



WORLD TRADE
ORGANIZATION



Technical Barriers to Trade Agreement

**10 key results
from 2022**

Technical Barriers to Trade Agreement

The Technical Barriers to Trade Agreement aims to ensure that regulations, standards, testing and certification procedures followed by WTO members do not create unnecessary obstacles to trade.

Annual Review of TBT Agreement

The WTO Committee on Technical Barriers to Trade collects data on an annual basis on the implementation of the TBT Agreement. The information in this brochure is based on the 2022 review.

About the WTO

The World Trade Organization is the international body dealing with the global rules of trade between nations. Its main function is to ensure that trade flows as smoothly, predictably and freely as possible, with a level playing field for all its members.

Disclaimer

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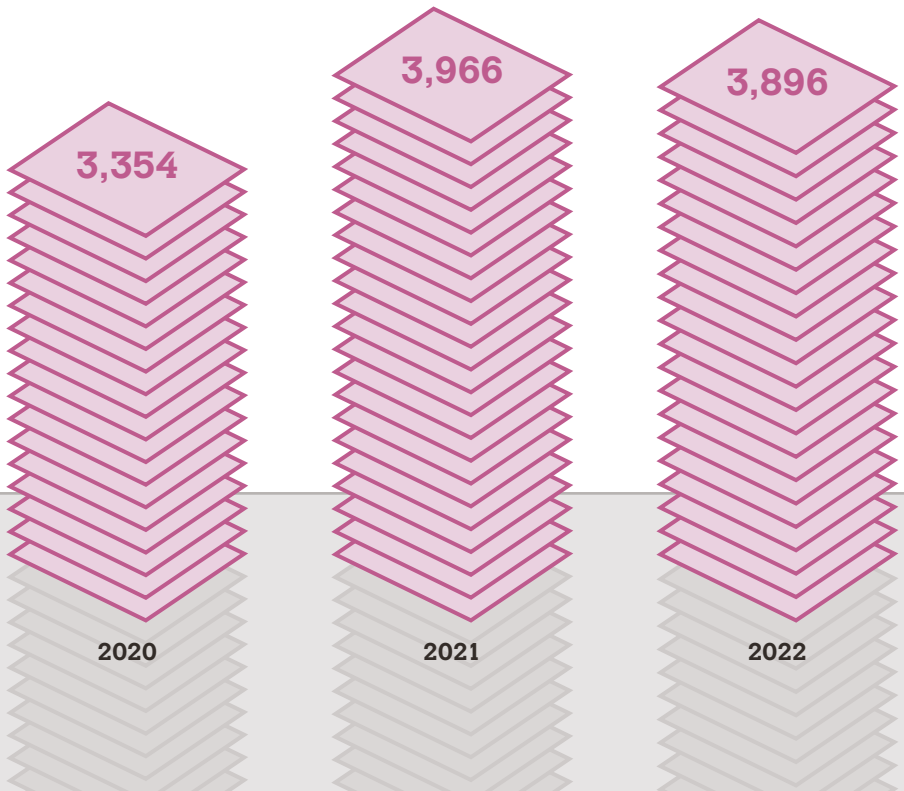
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1

WTO members submitted 3,896 notifications

about product standards and regulations to the Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) Committee in 2022. Notifications are a form of advance notice, providing an opportunity for WTO members to comment on the draft measures before they enter into force. Typically, they are about health or safety requirements, or measures taken to protect the environment. More than 3,000 notifications have been submitted annually to the TBT Committee for the past three years, illustrating WTO members' commitment to increasing transparency about measures affecting traded products.

