Press Release

Non-tariff Digital Trade Barriers

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The United States Trade Representative (USTR) recently withdrew U.S. support for digital trade proposals that would have blocked World Trade Organization members from placing restrictions on the flow and trade of data. In a new insight, Technology and Innovation Policy Analyst Joshua Levine and Data and Policy Analyst Tom Lee and Nicolo Pastrone consider the potential harms of USTR's decision.

Key points:

- *Digital trade proposals were first introduced in 2019 by the Trump Administration and are currently under negotiation at the Joint Statement Initiative on E-Commerce (JSI).*
- *USTR justified its decision to withdraw from these JSI proposals as necessary to balance "the right to regulate in the public interest and the need to address anticompetitive behavior in the digital economy."*
- *Withdrawing from these free-trade proposals cedes the United States' ability to lead the way in global policy trends in e-commerce and data; it also leaves the United States vulnerable to discriminatory non-tariff barriers on U.S. firms that will diminish their opportunities to participate in the global digital economy.*

Read the analysis