

# WTO END-YEAR TRADE MONITORING REPORT

This WTO Trade Monitoring Report covers trade and trade-related developments during the period from 16 October 2021 to 15 October 2022. This annual report by the WTO Director-General is provided for in the Trade Policy Review Mechanism (TPRM) mandate, which aims to assist the Trade Policy Review Body (TPRB) in undertaking an annual overview of developments in the international trading environment.



The WTO Secretariat strives to ensure that the Trade Monitoring Reports are factual and objective. Since 2009, the Reports have sought to provide nuance to developments in the area of international trade.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This **WTO Trade Monitoring Report** on trade-related developments comes at a time when the global economy continues to face multiple challenges. The war in Ukraine, events related to climate change, soaring food and energy prices as well as the continuing ramifications of the COVID-19 pandemic are having serious implications for the global economy. The volume of world merchandise trade is expected to increase by 3.5% in 2022 and to further slow in 2023, with an expansion of just 1.0% for the year, down sharply from the previous estimate of 3.4%.

The Report provides evidence that the pace of implementation of new restrictions by WTO Members, in particular on the export side, has increased since 2020, first in the context of the pandemic and more recently in the context of the war in Ukraine and the food security crisis. WTO Members have lifted some of these **export restrictions** during the review period. As of mid-October 2022, 52 export restrictions on food, feed and fertilizers and 27 COVID-19-related export restrictions on essential products to combat the spread of the virus were still in place.

WTO Members introduced **more trade-facilitating than trade-restrictive measures** on goods, unrelated to the pandemic, during the review period. The trade coverage of the trade-facilitating measures was estimated at USD 1,160.5 billion, and that of trade-restrictive at USD 278.0 billion.

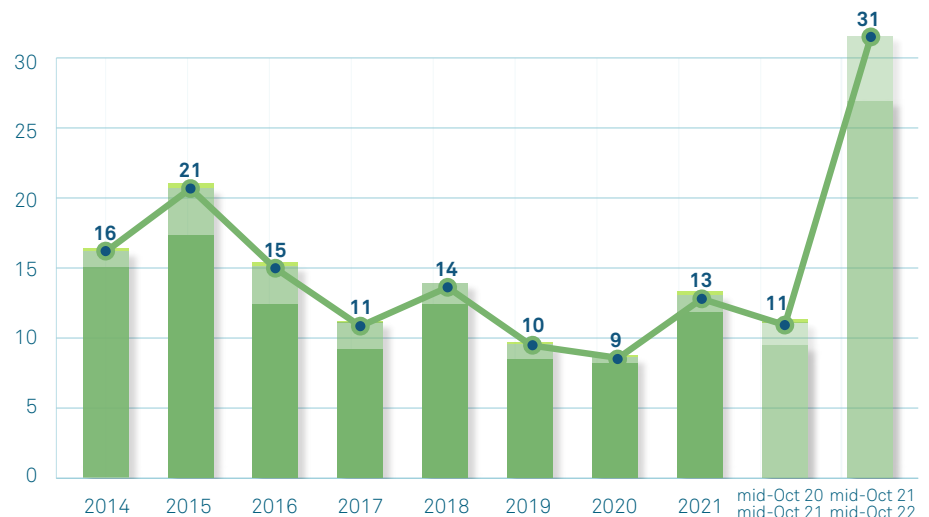


### Trade Monitoring DATABASE

The **Trade Monitoring database** (TMDB) provides information on trade measures implemented by WTO Members and Observers since October 2008.

The average number of trade-facilitating measures per month introduced during the review period was the highest recorded since 2012. Most of the facilitation happened on the import side while most of restrictions took place on the export side.