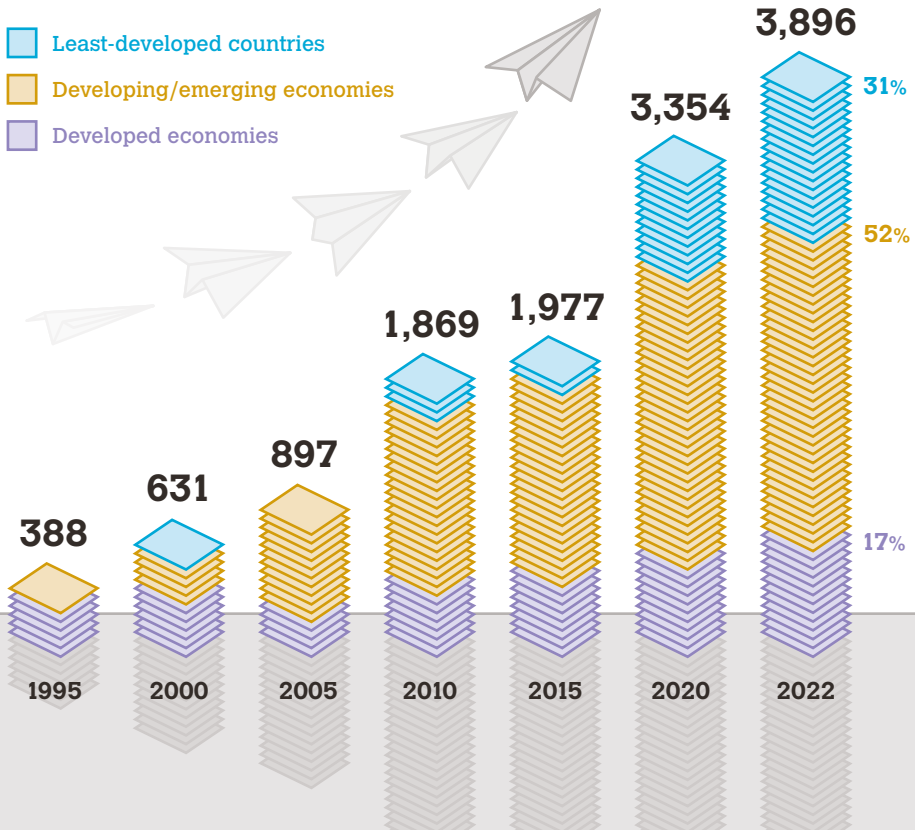
Number of TBT notifications per year

2

The share of notifications from least-developed countries continues to increase, representing 31% of submitted notifications in 2022.

This trend was spearheaded by Uganda, Rwanda, Tanzania and Burundi.

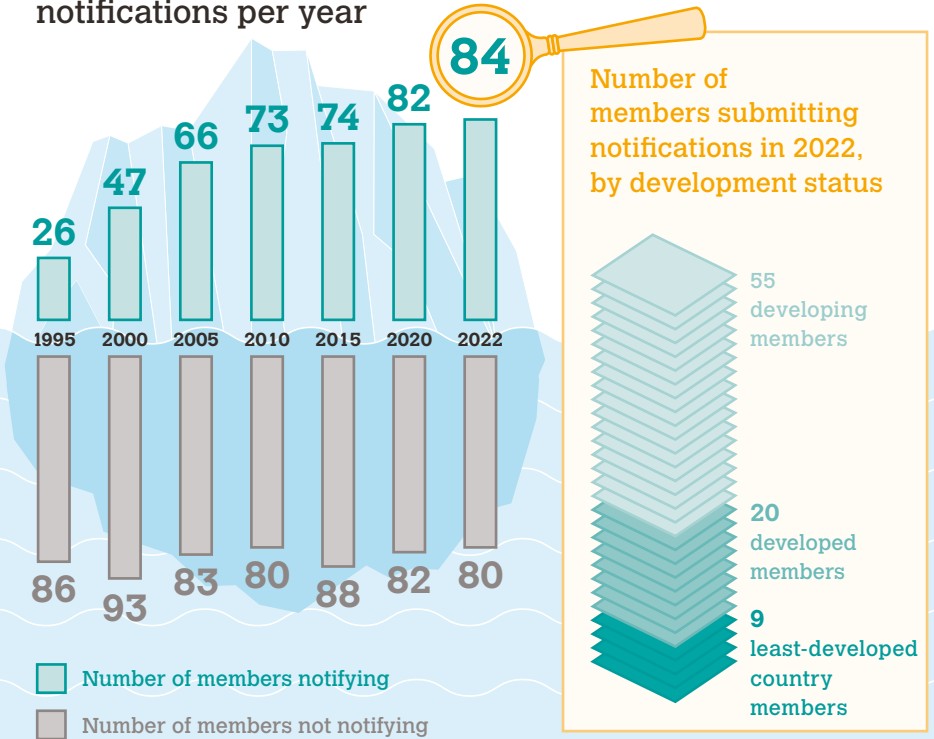
Number of notifications per year, by development status



