

6.1. The Information Technology Agreement, Manufacturing and Innovation – China’s and India’s Contrasting Experiences

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1. The US (with its main allies) can no longer shape alone the outcome of pluri-lateral agreements like the Information Technology Agreement (ITA).
2. China’s trade negotiators seem to have learnt how to compromise without undermining the scope for upgrading the country’s semiconductor and solid-state lighting industries. Due to its weak electronics industry, India doesn’t seem to hold anything comparable to China’s trump cards.
3. The majority of developing countries have had no say. Will this deprive these countries from speedy access to critical learning opportunities and productivity-enhancing generic technologies?
4. Rapid technical change in IT will require another expansion of the ITA product list in the near future. Are there ways to simplify the current tortuous negotiation process?
5. What changes are necessary in domestic regulations as well as in industrial and innovation policies to reap the potential benefits of ITA trade liberalization?
6. How does a country’s manufacturing and innovation capacity in a particular industry affect its approach to and its position in pluri-lateral and mega-regional trade agreements?