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Multilateral Dialogue Geneva
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WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION

W T O



WHAT IS WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION?

The **World Trade Organization (WTO)** is a Geneva-based intergovernmental organisation which regulates and facilitates global trade.

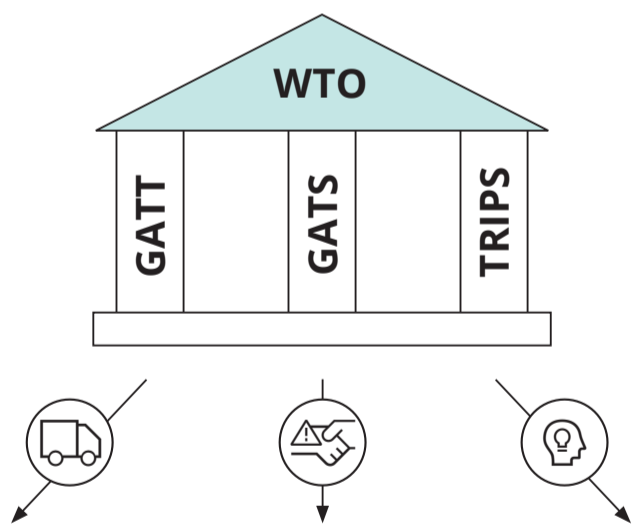
<p>It is one of the youngest international organisations and was founded in 1995</p>	<p>Current Director General: Dr. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala</p> <p><i>The first woman and the first African on the post of WTO DG</i></p>
<p>Budget and Staff 2020</p> <p>~200 MILLION Swiss francs</p> <p>624 STAFF MEMBERS including many specialists and consultants</p>	<p>It aims to open trade and reduce trade barriers through...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ... the negotiation of trade agreements ... the settlement of trade disputes ... the periodic review of members' trade policies.

CURRENT PRIORITIES

<p>COVID-19 pandemic response through trade instruments</p>	<p>Support integration of least-developed countries (LDCs) into multilateral trading system</p>
<p>Restore dispute settlement function</p>	<p>Agreement on agriculture & public stockholding</p>
<p>Find trade-related solutions for sustainable development, protection and preservation of the environment</p>	<p>WTO reform to address today's challenges</p>
	<p>Agreement on fisheries subsidies to protect oceans and fish stock</p>

MANDATES AND KEY AGREEMENTS

Over **60 international agreements** administered by WTO



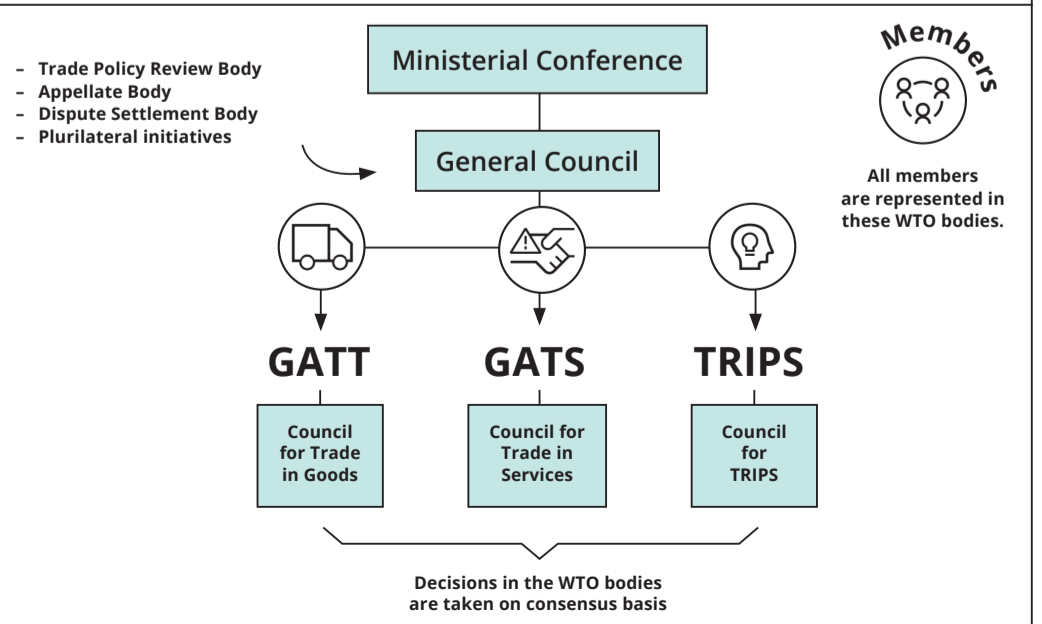
General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT)	General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade in Services (GATS)	Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS)
<p>Negotiated between 1947 and 1994, the GATT is...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the founding agreement of the multilateral trade system. one of the most important set of rules for economic development (i.e. lowering of tariffs and removal of barriers). the predecessor of the WTO (until Marrakesh Agreement in 1995). 	<p>The GATS is the first and only set of multilateral rules on services. It covers all services except government and air traffic services. It includes...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> substantive rules on equal treatment to foreign market access. commitments of members to opening service sectors to foreign service suppliers. 	<p>The TRIPS Agreement is a multilateral agreement on intellectual property (IP). It requires members to provide...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> copyrights and protection of related IP products (i.e. patents). domestic procedures for the enforcement of IP rights. the right to seize the WTO dispute settlement mechanism.

