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## TRENDS IN SOUTH-SOUTH TRADE ACTIVITIES OF EAST ASIA PACIFIC AND SOUTH ASIA

### ABSTRACT

The aim of this article is to analyse trends in trade throughout the global South, focusing on two regions of Asia: East Asia and Pacific, and South Asia. Unlike many recent texts which tend to focus on the activities of China and India, and their consequences for the developed economies (mainly US and Europe), this article aims to identify trends in trade between developing countries, with a special emphasis on non-Chinese and non-Indian actors.

In attempting to measure the Asian developing regions' engagement in the economic cooperation across the global South over the period of 2000–2019, an emphasis is placed on relative data (South-South trade as a percentage of total imports/exports), as opposed to absolute data (trade volumes for exports/imports in USD). This allows us to identify and compare trends in engagement for each individual actor regardless of their economic power. Important changes in the character of goods traded (i.e. leading import/export categories) can also be seen over the whole 20-year period.

While the participation of East Asia Pacific and South Asia in South-South trade undoubtedly grew after 2000, largely due to impressive performances of China and India. However, the economic might of these giants should not overshadow the performances of their smaller counterparts, who also play an integral role in setting the trends this article hopes to identify. In fact, in some particular years, the group of non-Chinese economies of East Asia Pacific, and the group of non-Indian countries of South Asia, outperformed both China, and India, when South-South trade was measured as a percentage of their total imports and exports.

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Intraregional trade became the dominant component of East Asia Pacific trade over the 20-year period. This was not the case for South Asia, which might be seen as an obstacle for future development.

The positive experience of these two regions might be used as a blueprint to extend networks of trading relationships across the global South through which new value chains can be created. While this might be seen as somewhat controversial from a Northern perspective, it would inevitably lead to strengthening political relationships between developing regions, helping to balance the global economy, and provide opportunities for Southern-led capital flows to Africa, the Middle East, and Latin America and the Caribbean.

**Keywords:** developing Asia; South-South trade; East Asia and Pacific; South Asia

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The United Nations defines South-South cooperation as ‘a broad framework for collaboration among countries of the South in the political, economic, social, cultural, environmental and technical domains’. This collaboration ‘is managed by developing countries themselves, with active participation from Governments, public and private sector actors, academia and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) among others’ (United Nations, 2018a, p. 3). Scholarly analysis of South-South cooperation tends to focus on various development projects, sponsored by emerging donors with an aim of resolving, or at least minimising, social and economic problems in other developing countries (Bergamaschi, Moore & Tickner, 2017; Besharati & MacFeely, 2019, p. 6), while journalists, pundits, and other commentators tend to offer perspectives of a more overtly political nature (e.g. the rise of China). The importance and complexity of trade should not be overlooked in any attempt to fully understand developing international relationships, and failure to explore their details would render any analysis of South-South cooperation incomplete.

This paper aims to analyse trends in the development of trade relationships throughout the global South, focusing on two developing regions of Asia: 1. South Asia (SA), and 2. East Asia and Pacific – excluding Australia, Japan, Korea, and New Zealand (for the sake of brevity and clarity, I will henceforth refer to this group as the developing EAP countries). The United Nations Secretary General’s annual report (United Nations, 2018b) tells us that a great deal of multilateral effort has been made to promote trade initiatives between developing countries. We should remember that benefits of these trade relationships are not only limited to the regions of the South, but can also help to stimulate the global economy as a whole. Recently, thanks to statistical work done by several international organisations, it has become easier to examine the scope of ongoing trade between the countries of the global South and to identify the challenges they face. Despite the improvement in its availability, there are still problems with how the data on South-South trade is presented. Usually, this is done either from a global perspective, showing the South-South share of total imports/exports within the world economy (e.g. WTO, 2018, pp. 19, 67, 77–78; Dahi & Demir, 2017, pp. 1452–1455), or from the perspective of a particular developing country and/or region (e.g. Didier, 2017, pp. 139–154; Shafaeddin, 2012). A clearer illustration of the actual levels of trade being carried out can be achieved by taking a more mesoscale approach to the

dynamics of the economic relations between regions (examples of sources using this interregional analysis: Shirotori & Molina, 2009, pp. 4–7; UNCTAD & JETRO, 2008, pp. 4–6; Athukorala, 2011, pp. 12–35; Bernhardt, 2016, p. 100). This also allows us to see which of the regions under scrutiny have been successful in strengthening their position, both economically and politically, and how it was achieved.

Due to the economic size of China, and the associated political implications involved, a lot of attention is paid to Chinese trade with other countries of the global South. In their study Gordon H. Hanson and Raymond Robertson assessed the impact of China on the exports of other, mostly developing, economies that specialised in manufacturing. The results showed that ‘even for ‘developing countries highly specialised in manufacturing, it appears China’s expansion has represented only a modest negative shock’ (Hanson & Robertson, 2008, p. 4). Yong He (2013, p. 28–38) econometrically tested data on the volumes and structure of Sub-Saharan Africa’s intraregional and extraregional trade (relations with the USA, France, and China) in the period 1995–2005. He claims that imports from China, generally, stimulated African countries’ exports, whereas such a significant effect was not recorded in the case of goods imported from the USA and France. He concludes with the argument that when ‘the absorptive capability of the import country is limited and (or) a sizeable substitution effect of importing intermediate goods on the import country is present, it is better to import from a Southern country with a superior technology than from a Northern country with a very advanced technology’. Vera Z. Eichenauer, Andreas Fuchs and Lutz Brückner in their 2018 paper (p. 1–48) using local surveys and 2002–2013 data on Chinese trade, aid, and investments targeted at Latin America, evaluated the effectiveness of Chinese influence on recipient societies. The results of this study showed that such an impact existed, but it was not always successful since the perception of Chinese activities was different in different social groups: The Chinese image improved among the richer, better educated, and younger sections of the population, while other, less privileged groups more often presented negative opinions about China. Recently, many texts focus on the ecologically related problems of Chinese trade with other developing nations (e.g. Meng, Mi & Guan, 2018; Lin & Xu, 2019; Wang & Yang, 2020).

This analysis uses 2000–2019 data (at the time of writing we still lack the data for 2020) on imports/exports from United Nations Statistics Division’s UN COMTRADE (United Nations International Trade Statistics Database) obtained through the World Integrated Trade Solution, which is a joint project of the United Nations, World Bank, World Trade Organization, and others.

This analysis hopes to answer a number of questions: What is the scale of South-South trade flow in relation to total imports and total exports of the regions under consideration? To what extent have China, and Indian, and other Asian actors been successful in increasing their trade with partners in the global South? What percentage of South-South trade is intraregional? How did the character of South-South trade change over the two decades between 2000 and 2019?

Hypothesis 1: The developing countries of East Asia and South Asia not only increased the intraregional component of their trade, but also expanded interregional activities with other regions of the global South, as is made apparent by the relative data relating to their total imports and total exports.

Hypothesis 2: Trends in South-South trade are not set only by the exports from and imports to China and India, but are also determined by the interactions of other developing countries from the East Asia Pacific, and South Asia.

## OUTLINE AND METHODOLOGY

The article is made up of an introduction, followed by two separate sections analysing the trade data relating to East Asia Pacific countries, and South Asia. Each section starts with a description of the region's level of engagement in South-South trade, and how this changed over the period 2000–2019. This is illustrated by presenting total South-South import/export figures as a percentage of total global import/export figures (comprising both North-South and South-South components). In order to identify who the main trade partners were, and what percentages of each region's total imports/exports can be deemed South-South trade, the following two formulas are used.