3

About half of the WTO membership regularly notifies the WTO about new regulations or changes to old ones. A total of 64 developing and least-developed country members submitted notifications in 2022.

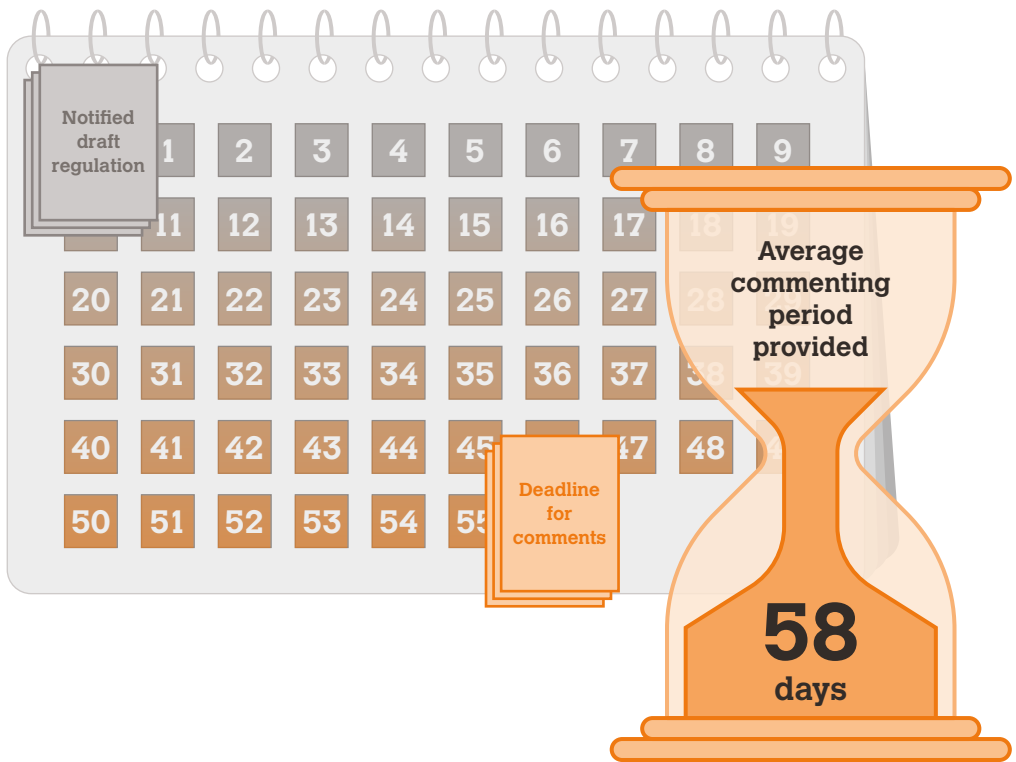
Number of members submitting notifications per year



4

Notifications submitted to the WTO in 2022 provided, on average, 58 days for members to comment, a slight increase from previous years. This period is an important opportunity for members to exchange views on regulations in the pipeline, allowing them to seek clarification on issues that may result from the proposed regulation.