## Trade facilitating measures, average per month, 2014-mid-October 2022

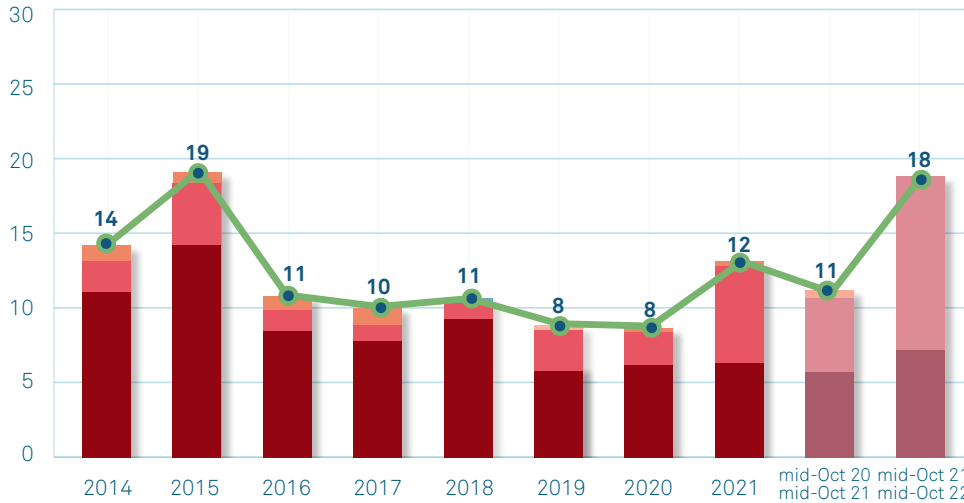


Source: WTO Secretariat

Legend: Import-facilitating (dark green), % of world imports (right axis) (light green), Other facilitating (medium green), Total (line with dots)

For the first time since 2009, the number of export restrictions have outpaced that of import restrictions during the review period.

## Trade restrictive measures, average per month, 2014-mid-October 2022



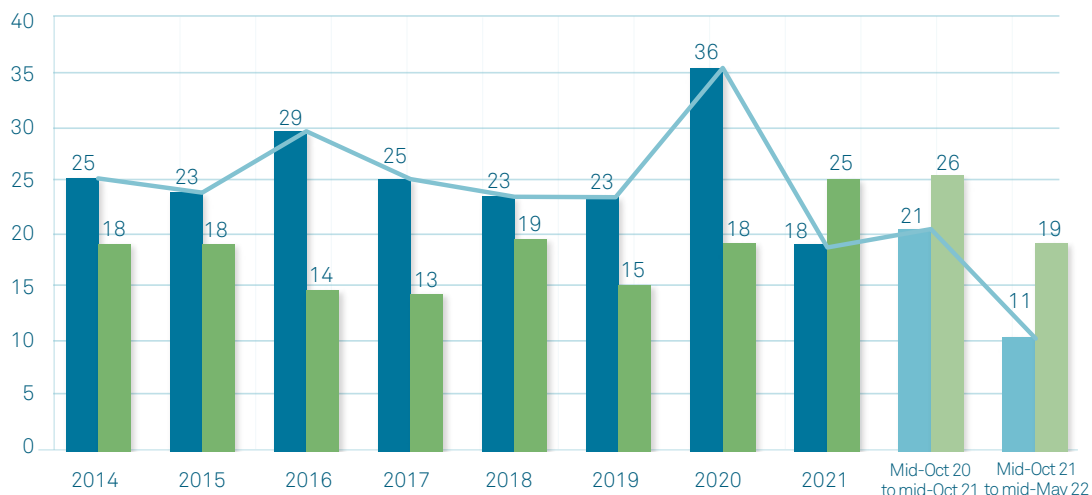
Source: WTO Secretariat

Legend: Import-restrictive (dark red), Export-restrictive (light red), Other restrictive (orange), Total (green line)

The **stockpile** of **import restrictions** in force continued to grow. By mid-October 2022, some 9.3% of global imports continue to be affected by import restrictions implemented since 2009 and which are still in force.

Initiations of **trade remedy** investigations by WTO Members declined sharply during the review period (10.9 initiations per month, the lowest since the beginning of the trade monitoring exercise in 2009) after reaching its highest peak in 2020 (36.1 initiations per month). Trade remedy actions remain an important trade policy tool for many WTO Members, accounting for 37.4% of all non COVID 19 related trade measures on goods recorded in this Report. Anti-dumping continues to be the most frequent trade remedy action in terms of initiations and terminations.

## Trade remedy initiations and terminations, average per month, 2014-mid-October 2022



Source: WTO Secretariat

Note: Values are rounded

Legend: Initiations avg per month (dark blue), Terminations avg per month (green), Trend initiations (light blue line)

The implementation of new **COVID-19 trade-related measures by WTO Members** has decelerated over the past 12 months, in the area of goods, services and IP. The number of new COVID-19-related support measures by WTO Members and Observers to mitigate the social and economic impacts of the pandemic also decreased sharply over the review period.