- For the calculation of South-South exports:

$$A_R^t = \frac{\sum_{R=1}^5 EXP_{R \rightarrow S}^t}{\sum_{R=1}^9 EXP_{R \rightarrow T}^t} * 100\%$$

Where the above mentioned variables stand for:

A – South-South share in the particular global South region's exports of goods

t – time (2000–2019 period of analysis, annual data)

R – regions under analysis (reporting countries):

1 – South Asia (SA)

2 – East Asia and Pacific – excluding Australia, Japan, Korea, and New Zealand (for the sake of brevity and clarity, I will henceforth refer to this group as the developing EAP countries)

S – trade partner regions of the global South

1 – SA

2 – developing EAP countries

3 – Middle East and North Africa (excluding Israel) – MENA

4 – Sub-Saharan Africa – SSA

5 – Latin America and the Caribbean – LAC

T – total trade partners

1 – SA

2 – developing EAP countries

3 – MENA

4 – SSA

5 – LAC

6 – Europe (plus Israel)

7 – North America

- 8 – Australia, New Zealand, Japan, Korea (the developed countries of East Asia Pacific)  
 9 – Unspecified countries

$Exp_{r \rightarrow S}$  – a particular region's South-South exports (exports of goods to all regions of the global South; in USD)

$Exp_{r \rightarrow T}$  – a particular region's total exports (exports of goods to all regions of the global South, the global North and unspecified partners; in USD)

- For the calculation of South-South imports:

$$B_R^t = \frac{\sum_{R=1}^5 ImP_{R \leftarrow S}^t}{\sum_{R=1}^9 ImP_{R \leftarrow T}^t} * 100\%$$

$ImP_{R \leftarrow S}$  – a particular region's South-South imports (imports of goods from all regions of the global South; in USD);

$ImP_{R \leftarrow T}$  – a particular region's total imports (imports of goods from all regions of the global South, the global North and unspecified partners; in USD).

One of the paper's objectives is to test whether or not the trends in South-South trade activities were exclusively set by the regions' leading economies (China and India). In order to do this we need to filter the data in such a way that the figures for imports into China are subtracted from aggregated import figures for East Asia Pacific, and figures for imports into India are subtracted from the aggregated import figures for South Asia. Then, the Chinese component in imports into each of the other East Asia Pacific countries needs to be filtered out. Obviously, the same calculation is required for the Indian component of imports into other countries of South Asia. The same methodology is repeated to identify and filter Chinese and Indian components of South-South exports. As a result, we need to alter regions under analysis in our in our two formulas.

$$C_{R'}^t = \frac{\sum_{R'=1}^5 Exp_{R' \rightarrow S}^t}{\sum_{R'=1}^9 Exp_{R' \rightarrow T}^t} * 100\%$$

Where the new variables stand for:

C – South-South share in the altered region's exports of goods

R' – regions under analysis (reporting countries):

1' – SA minus India

2' – developing EAP countries minus China (PRC, Hong Kong SAR + Macao SAR).

$$D_{R'}^t = \frac{\sum_{R'=1}^5 ImP_{R' \leftarrow S}^t}{\sum_{R'=1}^9 ImP_{R' \leftarrow T}^t} * 100\%$$

Where the newly introduced variable stands for:

D – South-South share in the altered region's imports of goods.

To demonstrate the changing character of trade across the global South between 2000 and 2019, we identify the main categories of imports from and exports to developing regions. Due to a gap in available data using the amended nomenclature agreed from 1996, the analysis uses the 1988/1992 Harmonized System (HS) tariff nomenclature, which divides all internationally traded goods into over 5000 groups, which can be further reduced to 16 broad categories (WCO, 2012; United Nations, 2017; WITS, n.d.). For the purpose of this article, a main trade category is one which amounts to 10% or more of total imports/exports between two regions. The article highlights the most important trends in South-South imports and exports of SA and the developing EAP countries, based on the mean percentage value of trade with all of developing regions for the period of 2000–2019, the minimum and maximum recorded annual values for each category, the values of a standard deviation and kurtosis. The article further illustrates the most important products dominating the ‘region to region’ perspective, and it compares their position at the starting point (2000) and the end-point (2019) of this analysis. In the appendix, however, the reader can find tables with full descriptive statistics for all 16 category groups of South-South imports and exports of SA and the developing EAP countries.

## **2. SOUTH-SOUTH TRADE FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE DEVELOPING EAST ASIA PACIFIC COUNTRIES**

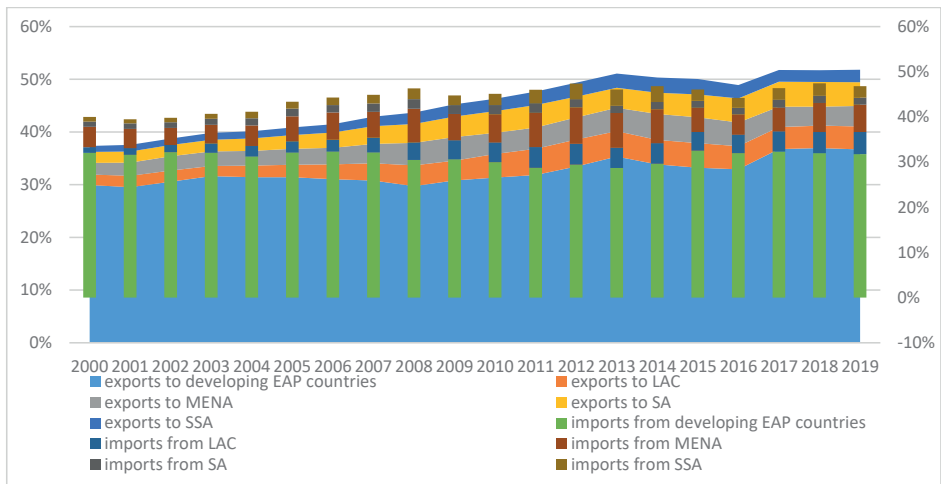
In line with the long term trend for South-South trade as a whole (Athukorala, 2011, pp. 6–11; UNCTAD, 2015, pp. 19–20), calculations show a rapid increase in South-South trade carried out by the developing EAP countries. By looking at the total global import figures of the developing EAP countries, then subtracting the North-South component from this total, we reach the figure relating solely to South-South trade. The same methodology can be employed for exports.

Over the period 2000–2019, the volume of developing EAP countries’ South-South trade rapidly grew: the exports increased from USD 261.06 billion to an impressive USD 2.31 trillion, and imports increased from USD 320.3 billion to USD 1.9 trillion. In 2000, USD 84.5 billion (32%) of these export figures, and USD 54.3 billion (17%) of import figures were recorded by the People’s Republic of China (PRC), while in 2019, PRC’s components in these figures were USD 1.13 trillion (49%), and USD 729 billion (39%) respectively. Although this bustling system of trade ties is increasingly driven by the PRC, it does not mean that other countries in the region’s commitment to South-South trade is weakening or can be ignored.

