OECD statistics on Aid for Trade draw from the Creditor Reporting System (CRS) and include all official development assistance (ODA) activities pertaining to (i) technical assistance for trade policy and regulations, (ii) economic infrastructure, (iii) productive capacity building, including trade development, (iv) trade-related adjustment, and (v) other trade-related needs. See additional details here.

This fact sheet presents data on ODA disbursements. Data on commitments are also available in the CRS database.

Methodology: How is Aid for Trade measured?
Aid for Trade amounted to USD 46.6 billion in 2019

Aid for Trade (A4T) represented almost one quarter of total ODA in 2019.¹

¹ Data on ODA is not yet available for 2020. Hence, it is impossible to measure the impact of the COVID-19 crisis on aid and A4T in particular. Nonetheless, OECD explored three scenarios: (i) a continuous growth of ODA in support of the recovery, (ii) a standstill of ODA nominal levels, and (iii) a standstill of ODA relative to GDP levels (see details here).
Aid for Trade has steadily grown since 2006

Over 2006-19, A4T disbursements have increased on an average 6.6% per year, with regional/unspecified allocations growing fastest (10.4% per year). While support to least developed countries (LDCs), other low-income countries (LICs) and lower middle-income countries (LMICs) has also grown at a sustained pace (respectively at 8.2% and 8.4% per year on average), A4T to upper middle-income countries (UMICs) has declined (-1.7% per year on average).

Over the years Aid for Trade has become less concessional

In 2017, the share of ODA loans in A4T to LDCs surpassed the share of grants, which dropped from 67% in 2006 to 41% in 2019. In other developing countries, this substitution took place earlier (2010), and the share of grants dropped from 64% to 43%.

Economic infrastructure represented the bulk of total A4T disbursements in 2019 (USD 25.3 billion), together with economic capacity building (USD 20.4 billion). Trade policy adjustments accounted only for USD 0.9 billion.

Aid for Trade contributes to all Sustainable Development Goals

In terms of number of projects, 27% of A4T projects in the CRS contributed to SDG 2 (Zero Hunger) through their contribution to improving food and agriculture production and distribution. Another 17% contributed to SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), 16% to SDG 9 (Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure) and 11% to SDG 7 (Affordable and Clean Energy).

In terms of the value of projects, SDG 9 represented 25% of total A4T, SDG7 19% and SDG8 13%, reflecting the higher cost of infrastructure projects. SDG 2 and SDG 11 (Sustainable cities and communities) followed with respectively 12% and 9% of total A4T value.

LMICs not in the LDC category ("other LMICs") attracted the largest share of A4T, followed by LDCs and other LICs. Per capita, LDCs and other LICs benefited most from A4T disbursements, with an average **USD 13.3** per inhabitant, compared to **USD 6.8** for other LMICs and **USD 2.0** for UMICs in 2019.

Aid for Trade goes primarily to Africa and Asia

Since tracking of A4T began in 2006, Africa and Asia have been the main recipients. In 2019, Africa represented 40% of geographically specified A4T disbursements, compared to 37% for Asia, and 23% for the rest of the world.

Other official flows have been following similar trends

Trade-related other official flows (OOF) disbursements (defined as non-concessional loan disbursements targeting A4T) have grown by 44% on average per year over 2006-16, but declined by 3% on average per year since 2017, down to USD 41 billion in 2019 from a peak of USD 46 billion in 2016.

Other trade-related official flows mainly benefit middle-income countries

LMICs outside the LDC category and UMICs attract 79% of total trade-related OOF, compared to only 11% for LDCs and other LICs, and another 10% for regional or unspecified OOF.

Other official flows to A4T, by income category (2006-2019)

USD billion, 2018 prices
