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Let's Try Next Door: Technical Barriers to Trade and Multi-destination Firms

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### ACCEPTED MANUSCRIPT

## Let's Try Next Door:

## Technical Barriers to Trade and Multi-destination Firms

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#### Abstract

Stringent Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) are expected to drive exporters out of the markets imposing these hurdles. In addition, more able multi-destination exporters can refocus on TBT-free markets and reorient their exports. By matching a database of TBT measures raised as concerns at the WTO (Specific Trade Concerns – STCs), with a firm-level panel of French exporters, we show the complex effects of restrictive TBT measures on the different margins of trade. We show that the negative effect of TBT on export participation is magnified for multi-destination firms, which can divert their exports towards TBT-free destinations. Moreover, we conduct aggregate level estimations to show that the effect of stringent TBTs in reducing export flows is magnified in more homogeneous sectors. Observing the shape of the firm distribution at sectoral level and the aggregate response of export to trade cost, we shed light on the fixed component of the additional cost imposed by TBTs on exporters.

Key Words: Non-tariff measures, TBT, Multi-destination Firms, Trade Margins.

JEL Codes: F13, F14.

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