Between 2000 and 2019 the developing EAP countries’ imports from the global South increased from 40% to 47% of their total imports (which also include North-South imports). Similarly, the South-South share in developing EAP countries exports rose from 37% to 52% of total exports over the same period. The largest component of both import and export totals relates to trade with other developing EAP countries (ranging from 29% to 33% of imports, and 30% to 37% of exports). While the combined figures for imports and exports for the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), SA, Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA), and Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) were recorded as a mere 8–18%, and 7–17% respectively, it still represents an encouraging trend over time in trade with non-East Asian regions of the

global South. Over the same 20-year period, the South-South component of the PRC's total imports increased from 25% in 2000 to 35% in 2019, while their South-South exports grew from 34% to 45%.

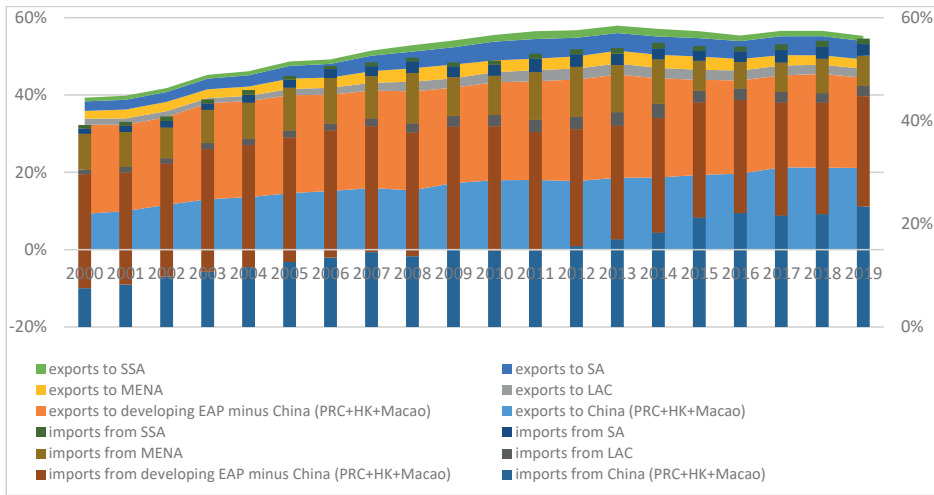
Figure 1. South-South share in the developing EAP countries' trade: export figures (areas), import figures (columns)



Source: own calculations using formula A and B based on WITS/UN COMTRADE.

We might ask ourselves, whether or not the Chinese economy is solely responsible for this significant increase in South-South cooperation (compare with Athukorala, 2011, p. 29–32; UNCTAD, 2015, pp. 21–22). The removal of statistics showing the percentage share of South-South trade carried out by the PRC, Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (SAR), and Macao SAR from the analysis of total trading activity of the developing EAP countries as a whole will show that this notion is wrong. The group of developing EAP countries, excluding China, increased their share of South-South imports from 39% to 56% of their total imports, with the lion's share being intraregional (including China). To accurately measure imports into non-Chinese developing EAP countries from the whole of the global South, imports from China must be included (China being a country of the global South). If we had excluded all goods imported from China to other developing EAP countries, the non-Chinese developing countries' share of South-South imports in 2019 would have amounted to 33% of total imports (instead of 56%). When we look at exports, the South-South transactions of non-Chinese economies within the developing EAP countries rose from 39% to 55%. Again, the exclusion of the developing EAP countries exports to China would have significantly affected the percentages of South-South export figures. If we take, for example, the 2019 total of 55%, this would have amounted to a total of 34%, had exports to China been excluded. As with imports, majority of exports from the non-Chinese developing EAP countries were of an intraregional nature (including exports to China).

Figure 2. Developing EAP minus China (PRC+Hong Kong SAR +Macao SAR)'s South-South trade: export figures (areas), import figures (columns)



Source: own calculations using formula C and D based on WITS/UN COMTRADE.

When we assess the data presented in Figures 1. and 2., we see that over the period of 2000–2019, a positive correlation was found between trading figures for the whole group of developing EAP countries and data for the non-Chinese developing economies. A correlation coefficient for exports (i.e. between formulas A and C) was 0.93. For imports (i.e. between formulas B and D) this measurement stood at 0.96. In both cases these figures translate into a very high level of correlation. Therefore, we can state that non-Chinese developing EAP economies engaged in their trading relations with other countries of the global South with the same dynamism as for the whole region.

Looking at the average values recorded within the period of 2000–2019, we can see that the developing EAP countries' exports to all regions of the global South fall mainly into two general categories:

1. 'Machinery and Electrical goods', including electronics and software (the mean percentage score was 32%, individual annual values for particular regions ranged from 20% to 51%).
2. 'Textiles and Clothing' (the mean percentage score was 12%, individual annual values for particular regions ranged from 4% to 22%) (compare with ASEAN-Japan Centre, 2019, pp. 18–24).

For both categories under consideration, the values of a standard deviation (0.08 for the category 1. and 0.05 for the category 2.) and kurtosis (-0.48 for the category 1. and -0.61 for the category 2)<sup>1</sup> suggest that the their shares in total exports differed significantly depending

<sup>1</sup> For more descriptive statistics of the developing EAP countries' exports divided into 16 category groups, see Table 1. in the Appendix.



on the particular region of the global South and/or the dynamic changes experienced over the period analysed.

Products within these categories make up the bulk of exports to all regions analysed, including the developing EAP countries themselves (category 1. constituted up to 48% of intraregional exports in 2000, rising to 51% in 2019. Category 2. represented 10% of intraregional exports in 2000, falling to just 4% in 2019). The percentage of the developing EAP countries' exports represented by 'Textiles and Clothing' gradually decreased over time – falling from 21% to 12% in respect of MENA, and from 18% to 9% in the case of LAC over a 20-year period. The category of 'Machinery and Electrical goods', however, saw a rapid growth – e.g., in 2000, it was 25% of exports to SA and 20% to SSA, in 2019, it increased to 36% and 25% respectively.

There are, of course, two other important categories of exports from the developing EAP countries apart from the two mentioned above. For example, in 2019, 'Metals' made up 10% of total exports to SSA, up from 5% in 2000. 'Vegetables' (14% in 2000, and 6% in 2019) and 'Transportation' (11% to 9% over the same period) both saw a drop in their percentages of total exports to SSA. The categories of 'Chemicals' and 'Fuels' should not be underestimated, especially in relation to SA. Over the twenty year period of 2000–2019, the export of 'Chemicals' fluctuated between 10% and 13% of all exports to SA, while the figure for 'Fuels' fell from 12% to 7%. A final category of significance, 'Miscellaneous products' recorded a drop in exports from the developing EAP countries to LAC (down from 14% in 2000 to 12% in 2019).

The diverse nature of imports from the global South to the developing EAP countries makes their analysis more complex, and requires some unpacking.

Statistical analysis reveals that the three categories of overwhelming importance were:

1. 'Fuels' (the mean percentage score was 32%, individual annual values for particular regions ranged from 2% to 88%),
2. 'Machinery and Electrical goods' (the mean percentage score was 13%, individual annual values for particular regions ranged from 0% to 50%),
3. 'Minerals' (the mean percentage score was 10%, individual annual values for particular regions ranged from 0% to 30%).