MEMBERSHIP





164 members representing 98% of world trade

WTO Membership status
■ WTO Member
 Observer negotiating accession

INSTITUTIONAL SET-UP



DISPUTE SETTLEMENT FUNCTION

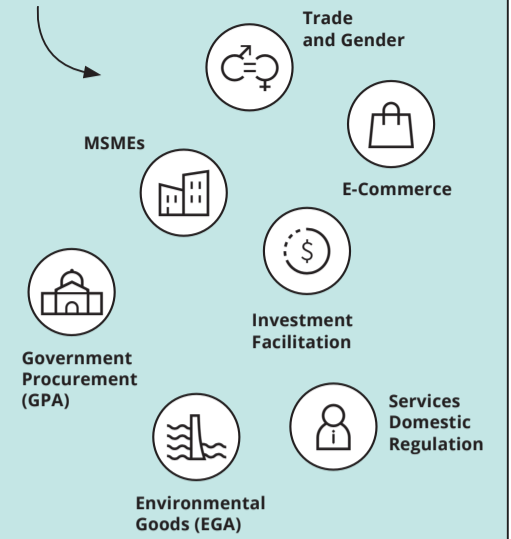
Dispute Settlement Body 	Appellate Body 
<p>Trade disputes regarding any of the WTO agreements can be settled within the Dispute Settlement Body (DSB). It can establish dispute settlement panels, refer matters to arbitration and grant the suspension of concessions in the event of non-compliance.</p>	<p>WTO members can appeal to the Appellate Body. It is composed of seven persons and can be seized to hear appeals from reports or panels issued by the DSB. It can uphold, modify or reverse decisions made by the DSB. It has been unable to operate since December 2019.</p>
The Multi-Party Interim Appeal Arbitration Arrangement (MPIA) 	
<p>A group of members created this alternative system for resolving WTO disputes that are appealed by a Member. The MPIA embodies the WTO appellate review rules and is open to all members. It is likely to remain in place for as long as the Appellate Body is not functioning.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"> Initiative by WTO members (not a formal WTO body)</p>	

WTO PLURILATERALS / JSI





WTO Plurilaterals or Joint Statement Initiatives (JSI) are discussions in which only a subset of members are participating.

In the absence of consensus on specific issue areas, plurilateral negotiations formed around topics such as electronic commerce and investment facilitation. New initiatives are under consideration.






7 Plurilaterals / JSI



ACHIEVEMENTS

Custom duties	
Lowering of custom duties & eradicating non-tariff trade barriers	<p>6% annual trade growth over the last 70 years</p>
Expanding membership	<p>Global Export Growth</p> 
<p>23 in 1947 (GATT) → 164 in 2022</p>  	<p>Progress in the areas of Services Domestic Regulation, MSMEs, Trade & Gender and Trade & Environment</p>
<p>Plurilaterals</p>	

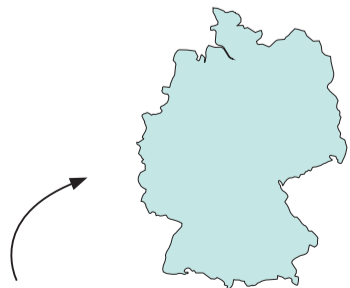
CHALLENGES AND CRITICISM

Multilateral trade negotiations	Dispute Settlement Mechanism
<p>Lack of progress in multilateral trade negotiations in most areas in recent years</p> 	<p>Dysfunctional dispute settlement system. No functioning Appellate Body since 2019</p> 
<p>Subsidies and state-owned enterprises</p> 	<p>Institutional reforms</p> <p>Difficulties in reforming itself (i.e. status of developing country at WTO)</p> 
<p>Unfit rules to address the issue of financial benefits received by and/or distributed by state-owned enterprises (SOEs)</p>	<p>Level playing field</p> <p>Rules not adapted to deal with non-market economies</p> 



ROLE OF GERMANY








As an export-oriented country and strongest economy in Europe, Germany has a key interest in global rules-based trade.



- All 27 EU countries are members of the WTO
- The EU delegation coordinates common positions among member states
- The EU delegation negotiates on behalf of its member states



WAY FORWARD

<p>Demonstrate that the WTO can deliver concrete results on today's most pressing issues</p> 	<p>Finalising fisheries subsidies negotiations</p> 	
<p>Updating rules to ensure level playing field among members</p> 	<p>Addressing challenges of climate change and sustainability</p> 	<p>Fighting COVID-19 pandemic with trade instruments</p>
<p>Reforming and restoring key functions of the organisation</p> 	<p>Including gender aspects to trade negotiations</p> 	<p>Concluding agreement on agriculture and public stockholding</p> 