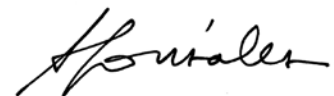
As the world becomes increasingly connected and doing business becomes more digitally enabled, it is vital that advances in technology are used to reinvigorate trade and boost inclusive and sustainable economic growth. This is especially true for the base of the pyramid who may still not have access to even basic technology of the 21st century, such as internet connection.

Trade in information and communications technologies (ICTs) and business environment policies play important enabling roles in achieving global trade growth. The World Trade Organization's Trade Facilitation Agreement has laid the groundwork for more efficient trade at the border and the Information Technology Agreement has helped to facilitate the trade of ICT goods and, in turn, promote access to technologies that can support the reform and implementation of national trade facilitation agendas.

These agreements complement each other by reducing costs, simplifying procedures and improving the efficiency of cross-border flows. These factors have not only resulted in enhanced global trade of ICT products but have also allowed both government agencies and businesses, including micro, small and medium-sized enterprises to rapidly integrate productivity-enhancing technologies into their operations.

Taken together, technology trade and trade facilitation policies can act as catalysts to upgrade ICT infrastructure and lower trade costs. Ultimately, all of these improvements help to increase access to lower-cost products that can improve the lives of consumers in developing countries and close the digital divide.

The International Trade Centre and Huawei Technologies, a leading global provider of ICT infrastructure, have developed this publication to help policymakers understand important interplay between international trade facilitation policies and their impact on future development of the global ICT industry. It aims to help governments recognize that ICT solutions can drive the implementation of national trade facilitation measures, improve administrative efficiency, and mitigate increasingly complex risks associated with international trade.



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