If we compare values of a standard deviation (0.29 for 'Fuels', 0.18 for 'Machinery and Electrical goods', and 0.09 for 'Minerals') and kurtosis (–1.00 for 'Fuels', 0.14 for 'Machinery and Electrical goods', and –0.87 for 'Minerals') for these groups of products, we will see a similar scores in the first parameter, and some differences in the second parameter.<sup>2</sup> This has a twofold explanation. While generally all three categories recorded significant differences in the level of imports between particular regions, 'Fuels' and 'Minerals', most probably due to the global financial crash, experienced larger fluctuations in their shares of total imports from individual regions over time than 'Machinery and Electrical goods'. With regard to 'Fuels', these fluctuations are well illustrated by the example of their imports from the SSA. In 2000, this product category accounted for 48% of imports from this region, peaking in 2008 (62%), but then falling to less than 34% in 2016, and rebounding to 44% in 2020. Despite such changes, 'Fuels' still constituted a substantial percentage of import totals over the whole period, from the remaining regions under consideration: 82% from MENA, 12%

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<sup>2</sup> For more descriptive statistics of the developing EAP countries' imports divided into 16 category groups, see Table 2. in the Appendix.

from LAC, 10% from SA, and 10% from other developing EAP countries. While ‘Machinery and Electrical goods’ became an even more important category of intraregional imports (an increase from 45% of imports in 2000 to 50% in 2019) and trading relations with SA (a growth from 9% in 2000 to 10% in 2019), this category somehow diminished in imports from LAC (decreasing from 13% in 2000 to just 5% in 2019). Over the 2000–2019 period, ‘Minerals’ recorded an impressive increase in imports from LAC (from 6% to 28%), and SSA (from 5% to 17%). While the developing EAP countries recorded ‘Minerals’ as 6% of total imports from SA in both 2000 and 2019, this category saw a spike between 2003 and 2011, reaching 30% at its peak in 2008.

Data for other categories of imports show that in 2000 LAC provided mainly ‘Vegetables’ (17%) and other ‘Food Products’ (14%), while in 2019 these figures were 20% and 5% respectively. ‘Metals’ dropped from 14% to 7% over the same period. The leading categories of recorded imports from SA were: ‘Stone and Glass’ (which include mica, and precious stones and metals) – 23% in 2019, down from 26% in 2000. ‘Textiles and Clothing’ saw a decrease from 21% to 8%, while ‘Chemicals’ saw increases from 10% to 14% over the same twenty years. The leading import category from SSA was ‘Stone and Glass’ (up from 8% in 2000 to 15% in 2019). ‘Metals’ saw a slight increase from 10% in 2000 to 11% in 2019.

As the developing EAP countries continue to provide the global South with more and more technologically advanced industrial products, they have also attempted to meet their own growing development needs. This has required a growing flow of raw materials and their derived products, imported from almost all developing regions.

The intraregional trade between developing EAP countries might be seen as not following the same pattern as between the developing EAP countries and the rest of the global South outlined above. The emphasis on advanced technological production in the region has promoted the growth of a dynamic intraregional market (Francois & Elsig, 2021, pp. 6–8). The large percentage of import and export transactions, involving products which may either be classified as consumer goods, or are components for further manufacture and re-export (Bernhard, 2016, pp. 101–102), are between members of the same developing EAP group of countries. This thriving economic activity continues to help developing EAP countries to elevate their status within the world economy. We should expect that the implementation of the recently agreed Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) will only strengthen these trends, despite the fact that its membership will include not only China, and the countries of the Association of South-East Asia Nations, but also Australia, Japan, Korea, and New Zealand (Ward, 2020; KPMG, 2020; Petri & Plummer, 2020; Francois & Elsig, 2021, pp. 12–16).

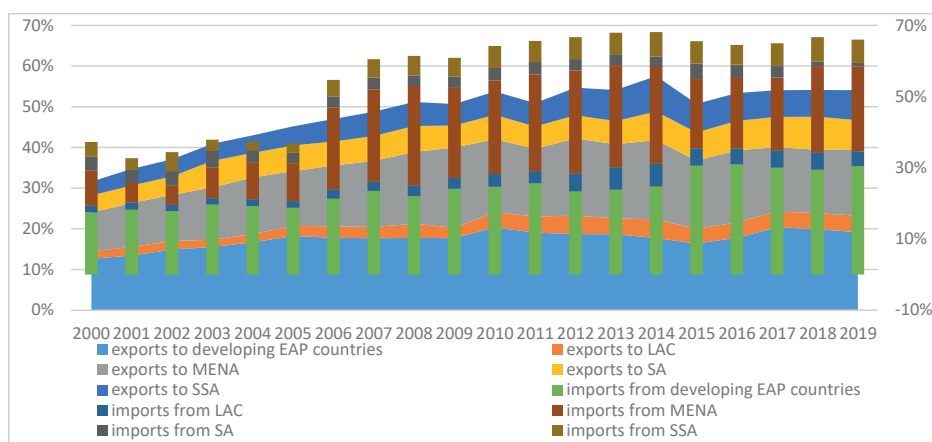
### 3. SOUTH-SOUTH TRADE FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF SOUTH ASIA

Due to its geographical location and importance in the post-WWII political landscape, SA could be perceived as a sort of natural ‘economic bridge’ connecting MENA and SSA on the one side, with the developing EAP countries on the other. SA’s South-South trade grew significantly over the 20-year period under scrutiny: exports to developing countries increased from USD 17 billion in 2000 to USD 187.4 billion in 2019; South-South imports expanded even more dynamically from USD 25.6 billion to USD 349 billion over the same period. N.B.: Unlike was the case with the developing EAP countries, the level of SA’s imports

clearly outweighed its exports. The lion's share of these transactions were carried by the largest regional economy (India): in 2000, USD 15.3 billion in exports (90% of total SA's South-South exports), and USD 16.5 billion in imports (65% of total SA's South-South imports); in 2019, these figures rose to USD 177.9 billion (95%), and USD 312.2 billion (89%) respectively.<sup>3</sup> This growing asymmetry in regional economic activity (also check Banik & Gilbert, 2008, pp. 4–6), suggests that India will continue to play an absolutely dominant role in shaping SA's trade with other developing regions.

Between 2000 and 2019, the South-South share of SA's total imports increased from 37% to 66%. This positive change was produced mainly by increased trade relations with two specific regions of the global South: the developing EAP countries (17% in 2000, increasing to 30% in 2019), and MENA (10% in 2000, rising to 24% in 2019). Trade activity with the remaining three regions under consideration increased only slightly or remained more or less the same. A similar evolution can be noted in SA's South-South exports, which increased during this 20-year period from 32% to 54%. Again, the bulk of transactions was related to either the developing EAP countries (up from 13% to 19% over the same two decades) or MENA (increasing from 10% to 16%). Some increases in SA's exports to LAC, SSA, and SA were recorded, but the base values remained relatively low. Unlike in the case of the developing EAP countries, SA's intraregional trade activity did not constitute a large part of the region's total imports and exports (intraregional imports 1–5% in years 2000–2019; intraregional exports 4–8% over the same period). Between 2000–2019, the South-South component of Indian total imports more than doubled from 31% to 65%, while the South-South share of Indian total exports grew from 36% to 55%.

