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AUTHOR OR EDITOR

García-García, Jorge

Montes-Uribe, Enrique

Silva-Rodríguez, Juan Sebastián

Zárate-Solano, Héctor Manuel

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Abstract

Numerous studies exist about exports at the firm level in Colombia, but only a few exist about the market for imports and the importing firms. This study seeks to fill that gap by looking at the dynamics of imports, the market for imports and the role of importing firms in Colombia between 1995 and 2019. The study uses the information in the import declaration (Form DIAN 500) that importers have to present to Dirección de Impuestos y Aduanas Nacionales (DIAN) to clear imports from customs. The study finds that the import market in Colombia is quite heterogenous; few economic agents account for a large share of the imported value; a large number of small importers purchase small amounts of foreign goods; firms have a high rate of entry and exit in the import market; a small share of firms imported every year; and commodities not imported have a larger number of tariff measures than the imported ones.