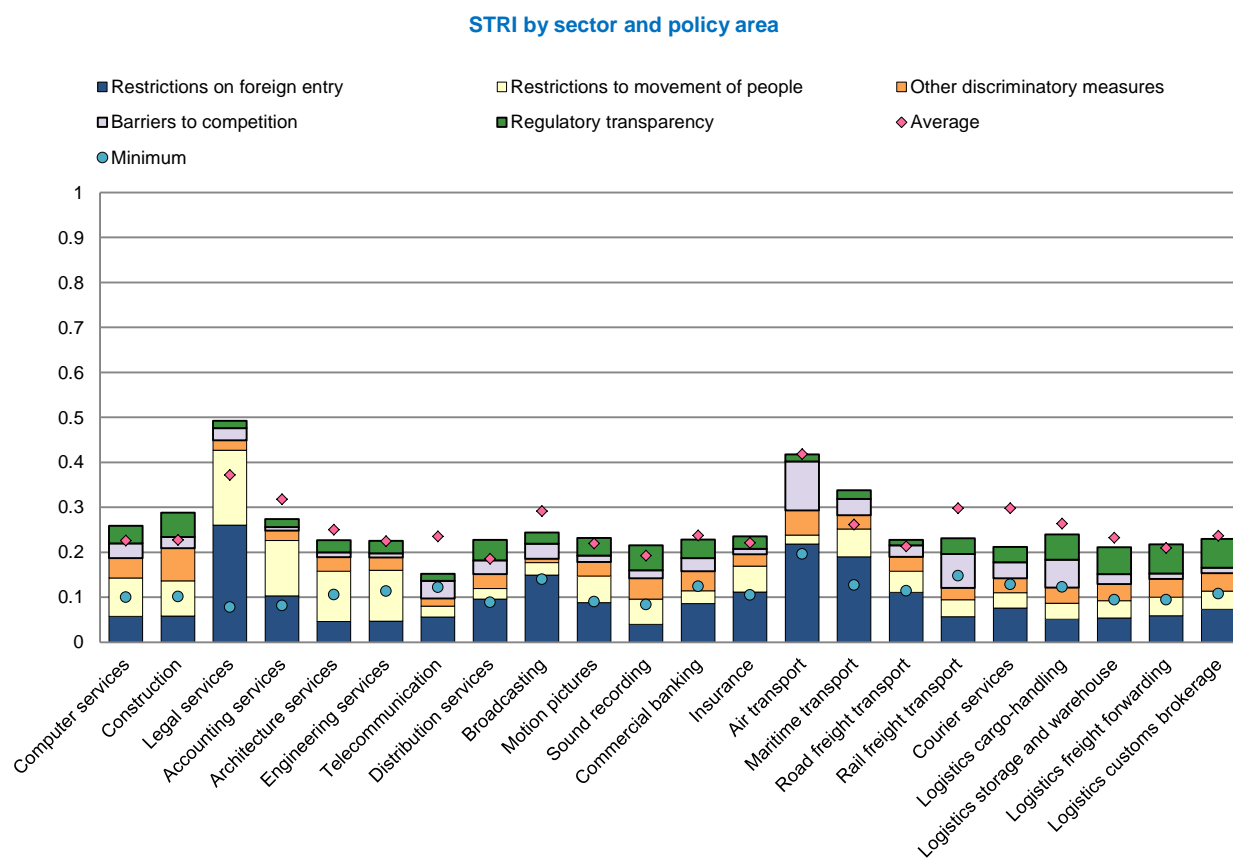


OECD Services Trade Restrictiveness Index (STRI): Greece

Greece exported services worth USD 31 billion and its services import value was USD 12 billion in 2015. Transport services, particularly maritime transport, are the largest services exporting and importing sector.

Greece's score on the STRI in the 22 sectors is shown below, along with the average and the lowest score among the 44 countries included in the STRI database for each sector.



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).