Figure 3. South-South share in South Asia trading relations: export figures (areas), import figures (columns)



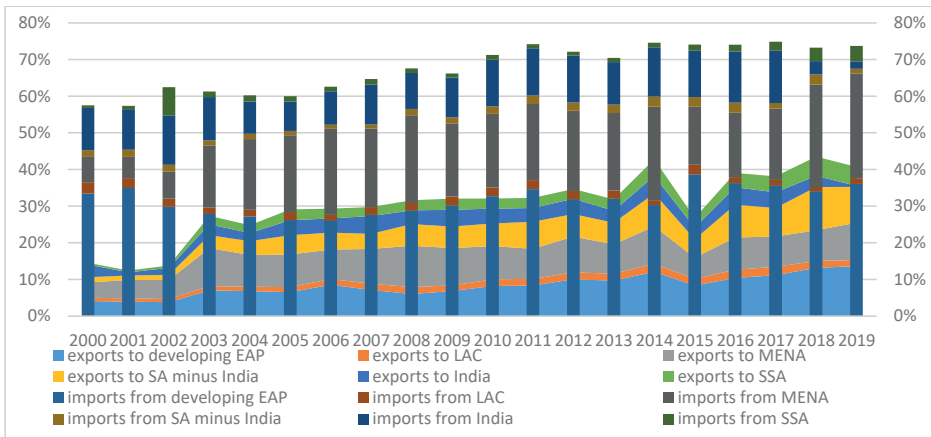
Source: own calculations using formula A and B based on WITS/UN COMTRADE.

<sup>3</sup> Readers should be aware that the data for SA for the whole period was incomplete. For the early years of the analysed period, data for Afghanistan, Bhutan, Sri Lanka, Maldives, and Pakistan is missing. Only the short period of 2009–2012 offers us complete data for all eight economies under consideration.

For the sake of clarity, it may help to separate India’s import/export statistics from the analysis of trends within the region’s total trade activities. In simply subtracting Indian import/export figures from the total SA trade data, some surprising facts become apparent. Between 2003–2015<sup>4</sup> the non-Indian countries of SA increased their combined South-South imports from 61% to 74%, while their South-South exports remained at the same level of 27% over the same period (N.B.: The percentage figure for SA’s South-South imports is higher when India’s South-South imports are subtracted from the SA total. In contrast, SA’s percentage export figures drop when the Indian export component is subtracted).

In terms of both imports and exports in SA, the developing EAP countries, MENA, and SA (including India) were the major players. If we had excluded imports from India from total South-South imports of the non-Indian SA’s countries, the figure in 2015 would have been 13 percentage points (p.p.) lower than previously presented (61% instead of 74%). Yet, if we had subtracted the total value of exports to India from all other SA countries, the 2015 figure would have only been 3 p.p. lower than the recorded total (24% instead of 27%). All of this demonstrates the weakness of SA’s export offer, especially in the intraregional context (also check Varma & Ramakrishnan, 2014, p. 181).

Figure 4. SA minus India’s South-South trade: export figures (areas), import figures (columns)



Source: own calculations using formula C and D based on WITS/UN COMTRADE.

Calculations revealed a very strong positive correlation for data presented in Figures 3. and 4. This can be evidenced by the correlation coefficient of 0.92 for export figures (i.e. formulas A and C) and 0.91 for import figures (i.e. formulas B and D). We can interpret this

For 2019 we have data only for India and Pakistan. In previous years some data is missing for the remaining countries. 2015 was the last year when we can use all but Bhutanese figures. In this year, India’s share in SA’s South-South exports was 90% (USD 149.6 billion) and 72% (USD 245.2 billion) for imports.

<sup>4</sup> Due to the limited availability of data, the period between 2003 and 2015 was chosen for the purpose of this part of the analysis.

as a situation where non-Indian economies of SA developed their trading relation with the countries of the global South at a similar pace to the one recorded by the whole region.

In order to assess the main categories of exports from SA to all developing regions, a simple statistical analysis was used. Thanks to average values of annual exports to individual regions of the global South, we can see that between 2000 and 2019, 'Textile and Clothing' (the mean percentage score was 16%, individual annual values for particular regions ranged from 6% to 34%), 'Fuels' (the mean percentage score was 15%, individual annual values for particular regions ranged from 0% to 36%) and 'Chemicals' (the mean percentage score was 12%, individual annual values for particular regions ranged from 4% to 28%) achieved results that allow us to identify them as the leading export products. The share of total export volume of the first two major categories fluctuated significantly over this period, which resulted in their values of kurtosis (-0.48 for 'Textile and Clothing', -0.39 for Fuels). This stands in contrast to the same measurement for 'Chemicals' (0.32).<sup>5</sup> In 2000, 'Textile and Clothing' represented 34% of SA's exports to SSA, 28% to MENA, 27% to LAC, and 11% to the developing EAP countries. By 2019, these figures dropped to 11%, 9%, 13%, and 6% respectively. In contrast, 'Fuels' gained a stronger position in SA's exports over the same period. Fuel exports from SA to other areas of the global South increased astronomically, and by 2019, 20% of total exports to SSA were in this category. In the case of MENA, the figure rose to 16%. In exports from SA to the developing EAP countries 'Fuels' represented 13% of total value. Twenty years earlier, Fuel exports to these three regions stood at 0% or 1% of SA's total exports. Although the share of 'Fuels' in SA's exports to LAC was just 6% in 2019, over the period of 2002–2014, it was the main export product with a massive 36% share in 2011. There were some fluctuations in SA's exports of 'Chemicals', but when we compare the relative data from 2019 and 2000, we will notice only minor differences. In 2019, this category accounted for 26% of exports to LAC (1 p.p. less than in 2000), 18% to SSA (up 1 p.p.), and 13% to the developing EAP countries (up 2 p.p.).

Other important export categories include:

- 'Stone and Glass' – SA's exports to the developing EAP countries notably decreased from 34% in 2000 to 18% in 2019. SA exports in 'Stone and Glass' to MENA saw a significant increase from 9% in 2000 to 20% in 2019;
- 'Vegetables' – this category saw a significant drop from 25% to 12% of SA's exports to MENA between 2000 to 2019;
- 'Transportation' – 23% of SA's exports to LAC and 11% to SSA in 2019, up from the 7% recorded in 2000 for both regions;
- 'Machinery and Electrical products' – in 2019 this category represented 12% of SA's exports to SSA (up 1 p.p. in comparison with 2000).

The intraregional trade in SA essentially focused on seven commodity categories: 'Textile and Clothing' (18% of exports in 2019, down from 21% in 2000), 'Fuels' (up to 15% in 2019 from a mere 2% in 2000), 'Chemicals' (11% in 2019, dropping slightly from 13% in 2000), 'Metals' (10% in 2019, up from 7% in 2000), 'Machinery and Electrical products' (10% in 2019, up from 6% in 2000), 'Transportation' (10% in 2019, up from 7% in 2000), and 'Vegetables' (8% in 2019, down from 14% in 2000). Even though the vast majority of

<sup>5</sup> For more descriptive statistics of SA exports divided into 16 category groups, see Table 3. in the Appendix.

this intraregional trade still consisted of lower tech products (Banik & Gilbert, 2008, p. 6), we see a shift toward higher tech goods over the 20-year period under scrutiny. If this trend continues, increasing Indian demand for energy resources and industrial materials will likely have the knock-on effect of stimulating other regional economies.