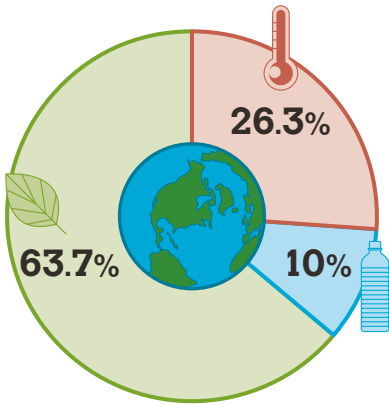
Time-period for members to comment on notifications



5

Protection of the environment was the objective of at least 18% of all notified regulations in 2022. Plastic pollution and climate change are issues attracting growing interest in the TBT Committee, with notifications related to both topics having increased markedly since 1995. **A total of 239 measures related to climate change and 152 related to plastics were notified in 2022.**

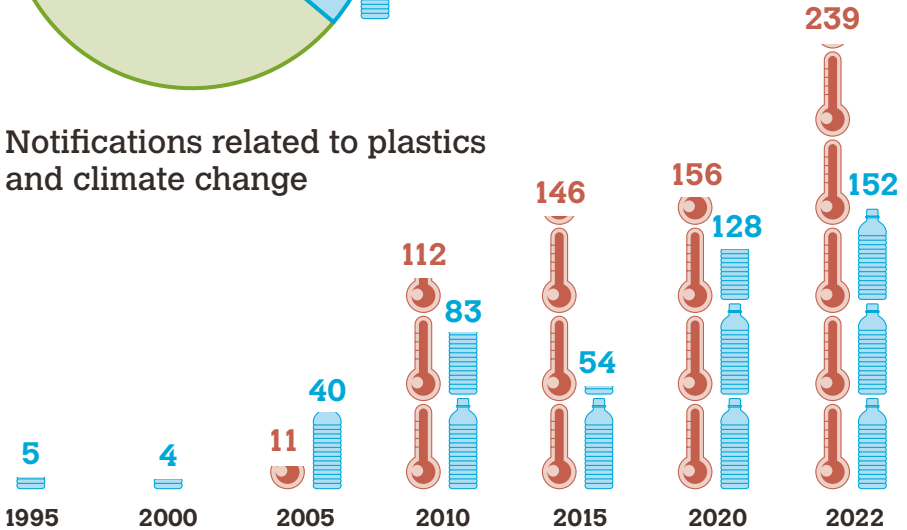
Types of notifications in 2022



631 TBT notifications have an environmental objective.

- Measures related to climate change
- Measures related to plastics
- Other environment-related notifications

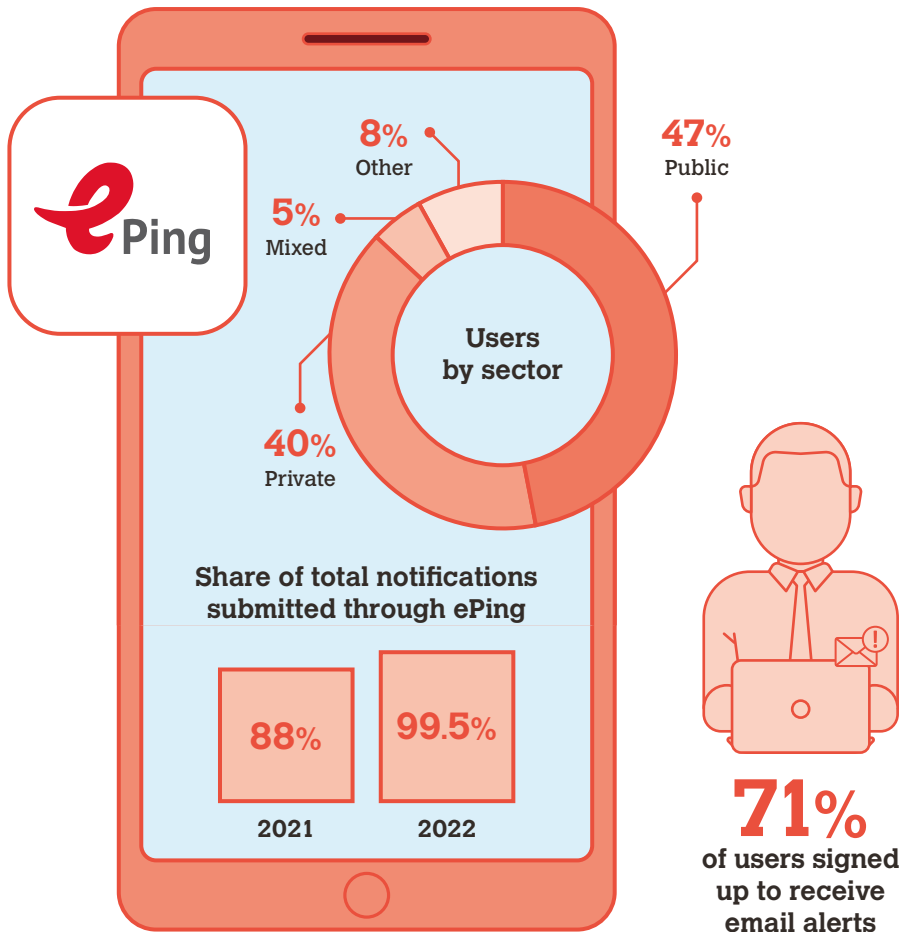
Notifications related to plastics and climate change