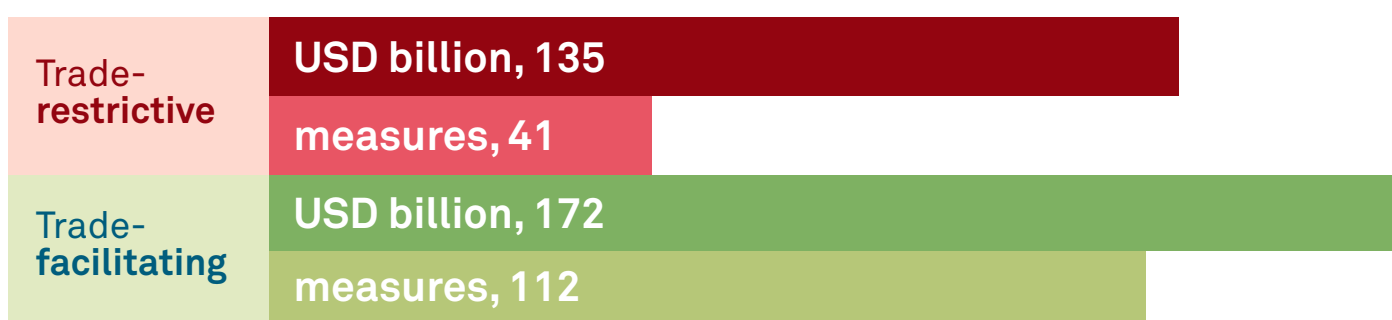
Since the outbreak of the pandemic, most of the 443 COVID-19-related trade and trade-related measures in the area of goods introduced by WTO Members and Observers were trade facilitating (55.5%). Members continued to phase out the

pandemic-related measures, and in particular the restrictive ones. According to information received by the Secretariat, as of mid-October 2022, 79.2% of the COVID-19-related trade restrictions have been repealed, leaving 27 export restrictions and 14 import restrictions in place.

Although the number of the pandemic-related trade restrictions that are still in place has decreased, their trade coverage remains important (41 import and export restrictions USD 134.6 billion) compared to that of trade-facilitating measures (112 import and export measures USD 172.4 billion) (Chart 3.8).

## COVID-19 trade and trade-related measures on goods in force, by mid October 2022

(Number of measures and trade coverage in USD billion)



Source: WTO Secretariat

## COVID-19 and world trade

The WTO dedicated portal on **COVID-19 and world trade** provides updated trade-related information on the impact the pandemic has had on exports and imports, including COVID-19 measures taken by WTO Members and Observers in the area of **goods, services** and **intellectual property**. It also provides information on COVID-19 related **support measures**

communicated by WTO Members and Observers to the Secretariat. This information has been compiled by the WTO Secretariat and is an informal situation report and an attempt to provide transparency with respect to measures taken in the context of the pandemic. These lists of measures are not exhaustive and are updated regularly by the WTO Secretariat.

This Report is set against a backdrop of **slowing international trade** as the global economy struggles with several interconnected shocks, including the war in Ukraine, high inflation, devastation left by several climate change-related events, and lingering side-effects from the COVID 19 pandemic. The volume of world merchandise trade is expected to increase by 3.5% in 2022 and further decelerate in 2023, with an expansion of just 1.0% for the year, down sharply from the previous estimate of 3.4%.

The Report also covers several other important trade-related developments that took place in the areas of SPS, TBT and Agriculture and the discussions on domestic regulation in services, electronic commerce, investment facilitation for development, micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs), trade finance, and women's economic empowerment.

The successful conclusion of the 12th WTO Ministerial Conference (MC12) on 17 June 2022 in Geneva secured a series of unprecedented multilaterally agreed outcomes on fisheries subsidies, on the WTO response to the current and future pandemics, including a waiver of certain intellectual property (IP) requirements concerning compulsory licensing for COVID 19 vaccines, on food security, on WTO reform and on the e-commerce customs duties' moratorium.

WTO Members must build on the momentum achieved at MC12 and cooperate to keep markets open and predictable to allow goods to flow to where they are needed the most, remove supply chains bottlenecks and get global value chains (GVCs) back to the disinflationary role that they have played in the past.