Moving our focus from exports to imports, when we apply statistical analysis, we can see that 'Fuels' and 'Vegetables' (check Suresh, 2020; Varma & Ramakrishnan, 2014) are the two leading categories of imports to SA between 2000–2019. For 'Fuels' the mean percentage score was 33%, while individual annual values for particular regions ranged from 0% to 81%. The recorded standard deviation (0.28) and a value of kurtosis (-1.58) suggest that over the analysed period imports of 'Fuels' to SA were not equally concentrated among all five developing regions, and that this product category experienced dynamic changes within trading relations with individual regions. By 2019, 'Fuels' had become the dominant category of imports into SA from a number of areas: MENA (74%, up 8 p.p. from 2000), SSA (61%, up 31 p.p. from 2000), and LAC (49%, up 46 p.p. from 2000). Looking at the calculations related to the second product category under consideration, we can see that for the 2000–2019 period the mean percentage score was 12% with individual annual values for particular regions ranging from 0% to 63%. The values of a standard variation (0.12) and kurtosis (7.86) tell us that despite some differences in the level of imports of 'Vegetables' to SA from our five developing regions, many annual records were close to the general percentage score.<sup>6</sup> We can interpret this situation to mean that major changes took place in a short time, and for the majority of the years under consideration, the regional shares of 'Vegetables' in imports were more or less stable. This product played an important role in intraregional imports, growing from 17% in 2000 to 29% in 2019. While seeing a fall from 59% to 12% over this period, the category of 'Vegetables' still maintained its position as a leading category of imports from LAC.

If we now take a broader look at other import categories into SA, we see a number of fluctuations, which had a significant effect on trading patterns over this 20-year period. Imports of 'Chemicals' to SA from the developing EAP countries saw an increase from 9% to 13% between 2000 and 2019 and a decrease from 15% to 7% from MENA over the same period. While 'Machinery and Electrical goods' imported from the developing EAP countries saw a rise from 22% of total in 2000 to 40% in 2019, the 'Textile and Clothing' category dropped from 16% in 2000 to just 4% in 2019. 'Stone and Glass' imported to SA from LAC was a mere 1% of total in 2000 and had reached 19% by 2019. 'Minerals' imports from LAC fluctuated from 10% in 2000, shooting up to 32% in 2006, and then plummeting down to 5% in 2019. SA 'Stone and Glass' imports from MENA and SSA also saw major fluctuations. In the case of MENA, this category represented 4% of total in 2000 and 7% in 2019. 2004 saw this category rise to 25% of total. In 2000, 'Stone and Glass' represented 29% of total imports to SA from SSA, rising to 50% in 2003, then falling back to 19% in 2019.

Three broad conclusions can be drawn from the above. First, due to the ongoing industrialization across SA, the nature/character of imports into the region has changed substantially (a clear shift from consumer goods to materials necessary for large industrial production). Second, supply chains between SA, MENA, and the developing EAP countries have developed significantly (though, India's decision to quit the RCEP negotiations in 2019 will

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<sup>6</sup> For more descriptive statistics of the SA imports divided into 16 category groups, see Table 4. in the Appendix.



likely have negative consequences moving forward) (Vidya & Prabheesh, 2019; Panda, 2019; Raghavan, 2020). Third, processes of modernisation and economic development across the region have undoubtedly been restricted by the global financial instability, evidenced by the fluctuations in the data.

Interestingly, three categories of goods – ‘Fuels’, ‘Chemicals’, and ‘Textiles and Clothing’ – rank high in both imports to and exports from SA – clear evidence of SA playing the role of an economic hub for the other regions of the global South.

In 2019, the value of SA ‘Fuels’ imports was five times that of its exports from/to the global South (USD 138.6 billion of imports to USD 27.9 billion exports). This dependency on imports is nowhere more evident than in the biggest and the most developed economy of the region. Even though India, itself an oil producing country with an output of around 709 000 bbl/day (The World Factbook, 2021), has a well-developed petroleum industry through which it produces more refined products for exports, it still requires massive imports of crude material to achieve this and secure its own domestic needs (Walia, 2021; Jaganmohan, 2021). Although the differences in values of SA’s imports (USD 32.7 billion in 2019) and exports (USD 24.4 billion) of ‘Chemicals’ are not as large as was the case with ‘Fuels’, the data still shows SA as a net importer. Nonetheless, trade activities around this category represent an interesting development of intra-industry trade (also check Aggarwal & Chakraborty, 2019), which has provided the opportunity for further trade specialisation, and deeper economic integration in the future. The trade in the category of ‘Textiles and Clothing’ essentially consists of SA’s import of raw materials – natural and man-made fibres; woven, knitted, and crocheted fabrics – which are then processed into finished garments, etc. to be sold on as exports. Out of the three main categories identified, this category is the only one in which exports exceed imports (USD 18 billion to USD 7.8 billion) (WITS/UN COMTRADE).

#### 4. DISCUSSION

As can be seen from this analysis, the participation of East Asia and Pacific and South Asia in South-South trade has grown significantly since 2000. This trend can be seen in both the volumes and shares of total imports/exports conducted between the countries of the global South. It is important to note that China and India are not solely responsible for these positive outcomes. While these two economic giants continue to play a dominant role, many other Asian countries have significantly increased their involvement in trade with the rest of the global South.

China’s massive economic power is undoubtedly responsible for East Asia Pacific’s dominant role in South-South economic cooperation. However, we should not allow this dominance to overshadow the performances of other smaller players. In the growing theatre of South-South relations, these ‘smaller economies’ should not be underestimated, and, in fact, from a political point of view, their engagement is equally as important as that of their giant counterparts. In order to get an accurate picture of the changing trends in economic activity, we need to look at the relative performances of all 140 countries across the global South and not just concentrate only on the absolute data relating to its largest economies.

While there is a clear increase in South-South trade as a % of total trade across both regions under scrutiny, it is perhaps surprising that the developing EAP countries are outperformed by SA. In order to more accurately evaluate the engagement of smaller Asian econ-

omies in South-South trade, the import/export activities of the regions' largest economies (China and India) have been set aside. N.B.: Data relating to imports/exports between the smaller economies and these economic giants had to be indirectly included to accurately record how these smaller economies engage in South-South trade. This shows that:

- The developing EAP countries recorded higher % figures for both imports and exports when the data for China's (of PRC, Hong Kong SAR, and Macao SAR) South-South trade activities were discounted.
- SA recorded a % increase in import figures but a % decrease in export figures; India South-South trade data was taken out of the equation.

The close correlation between results, whether each of our regions' largest economies are included or excluded, shows that the general trend in South-South engagement is not set solely by the activities of China and India.

Contrary to findings by some UNCTAD (United Nations Conference on Trade and Development) and ADB (Asian Development Bank) reports (e.g. Shirotori & Molina, 2009, pp. 4–6; Athukorala, 2011, p. 18) that intraregional trade was the dominant component of South-South trade in Asia, our analysis over a 20-year period shows this not to be the case. The mentioned reports treated the developing EAP countries, SA, and MENA as a single block, leading them to conclude that the lion's share of South-South trade was intraregional in nature. Our analysis demonstrates that, while most South-South exports from and imports to the developing EAP countries were intraregional, this was not the case for SA. The available data shows that smaller nations were usually more successful than their giant economic counterparts in increasing the intraregional component of their trade activities between 2000 and 2019.

The increase in volume of South-South trade clearly represents a positive trend for the global South. To gain a deeper appreciation of ongoing trends, we need to consider the changing nature of the goods being traded across Asia. Since 2000, we have seen a significant shift from exports of raw materials, and basic consumer goods (e.g. food, clothes) towards more technologically advanced products and by-products of the regions' booming petrochemical industries. This shift in exports was only made possible by equally significant changes in the nature of goods being imported. This has allowed extensive development of the regions' manufacturing industries, thereby rapidly increasing their exports around the world. The existing trading relationships between the developing EAP countries, based on the comparative advantages of individual economies, have evolved into a set of hugely profitable global and regional value chains (Francois & Elsig, 2021, pp. 7–8, 15–16; WTO & JETRO, 2011, pp. 10–12, 21–26, 41–42, 61, 74–77, 85–87; UNCTAD, 2015, pp. 12, 22–30, 33–36, 40–43; World Bank, 2020, pp. 15–17, 21, 23–26, 66–93). These chains came into being to meet the growing demand of the World's richest economies (mostly US and Japan, but also Western Europe and Australia) for cheaper manufactured goods and were made possible by private and public investments from the global North. Over time, more and more local capital has been drawn in to develop these economic relationships, creating opportunities for further growth of Asian businesses. The success of these relationships offers a blueprint to facilitate the replication of similar value chains, in which capital from the South plays a more dominant role, allowing other Asian and African nations to get on board and have their voices heard.