6

The new ePing platform, the WTO's main tool for TBT and SPS notifications and specific trade concerns, was launched in July 2022.

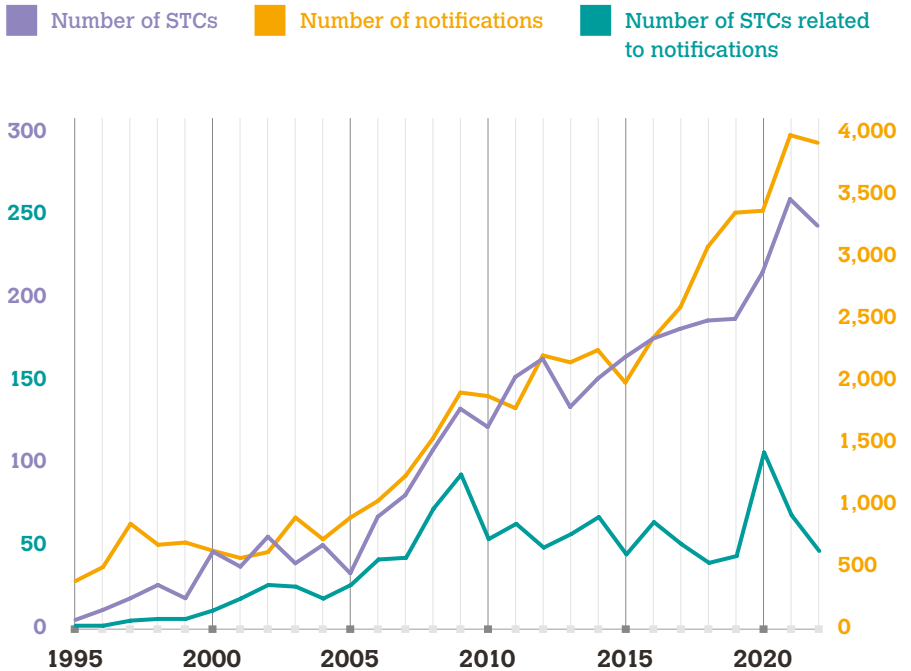
By the end of 2022, more than 19,000 users had registered on ePing.



7

The number of trade concerns raised by WTO members at the TBT Committee decreased by 6% in 2022 but grew, on average, by 24.5% per year since 1995. Discussions of these concerns before a measure enters into force often helps members to prevent them escalating into a formal dispute. Concerns raised in response to notifications range from simple requests for clarification to specific concerns about potential inconsistencies with the TBT Agreement.

