The Rise of Exporting By U.S. Firms*

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September 17, 2017

Abstract

Although a great deal of ink has been spilled over the consequences of globalization, we do not yet fully understand the causes of increased worldwide trade. Using confidential microdata from the U.S. Census, we document widespread entry into countries abroad by U.S. firms from 1987 to 2006. We show that this extensive margin growth is unlikely to have been due to significant declines in entry costs. We instead find evidence of large roles for telecommunications advances, trade agreements, and foreign income growth in driving these trends.


Keywords: globalization, barriers to entry, international trade, information technology.

*Any opinions and conclusions expressed herein are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the views of the U.S. Census Bureau, the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, or any other person associated with the Federal Reserve System. All results have been reviewed to ensure that no confidential information is disclosed. We especially thank our dissertation chairs Andrei Levchenko and Jim Levinsohn, Dan Ackerberg, Vanessa Alvarez, Wenjie Chen, Alan Deardorff, Ying Fan, Aaron Flaaen, Rob Feenstra, Jeremy Fox, Fariha Kamal, Bill Kerr, Brian Kovak, Pravin Krishna, C.J. Krizan, Pawel Krolikowski, Rosana Lincoln, Day Manoli, Prachi Mishra, Ryan Monarch, Dan Murphy, Justin Pierce, Mark Roberts, Mine Senses, Cameron Shelton, Jagadeesh Sivadasan, Heiwai Tang, Jim Tybout, and Jing Zhang have all provided helpful comments. The staff at the U.S. Census Bureau has been exceptionally helpful, particularly Clint Carter, James Davis, Barbara Downs, Cheryl Grim, Shawn Klimak, Margaret Levenstein, Danielle Sandler, Danielle Vesia, and William Wisniewski. We thank Alex Avramov, Hannah Kwon, Hang Liang, Alejandro Perez-Segura, and Isaac Rabbani for superb research assistance. Lincoln is grateful for financial support from Johns Hopkins University, the Sloan Foundation, the Innovation Policy group at the NBER, and Claremont McKenna College and the Lowe Institute of Political Economy and Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship located there. McCallum is grateful for financial support from the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System and Georgetown University. Lincoln and McCallum are both grateful for financial support from the University of Michigan and the Center for International Business located there. The authors can be reached at wlincoln@cmc.edu and andrew.h.mccallum@frb.gov. All errors are our own.
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