While the growth in South-South trade has had the obvious benefits of stimulating GDP and facilitating the processes of social and economic development (inter alia by job creation),<sup>7</sup> it has also opened up the possibility of other forms of South-South investment (e.g. development assistance and foreign direct investments) (Mohanty, Franssen & Saha, 2019; ASEAN-Japan Centre 2019, pp. 6–9, 14–17, 26–28; Bo, 2020; Ratna, 2009). Such dynamic growth encourages trust, respect, and a general strengthening of political relations between all countries involved and can be seen as a move towards addressing the current imbalance in international relations (i.e. reducing the gap between the global South and the North).

What this expansion of South-South trade actually represents is open to interpretation, and conclusions will differ depending on which international relations prism is being employed. The liberal perspective on international relations, based on absolute gains argumentation, sees any net growth of international trade as being good for the world economy as a whole (Weber, 2001, pp. 104–105; MacMillan, 2007, pp. 25–27; Banik & Gilbert, 2008, p. 1; IMF, 2001). When emerging markets grow quickly, developed economies use their existing advantage to find new customers for their technologically sophisticated products and services, often presented as a ‘win-win’ situation in which ‘all boats rise’. This paradigm might also be seen to recognise increased trade as a means of pursuing peace, poverty reduction, and stability throughout the global South. Such increased interdependence also reduces the likelihood of any regional military conflict. The scope, and direction of this South-South cooperation continues to be greatly influenced by the countries of the global North whose strategic interest is the maintenance of its global dominance.

Contrary to the ‘no losers’ liberal vision above, both economic nationalist (neo-mercantilist), and realist theories recognise the extent to which ‘winners and losers’ exist as a result of these trade relationships. What constitutes winning and losing differs depending on which of the two interpretations we employ. Neo-mercantilism focuses mainly on the relative economic gains and losses resulting from trade activities, while realism places more importance on the actual geopolitical consequences of trade for a state’s national security and its ability to exert influence. Despite their differences, both of these theories represent a more cautious interpretation of what the increased South-South cooperation amount to in the global context. In some quarters, these developments are undoubtedly perceived as a direct threat to the dominance of the North, leading to interventionist moves designed to curtail South-South trade projects (e.g. various US attempts to limit Chinese influence over the Asia-Pacific region).

## 5. CONCLUSIONS

The claims presented in hypotheses 1 and 2 are clearly borne out by the data provided. The expansion of South-South trade over the period 2000–2019 has had broad and far reaching consequences for international relations. The scope and nature of these have not been determined by China and India alone, but have also been influenced by the increased engagement of smaller countries of the global South.

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<sup>7</sup> We should not forget about potential pitfalls in value chain production such as workers’ rights violations, and a negative environmental impact. These factors need to be identified, controlled, and managed on all relevant levels: company, national, and intergovernmental (De Backer et al., 2018, p. 6; FAO, 2017; Salo, 2016; Bolwig et al., 2010).

The growth in South-South trade has allowed many middle income developing countries to further engage in other aspects of economic cooperation, such as foreign direct investments, development cooperation, and/or exchange of migrant labour with developing partner nations. For example, Indonesian investment in Africa or South Asia not only represents an increase in capital flow to recipient countries, but also offers some leverage in their dealings with other major public investors (US, EU, Japan, multilateral institutions, China et al.).

Up until 2000, cooperation between developing countries, economic interdependence, and shared interests were little more than slogans. The increase in South-South trade activity described in this article has helped to realise these ideals, and increase the likelihood of a number of potential consequences of a strictly political nature. Firstly, a material basis for strengthening and further developing institutional frameworks for political cooperation between developing countries on regional, interregional, and global levels. Regional, through further integration in structures such as the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) or the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation. Interregional, through expansion of the cooperation between ASEAN and the African Union. Global, through the possible revival of G-77 dialogue. Secondly, increased potential for additional influence of the global South in world politics. This could be achieved through more regular dialogue and close coordination between the largest economies of the global South and their smaller, but equally committed, regional partners. Regular consultations between G20 members from the global South and regional economic blocks made up of developing countries from Asia, Africa, and Latin America would consolidate the global South's common positions in international negotiations, increasing their influence in various universal organisations. The resulting pressure on the economies of the global North may, to some extent, contribute to a contraction of the US, European or Japanese spheres of influence, but how much of a threat to the existing dominance of the North this increased trade represents is open to speculation. Alarmist concerns about military alliances across the global South are unlikely to undermine the ongoing mutually beneficial economic cooperation between North and South.

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## APPENDIX

Table 1. Descriptive statistics of developing EAP countries' exports over the period of 2000–2019

	01-05	Animal	06-15	Vegetable	16-24	FoodProd	25-26	Minerals	27-27	Fuels	28-38	Chemicals	39-40	PlastRub	41-43	HidesSkin	44-49	Wood	50-63	TextCloth	64-67	Footwear	68-71	StoneGlas	72-83	Metals	84-85	MachElec	86-89	Transport	90-99	Miscellan
Mean	0.01	0.06	0.02	0.01	0.05	0.06	0.05	0.01	0.05	0.01	0.05	0.06	0.05	0.05	0.01	0.01	0.02	0.02	0.12	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.04	0.04	0.07	0.07	0.32	0.06	0.06	0.07		
Standard Error	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.00		
Median	0.00	0.05	0.02	0.00	0.03	0.05	0.05	0.01	0.03	0.01	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.01	0.01	0.02	0.02	0.12	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.03	0.07	0.07	0.32	0.06	0.06	0.06	0.06		
Mode	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A		
Standard Deviation	0.00	0.04	0.01	0.01	0.04	0.03	0.03	0.01	0.04	0.00	0.01	0.03	0.01	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.05	0.01	0.01	0.00	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.08	0.03	0.03	0.03	0.03		
Sample Variance	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01		
Kurtosis	2.61	-0.69	-1.34	1.77	-1.31	-0.31	-0.72	-0.69	1.47	-0.61	-1.10	-0.52	0.85	-0.48	-1.38	0.13	0.13	0.13	0.20	0.32	0.32	0.32	0.80	0.71	0.58	0.71	0.58	0.20	1.06	1.06		
Skewness	1.27	0.60	-0.11	1.38	0.56	1.04	0.11	-0.32	0.94	0.20	0.32	0.80	0.71	0.58	0.20	1.06	1.06	1.06	0.20	0.32	0.32	0.32	0.80	0.71	0.58	0.71	0.58	0.20	1.06	1.06		
Range	0.02	0.14	0.02	0.02	0.12	0.10	0.02	0.02	0.05	0.18	0.05	0.18	0.05	0.05	0.02	0.02	0.05	0.05	0.18	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.08	0.13	0.13	0.31	0.11	0.11	0.12	0.12		
Minimum	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.03	0.04	0.00	0.01	0.04	0.01	0.03	0.04	0.04	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.01	0.04	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.03	0.03	0.20	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.03		
Maximum	0.02	0.15	0.03	0.03	0.13	0.13	0.06	0.02	0.06	0.22	0.05	0.13	0.06	0.06	0.02	0.02	0.06	0.06	0.22	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.09	0.16	0.16	0.51	0.12	0.12	0.15	0.15		
Sum	0.52	5.71	1.60	0.59	5.16	6.31	4.98	0.89	2.17	12.42	2.17	6.31	4.98	4.98	0.89	0.89	2.17	2.17	12.42	2.17	2.17	2.17	3.56	7.09	7.09	32.42	5.98	5.98	7.36	7.36		
Count	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	
Confidence Level (95.0%)	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.02	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01		

Source: own calculations based on WITS/UN COMTRADE.

