

“The Return to Protectionism”

List of Targeted HS Codes in the Trade War

Pablo Fajgelbaum, Penelopi Goldberg, Patrick Kennedy, and Amit Khandelwal

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This document contains information about the data sources used to construct a dataset of tariff changes on U.S. imports and exports in 2018 due to the ongoing trade war. We will soon update these data to include tariffs implemented in 2019. We request that researchers who use this dataset cite the following:

Fajgelbaum, Pablo D., Penelopi K. Goldberg, Patrick J. Kennedy, and Amit K. Khandelwal. “The Return to Protectionism.” *Quarterly Journal of Economics*. (Forthcoming).

1 US Import Tariffs

1.1 Dataset and variables

The file `us_import_tariffs_2018.csv` (also provided in `.dta` format) identifies U.S. import products subject to tariffs as a result of the trade war, and contains the following variables:

- *hs10*: the 10-digit Harmonized System (HS) code associated with each targeted product.
- *hs10_desc*: the product description associated with each 10-digit code.
- *wave*: classifies products into the following tariff groups: (1) tariffs targeting washing machines; (2) tariffs targeting solar panels; (3) tariffs targeting aluminum, iron, and steel imports; and (4) tariffs targeting only Chinese imports.
- *effective_date*: the date when tariffs were implemented.
- *tariff*: the percentage point tariff increase.

1.2 Countries targeted

Here we provide additional details about which countries are targeted or exempt for each 2018 U.S. tariff wave. For additional information about these tariff waves, see discussion of Table 1 in “The Return to Protectionism.”¹

- **Washer Tariffs:** Apply to all countries except Canada and GSP Least Developed Nations.²
- **Solar Panel Tariffs:** Apply to all countries except GSP Least Developed Nations.
- **Steel Tariffs:** Apply to all countries except Argentina, Australia, Brazil, and South Korea. Canada, Mexico, and the EU were exempt until June 1, 2018, after which exemptions were lifted.
- **Aluminum Tariffs:** Apply to all countries except Argentina (subject to quotas) and Australia (fully exempt with no quota restrictions). Canada, Mexico, and the EU were exempt until June 1, 2018, after which exemptions were lifted.
- **China Tariffs:** Apply only to imports of Chinese varieties.

¹The total number of products is slightly higher than in Table 1 of the paper because the paper includes only products that U.S. has actually imported at least once from 2013-2019.

²GSP Least Developed Nations include: Afghanistan, Angola, Benin, Bhutan, Burkina Faso, Burma, Burundi, Cambodia, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Gambia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Haiti, Kiribati, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mozambique, Nepal, Niger, Rwanda, Samoa, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Solomon Islands, Somalia, Tanzania, Togo, Tuvalu, Uganda, Vanuatu, Yemen, and Zambia.

1.3 Data sources

To construct this database, we scraped the U.S. tariff schedule from publicly available official U.S. International Trade Commission (USITC) documents. USITC publishes a “baseline” tariff schedule in January of each year, and publishes revisions to the baseline schedule to reflect changes in tariff policy. These revision files (14 revisions in total for 2018) document the ad-valorem tariff increases that unfolded over the course of the trade war.

The U.S. typically implemented tariff increases at the level of HS-8 codes. However, in rare cases the U.S. exempted specific HS-10 codes within HS-8 categories; this dataset captures those exemptions.

2 Retaliatory Tariffs

2.1 Dataset and variables

The file `retaliatory_tariffs_2018.csv` (also provided in .dta format) identifies U.S. export products subject to tariffs by American trading partners as a result of the trade war, and contains the following variables:

- *hs8*: the 8-digit HS code associated with each targeted export product.
- *country*: identifies the retaliating trade partner
- *effective_date*: the date when tariffs were implemented
- *tariff*: the percentage point tariff increase

2.2 Retaliating Partners

Retaliating U.S. trade partners in 2018 include:

- Canada
- China
- European Union
- Mexico
- Russia
- Turkey

2.3 Data sources

To construct this dataset, we used official documentation from foreign ministries and the World Trade Organization (WTO) describing retaliatory tariff actions due to the trade war. These ministries include the Ministry of Finance of China, the Department of Finance of Canada, the Office of the President of Mexico, and the World Trade Organization (covering the EU, Russia, and Turkey).

For a small number of products, Mexico and China increased tariffs on the same product multiple times. In this dataset we document the cumulative annual tariff increase and the earliest date when each country-product was targeted.

Finally, researchers should note that HS codes are only harmonized across countries up to the level of HS-6 codes. Finer codes, such as HS-8 and HS-10 codes, are developed independently by each country for internal classifications. Thus, we do not provide product descriptions for the retaliatory tariff dataset.³

³As with the import tariff dataset, the retaliatory tariff dataset does not capture antidumping or countervailing duties. It also does not capture potential non-tariff retaliatory actions, such as changes in purchasing behavior by state-owned enterprises.