Summary of Asian Trade Centre (ATC) RCEP Work Since 2014

The ATC has been active on RCEP work since 2014. We have been directly involved in 15 RCEP negotiation rounds as of October 2018 through different types of activities such as stakeholder engagement sessions, workshops, panels, round-table discussions and meetings. In addition to that, the ATC has also been involved in indirect and informal activities to contribute to the RCEP negotiations such as drafting materials on RCEP-related topics and providing input from the business community – especially SMEs – to RCEP officials.

The list below summarizes the materials that ATC has produced for RCEP and other relevant activities.

Policy Briefs for RCEP
Whitepaper: "Online Travel Agencies in Asia: A Major Opportunity in E-Services" October 2017. Click here.
Policy Brief 17-06: "How Did Keeping Children Safe Get So Complicated In Asia?" May 2017. Click here.
Policy Brief 16-08: "What is RCEP?" May 2016, Click here.

Other Publications related to RCEP
"RCEP Brings New Opportunities for Gradual Agricultural Reforms in India" by Deborah Elms and Kelly Phuong Tran. 2014. Presented at Indian Agriculture Sector Under Trade Liberalization and WTO: Issues and Challenges, Centre for WTO Studies, IIFT, New Delhi, December 11-12, 2014. Click here.

Workshops and Events for SMEs from across RCEP countries
- First workshop on Digital Trade: May 15, 2017 in Singapore with 15 SMEs
- Second workshop on Digital Trade: August 21, 2017 in Singapore with 19 SMEs
- Third workshop on Digital Trade: March 15-16, 2017 in Singapore with 17 SMEs
- Fourth workshop on Digital Trade: June 7-8, 2018 in Singapore with 20 SMEs
- SME Summit “Enabling SMEs in the Digital Age”: June 6, 2018 with 430 participants
- First workshop on International Trade, Importing, Exporting and Managing Supply Chain: August 6, 2018 in Singapore with 26 participants
- Second workshop on International Trade, Importing, Exporting and Managing Supply Chain: September 6, 2018 in Hong Kong with 20 participants
- Fifth workshop on “Champions of International Trade in a Digital Age”, October 17-18 in Singapore with 17 SMEs

Key findings from previous workshops and events
- The workshops and Summit gained huge attention, interest and support from both business community and government officials
- Most SMEs had limited knowledge on trade, trade policies and would like to have access to more training and capacity building programs
- Areas of concern for SMEs: Data localization requirement; Restricting free movement of data across borders; Taxing e-commerce; E-payment issues; Complicated customs procedures and paperwork; Inconsistent requirements on standards, testing and labelling among different countries; Local presence requirements; Internet connectivity quality, internet infrastructure;
Lack of training; High tariffs and low de minimis (or no de minimus); Obstacles to setting up business in new markets; Copyright issues; Non-tariff barriers to trade; and Issues with finding information about policies and policy changes.

**Webinars**
February 21, 2017, Webinar: in Conjunction with Thomson Reuters: Demystifying RCEP - The "Other" Mega-Regional Trade Agreement. Watch the recording

To get the electronic version of this summary with hyperlinks, please contact Ms. Minh Hue Nguyen at minhhue@asiantradecentre.org


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