Table 2. Descriptive statistics of developing EAP countries' imports over the period of 2000–2019

	01-05 Animal	06-15 Vegetable	16-24 FoodProd	25-26 Minerals	27-27 Fuels	28-38 Chemicals	39-40 PlastRub	41-43 HidesSkin	44-49 Wood	50-63 TextCloth	64-67 Footwear	68-71 StoneGlas	72-83 Metals	84-85 MachElec	86-89 Transport	90-99 Miscellan
Mean	0.02	0.06	0.03	0.10	0.32	0.05	0.03	0.01	0.02	0.05	0.00	0.08	0.07	0.13	0.01	0.03
Standard Error	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.01	0.03	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.02	0.00	0.00
Median	0.01	0.03	0.02	0.06	0.15	0.04	0.02	0.01	0.02	0.02	0.00	0.03	0.07	0.06	0.01	0.01
Mode	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A
Standard Deviation	0.02	0.07	0.03	0.09	0.29	0.03	0.02	0.01	0.02	0.05	0.01	0.09	0.04	0.18	0.01	0.04
Sample Variance	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.09	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.03	0.00	0.00
Kurtosis	0.24	0.50	2.95	-0.87	-1.00	-0.17	0.64	0.74	0.02	1.19	6.73	-0.01	-0.78	0.14	-1.20	12.76
Skewness	0.97	1.44	1.69	0.75	0.78	0.69	0.94	1.14	0.78	1.32	2.42	1.20	0.15	1.38	0.30	3.35
Range	0.07	0.23	0.14	0.29	0.86	0.13	0.09	0.05	0.07	0.21	0.03	0.32	0.15	0.50	0.03	0.24
Minimum	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.02	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.00
Maximum	0.07	0.23	0.14	0.30	0.88	0.14	0.09	0.05	0.07	0.21	0.03	0.32	0.16	0.50	0.03	0.24
Sum	1.77	5.57	2.95	9.64	32.43	4.51	2.68	1.30	2.02	4.52	0.36	7.52	7.17	13.29	1.18	2.64
Count	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Confidence Level (95.0%)	0.00	0.01	0.01	0.02	0.06	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.02	0.01	0.04	0.00	0.01

Source: own calculations based on WITS/UN COMTRADE.



Table 3. Descriptive statistics of SA countries' exports over the period of 2000–2019

	01-05 Animal	06-15 Vegetable	16-24 FoodProd	25-26 Minerals	27-27 Fuels	28-38 Chemicals	39-40 PlastRub	41-43 HidesSkin	44-49 Wood	50-63 TextCloth	64-67 Footwear	68-71 StoneGlass	72-83 Metals	84-85 MachElec	86-89 Transport	90-99 Miscellan
Mean	0.02	0.09	0.03	0.03	0.15	0.12	0.04	0.01	0.01	0.16	0.00	0.09	0.08	0.07	0.08	0.02
Standard Error	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.00
Median	0.02	0.09	0.02	0.01	0.14	0.10	0.04	0.01	0.01	0.14	0.00	0.02	0.08	0.07	0.07	0.01
Mode	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A
Standard Deviation	0.02	0.05	0.02	0.04	0.09	0.06	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.06	0.00	0.11	0.02	0.02	0.05	0.01
Sample Variance	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Kurtosis	2.94	-0.90	1.16	6.66	-0.39	0.32	-0.50	1.59	-0.25	-0.48	1.56	-0.46	-0.46	1.38	5.49	30.68
Skewness	1.72	0.29	1.12	2.61	0.24	0.93	-0.05	1.53	0.75	0.60	1.05	0.92	0.46	0.97	2.03	4.64
Range	0.09	0.20	0.11	0.18	0.36	0.24	0.05	0.03	0.03	0.28	0.01	0.37	0.09	0.11	0.29	0.08
Minimum	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.04	0.02	0.00	0.00	0.06	0.00	0.01	0.05	0.04	0.01	0.01
Maximum	0.09	0.22	0.11	0.18	0.36	0.28	0.07	0.03	0.03	0.34	0.01	0.37	0.14	0.16	0.30	0.08
Sum	2.18	9.02	3.04	2.61	14.81	12.05	3.70	0.87	1.03	15.55	0.40	9.12	8.44	7.23	7.82	1.53
Count	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Confidence Level (95.0%)	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.01	0.02	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.02	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.00

Source: own calculations based on WITS/UN COMTRADE.



Table 4. Descriptive statistics of SA countries' imports over the period of 2000–2019

	01-05 Animal	06-15 Vegetable	16-24 FoodProd	25-26 Minerals	27-27 Fuels	28-38 Chemicals	39-40 PlastRub	41-43 HidesSkin	44-49 Wood	50-63 TextCloth	64-67 Footwear	68-71 StoneGlas	72-83 Metals	84-85 MachElec	86-89 Transport	90-99 Miscellan
Mean	0.00	0.12	0.03	0.05	0.33	0.08	0.02	0.00	0.02	0.06	0.00	0.09	0.06	0.08	0.03	0.02
Standard Error	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.01	0.03	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.00
Median	0.00	0.09	0.01	0.03	0.16	0.09	0.02	0.00	0.02	0.03	0.00	0.06	0.05	0.04	0.02	0.01
Mode	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A
Standard Deviation	0.01	0.12	0.04	0.05	0.28	0.05	0.02	0.00	0.01	0.07	0.00	0.10	0.03	0.11	0.03	0.03
Sample Variance	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.08	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.00
Kurtosis	2.88	7.86	7.49	12.32	-1.53	0.78	-1.58	2.28	2.45	-0.30	1.33	4.26	0.18	0.92	-0.34	40.46
Skewness	1.91	2.56	2.37	3.15	0.39	0.56	0.09	1.77	1.42	1.05	1.39	1.98	0.76	1.54	0.87	5.52
Range	0.02	0.62	0.22	0.32	0.81	0.24	0.06	0.01	0.07	0.23	0.01	0.49	0.14	0.40	0.10	0.26
Minimum	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.00
Maximum	0.02	0.63	0.22	0.32	0.81	0.25	0.06	0.01	0.08	0.23	0.01	0.50	0.15	0.40	0.10	0.26
Sum	0.34	11.82	2.79	4.59	32.57	7.92	2.40	0.38	2.00	6.39	0.13	9.43	5.77	8.47	2.88	1.63
Count	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Confidence Level (95.0%)	0.00	0.02	0.01	0.01	0.06	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.02	0.01	0.02	0.01	0.01

Source: own calculations based on WITS/UN COMTRADE.