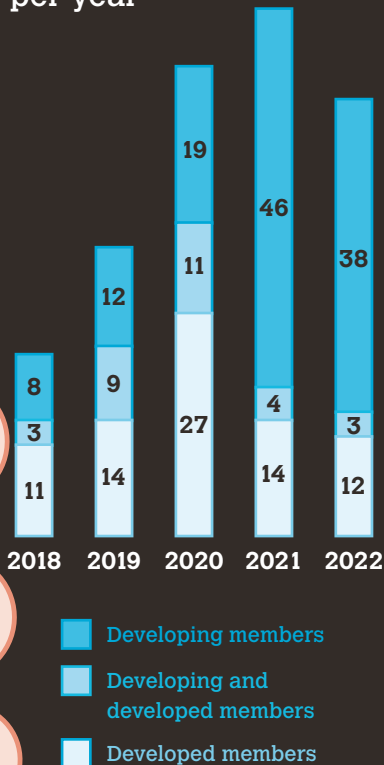
Specific trade concerns (STCs) raised and notifications submitted per year



8

In 2022, 53 new trade concerns were discussed by the TBT Committee, 38 of which were raised by developing members. While no least-developed country raised a new trade concern in 2022, developing members have become more active in raising new concerns over the past few years.

Number of new specific trade concerns raised per year



9

A TBT Symposium on Easing Regulatory Bottlenecks, organized by the WTO Secretariat, presented new data on the import value of trade concerns. **On average, each new trade concern covers imports with a value of USD 29 billion in the year it is first raised.** New and previously raised trade concerns from 2002 to 2020 covered, on average, imports with an annual value of USD 2,419 billion – equivalent to 16.7% of the average value of global merchandise imports.

Average value of global merchandise imports

Average annual import value of STCs

2,419
(USD billion)



2002

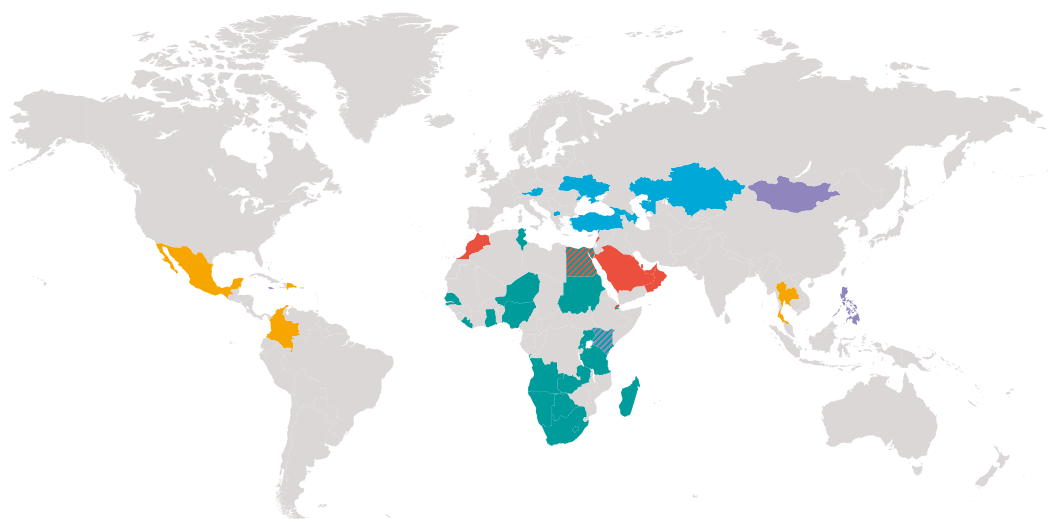
2020

New and previously raised trade concerns

10

In-person TBT technical assistance resumed in 2022, following the easing of COVID-19 restrictions. Courses related to transparency and ePing were particularly popular.

TBT technical assistance training (in 2022)



Red TBT regional for the Middle East and Arab Countries (in person, Kuwait)

Yellow TBT national (virtual)

Purple TBT national (in person)

Blue TBT regional for Central Eastern European, Central Asian and Caucasus Members and Observers of the WTO (CEEAC) (in person, Austria)

Teal TBT Transparency Champions Programme (in person and virtual)

Red/Teal diagonal Member took part in more than 1 training activity

Purple/Teal diagonal Member took part in more than 1 training activity

Further information

Further information about the implementation of the TBT Agreement is available in the 2022 Annual Review (G/TBT/50).



“Technical Barriers to Trade” – a publication in the WTO Agreements Series – provides an overview of the purpose and scope of the TBT Agreement, the types of measures it covers, and the key principles of the Agreement. It can be downloaded from the WTO website.

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