Horizontal policy measures

Greece has a lower STRI score than the average in 11 out of 22 sectors. This can be explained in large part by general regulations that apply to all sectors in the economy. Greece applies economic needs test for natural persons seeking to provide services in the country on a temporary basis as intra-corporate transferees and contractual services suppliers. The duration of stay is limited to 24 months on their first entry permit. There is at least one major state-owned enterprise in computer, construction, broadcasting, rail, banking and insurance services. Rights under the public procurement law are limited to partners in regional trade agreements and members of the WTO's Government Procurement Agreement. Greece imposes restrictions on ownership of land and real estate by foreigners and a minimum amount of capital must be deposited in a bank or with a notary in order to register a corporation. The standards for cross-border transfer of personal data are set at the EU level. Transfers to non-EEA economies can only take place when these ensure an adequate level of protection that is substantially similar to that required in the EU or when private data processors, both senders and receivers, establish various safeguards approved by the data protection authorities.

The sectors with the relatively lowest STRI scores

Telecommunications services, courier services and accounting service are the three sectors with the lowest score relative to the average. In telecommunications services, the score is driven to a large part by horizontal measures and there are only a few sector-specific limitations affecting the area of competition policy. In courier services, next to the general regulatory framework, there is a reciprocity requirement for firms providing services from third countries and the State maintains control of a major firm in the sector. The accounting sector includes also auditing services. Licensed professionals must own a majority of the shares in auditing firms as well as comprise majority of the board of directors. Foreigners seeking to obtain a license as auditors must re-do the university degree, practice, and exam locally.

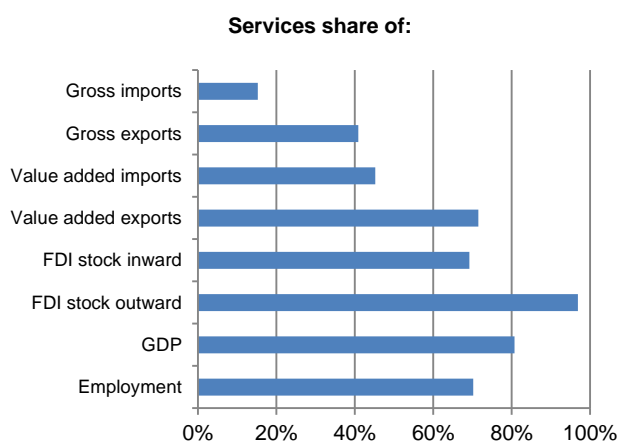
The sectors with the relatively highest STRI scores

Legal services, construction services, and maritime transport services are the three sectors with the highest score relative to the average. In legal services, EU nationality is required to obtain a license to practice domestic law, and only licensed lawyers may own shares in law firms. The latter limitation is accompanied by licensing requirements for board members and managers of law firms. In construction services, next to the economy wide limitations, discriminatory measures in the public procurement processes contribute to the score. In addition, the State controls two major firms in the sector. In maritime transport services, foreigners cannot own more than 49% of local maritime transport companies. The cabotage market is closed for non-EU registered vessels, and the registration of vessels under the national flag is preconditioned on majority ownership by Greek or EU nationals. In addition, certain technical agreements are exempt from competition law while some services are reserved for specific entities at ports.

Recent policy changes

There are no policy changes that affect the score on the STRI during the period 2015-2016.

Efficient services sectors matter



Services represent 40% of Greece's gross exports, but 71% in value added terms. Services also account for over two-thirds of GDP and 70% of employment in Greece, which implies that earnings and aggregate demand depend significantly on productivity in services sectors. Greece could further increase the efficiency of its economy by prioritising reforms that enhance competition in services markets. The STRI suggests that this may be particularly the case for business and transport services, both of which are essential inputs in downstream industries.

More information

- » Access all of the country notes, sector notes and interactive STRI tools on the OECD website at <http://oe.cd/stri>
- » Contact the OECD Trade and Agriculture Directorate with your questions at stri.contact@oecd.org