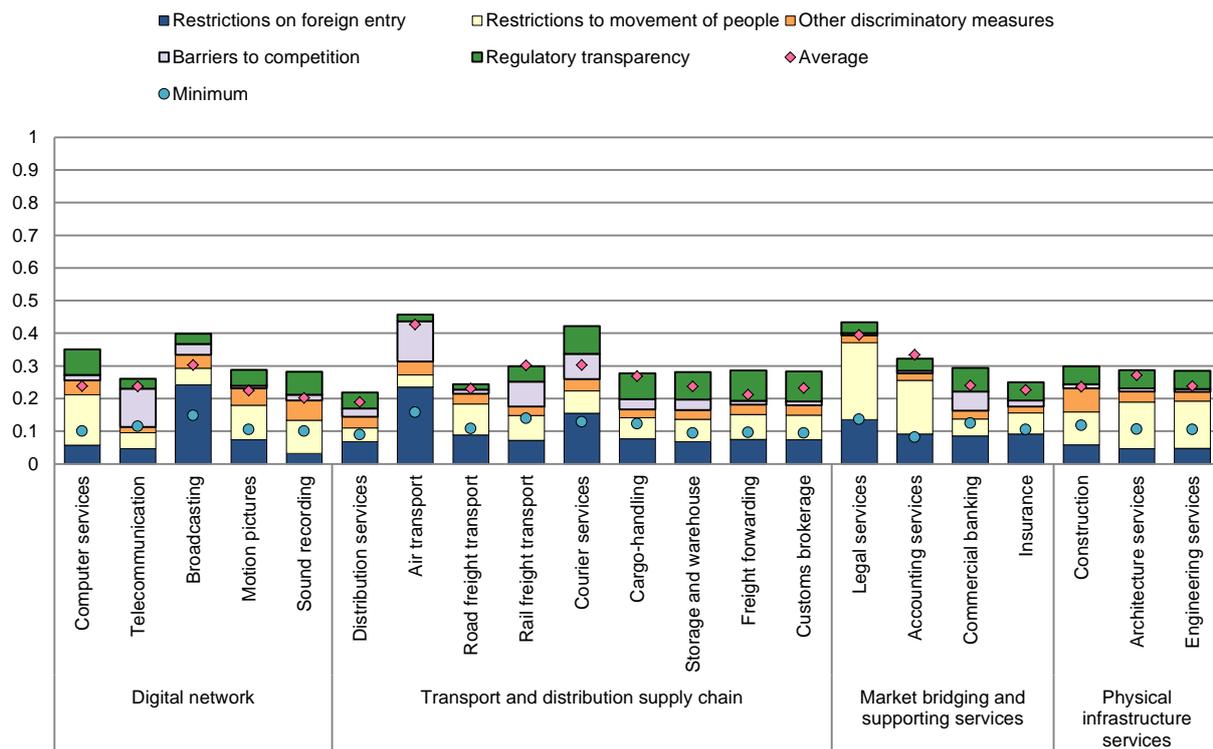


OECD Services Trade Restrictiveness Index (STRI): Switzerland

Switzerland exported services worth USD 114 billion and its services import value was USD 95 billion in 2016. Business services and financial services are Switzerland's largest services exports and imports. Switzerland's score on the STRI in the 21 sectors is shown below, along with the average and the lowest score among the 44 countries included in the STRI database for each sector.

STRI by sector and policy area



Note: The STRI indices take values between zero and one, one being the most restrictive. They are calculated on the basis of the STRI regulatory database which contains information on regulation for the 35 OECD Members, Brazil, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, India, Indonesia, Lithuania, Russia and South Africa. The STRI database records measures on a Most Favoured Nations basis. Preferential trade agreements are not taken into account. Air transport and road freight cover only commercial establishment (with accompanying movement of people). Maritime transport services are not covered for landlocked countries.

