Trade composition

Figure B.3: Product shares in world merchandise exports since 1900 (percentage)

Sources: UN Statistical Yearbook (1959), GATT Special Studies No.5 and No.7, and WTO Secretariat estimates.
Trade geography: the case of China

Figure: Chinese Trade - Source: IMF, World Economic Outlook 2014
Trade geography: North-South trade

Figure B.8: Shares of “North-North”, “North-South” and “South-South” trade in world merchandise exports, 1990-2011 (percentage share)

Source: WTO Secretariat.

Note: South includes Central and Eastern Europe before 2000, equal to 1.6 per cent of world trade in 1995.
Trade geography: interregional trade

Figure B.15.B: Share of total trade between geographic regions in world trade, 2011 (percentage)

Source: WTO Secretariat estimates.

Note: World trade includes intra-EU trade. Arrow weights based on shares in 2011. Trade within regions and with unspecified destinations represented 54% of world trade in 2011.
Causes of the growth of world trade

The decline of transport and communication costs relative to 1930

Sea freight corresponds to average international freight charges per tonne. Passenger air transport corresponds to average airline revenue per passenger mile until 2000 spliced to US import air passenger fares afterwards. International calls correspond to cost of a three-minute call from New York to London.


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Causes of the growth of world trade

Drop in tariff rates

US Tariff rate (%)
Causes of the growth of world trade
The tariff drop for developing countries is specially strong

MFN Applied Average Tariffs, 2016

*Intra-EU excluded from calculation, includes ad valorem equivalents of specific tariffs.
Source: TRAINS (WITS)
The US may soon have higher average tariffs than India

Tariff rate, applied weighted mean (%)
Import content of exports  Total, % of gross exports, 2016 or latest available

Source: OECD Statistics on Trade in Value Added: Trade in value added

- United States: 9.0%
- Japan: 13.4%
- United Kingdom: 15.4%
- China (People's Republic): 16.6%
- Germany: 20.3%
- Canada: 20.6%
- Italy: 22.0%
- France: 22.1%