FEATURE STORY

A Trade Data Revolution Is Uncovering Hidden Patterns in Global Export Markets

Over the last decade, a revolution in trade research has forced countries to give greater attention to the central actor in global trade—the firm. Aided by the creation of the World Bank’s Exporter Dynamics Database, the first dataset on exporters around the world, policy makers now have insights into previously hidden patterns of trade in developing countries. Read more →

Presentation | Video | Exporter Dynamics Database

RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS

✔ Product Standards and Firms’ Export Decisions
Firms are less likely to export to markets where product standards are more stringent than those they face at home.

✔ Exporter Behavior, Country Size and Stage of Development: Evidence from the Exporter Dynamics Database
Developing country exporters are not large and dominant like their rich country counterparts. Entry rates into export markets are also higher, but new entrants are less likely to survive.
Domestic Value Added in Exports: Theory and Firm Evidence from China

China’s trade and investment liberalization deepened its engagement in global value chains and this led to a greater variety and use of domestic materials at lower prices and a higher domestic value added in its exports.

Export superstars

Large exporting firms shape the export patterns of a country, and a country’s revealed comparative advantage in a sector can be based on the exports of a single firm.

Are the benefits of export support durable? Evidence from Tunisia

While the FAMEX export promotion program in Tunisia initially enhanced exports and diversification of beneficiaries, these benefits did not last.

Who are America’s star firms?

A new approach to calculating returns that accounts for measurement error in intangible capital suggests that star firms are not using pricing power to generate excessively high returns, but a small subset of exceptional firms have the potential to exercise market power in the future.

Insights from World Bank Research on Trade and Globalization

World Bank Research Digest, Fall 2016.
Research on trade patterns focuses increasingly on the microeconomic aspects of international integration. The Exporter Dynamics Database draws together transaction-level customs data for more than 70 countries to help us better understand trade success.

To access the latest Policy Research Working Papers, please click here.
Global trade plunged by 23% in 2008-2009 after the financial crisis and has been almost stagnant since then. What were the underlying micro sources of this trade collapse: were exporters’ ability to participate in foreign markets or their pace of growth most hurt? Evidence from high-income countries shows that declines in the intensive margin—average exporter size—explain most of the decline in global trade. But what about developing countries?

Read the blog | Database | Video of database release »

UPCOMING EVENTS

- September 24, 2018 | Policy Research Talk: A New Look at the Factors Driving Investment Project Performance
- October 23, 2018 | Policy Research Talk: Gendered Language
- November 12-16, 2018 | Short Course: Impact Evaluation Methods (Kuala Lumpur)
- January 15-16, 2019 | Globalization: Contents and Discontents (Kuala Lumpur)

To see more events, please click here.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

New Research Hub in Chile

The World Bank Group’s Research and Development Center in Chile, created jointly by the Government of Chile and the World Bank Group's Development Economics Vice-Presidency (DEC), opened on December 13th, 2017. The staff carry out research activities in coordination with other World Bank units, including the Malaysia Hub, local and regional policy makers, and academia.

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MORE BLOGS FROM THE RESEARCH DEPARTMENT

For refugees, the average duration of exile is going down. Why is this bad news?
Xavier Devictor and Quy-Toan Do, Let’s Talk Development, August 20, 2018

Nobody wants to be a refugee — and nobody wants to be a refugee for a long time. So, it seems fair to say that a shorter average duration of exile is a positive development. But a detailed look at the numbers tells a different story.

Read more »
We cannot be sure when and how the next crisis will strike, but it surely will. Finance is risky business and crises cannot be eliminated. The ultimate goal of public policy is to minimize the frequency and severity of crises.