

Levelling the Playing Field of Digital Trade

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Digitalization has drawn attention to a wide range of issues related to global trade governance. There is a high demand for new laws and rules to be introduced to level the playing field for digital trade. Among many approaches, preferential trade agreements are widely used as the laboratories for new rules and disciplines for the digital economy.

Asia is among the global frontiers in exploring new rules on regulating the digital economy. Some notable achievements include the signing of the ASEAN Agreement on E-commerce and the workplan, the e-commerce chapter concluded in the ASEAN-Australia-New Zealand Free Trade Agreement (AANZFTA), the CPTPP and the RCEP, as well as DEFA's attempts to boost for digital integration.

This presentation shares the viewpoints on global rule settings on digital trade, as well as how Asia could foster regional development via levelling the playing field. It is based on (i) the outcomes of ERIA 2019-2021 research project on Facilitating Digital Trade in ASEAN and East Asia, (ii) ERIA study on The Indo-Pacific Partnership and Digital Trade Rule-settings, and (iii) the ongoing ERIA research project on Asian FTAs in Leveling the Playing Field of Digital Trade.