Horizontal policy measures

Switzerland has a lower score than average on the STRI in two out of 21 sectors. Switzerland applies quotas and labour market tests for workers seeking to provide services in the country on a temporary basis as intra-corporate transferees, contractual services suppliers or independent services suppliers. Workers in these categories may stay in the country for up to 12 months on their first entry permit. Switzerland requires that at least one of the board members or the manager in corporations must be residents of Switzerland; and access to the public procurement market on equal terms is limited to firms from countries with which Switzerland has a mutual agreement. Transfers of personal data can only take place to foreign countries which ensure an adequate level of protection or when private data processors, both senders and receivers, establish various safeguards approved by the data protection authorities. Moreover, it is relatively burdensome to register a company in Switzerland, measured by the number of working days and the number of mandatory procedures required. More than eight documents are needed to obtain a business visa. Finally, it is noted that the state retains a prominent role in the economy with at least one major state-owned enterprise in banking, broadcasting, courier, rail freight transport and telecommunication services.

The sectors with the relatively lowest STRI scores

Accounting, rail freight transport and logistics cargo-handling are the three best performing sectors in Switzerland, relative to the average STRI across all countries. Accounting services cover also auditing. Restrictions in the sector result mostly from the regulation relating to auditing professionals. Commercial presence is required in order to provide auditing services and the majority of the board members must be licensed professionals. Foreign auditors must completely re-do the university degree, practice and exam in order to provide services in Switzerland.

Certain rail transport agreements are exempt from anti-trust regulation in Switzerland. Moreover, the railways operator is not independent from the government. In the logistics sector, several licenses might be required in order to provide integrated logistics services. Licenses for cargo handling at Switzerland's major airport are subject to a quota. In addition, domicile in Switzerland is required in order to obtain a license to operate a customs warehouse.

The sectors with the relatively highest STRI scores

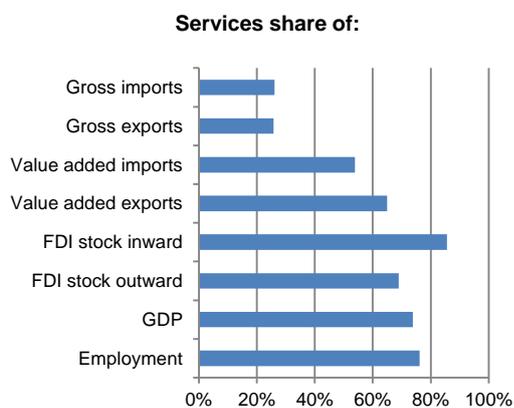
Courier services, sound recording and computer services are the three sectors with the highest score relative to the average STRI across all countries. In courier services, Switzerland maintains a state-owned postal service monopoly on the category of letters up to 50 grams. Moreover, commercial presence is required in order to provide courier services.

In sound recording a sector-specific contribution to the score relates to foreign rights holders' access to collecting royalties or license fees through authorised collection societies, which is granted subject to reciprocity. The score in computer services is entirely due to horizontal restrictions.

Recent policy changes

There are no policy changes that affect the score on the STRI during the period 2014-2017.

Efficient services sectors matter



Services account for 26% of Switzerland's gross exports, but for 65% of value-added exports, indicating that Switzerland's exports of goods rely intensively on services inputs. The services share of inward investment is relatively high in Switzerland. Services account for 75% of employment, which implies that earnings and aggregate demand depends crucially on productivity in the services sector. The information and communication technology revolution opens new opportunities for inclusive growth in a services economy like Switzerland. Innovation and adoption of technology relies on access to knowledge and to the networks, people, goods and services that carry the knowledge around the world. In this context, Switzerland could benefit from more open markets for services trade through the temporary movement of natural persons.

More information

- » Access all of the country notes, sector notes and interactive STRI tools on the OECD website at <http://oe.cd/stri>
- » Read more about services trade policies and their impacts in this publication: [Services Trade Policies and the Global Economy](#)
- » Contact the OECD Trade and Agriculture Directorate with your questions at stri.contact@oecd.org