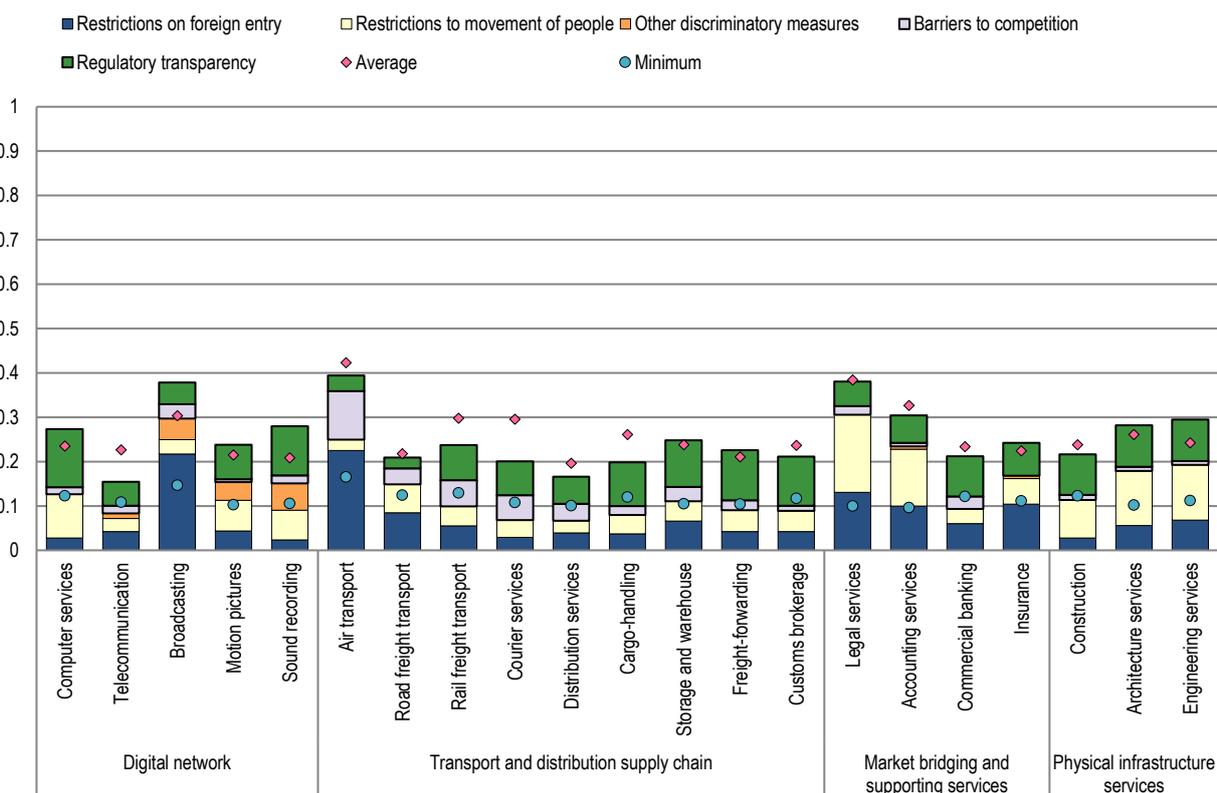


OECD Services Trade Restrictiveness Index (STRI): Austria

Austria exported services worth USD 66 billion and its services import value was USD 55 billion in 2017. Travel and other business are Austria's largest services exports and transport and other business services the largest services imports. Austria's score on the STRI in the 21 sectors is shown below, along with the average and the lowest score among the 45 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 36 OECD Members, Brazil, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, 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

Austria has a lower score on the STRI than average in 12 out of 21 sectors. Labour market tests are applied for workers seeking to provide services in the country on a temporary basis as intra-corporate transferees, contractual services suppliers or independent services suppliers. Managers and specialists entering the country as intra-corporate transferees can obtain a work permit for three years, while workers of other categories may stay in the country for up to 12 months on their first entry permit. The standards for cross-border transfers of personal data are set at the EU level. Transfers to non-EEA economies can take place when these ensure an adequate level of data protection or, in the absence of this, appropriate safeguards (e.g. binding corporate rules or standard data protection clauses) are in place. In addition, it is relatively burdensome to register a company in Austria, 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, there are no legal obligations to consult with

stakeholders during the preparation of laws and regulations at the federal level although it is a common practice to have such consultation procedures.

The sectors with the relatively lowest STRI scores

Courier services, telecommunication, and logistics cargo-handling services are the three sectors with the lowest score relative to the average STRI across all countries. Competition in the courier services sector is affected by the presence of a major firm controlled by the government which receives preferential tax treatment in its role as designated postal operator. The STRI in the telecommunications sector results almost entirely from the general regulatory environment, rather than sector-specific restrictions. In the cargo-handling sector a major supplier is owned by the government.

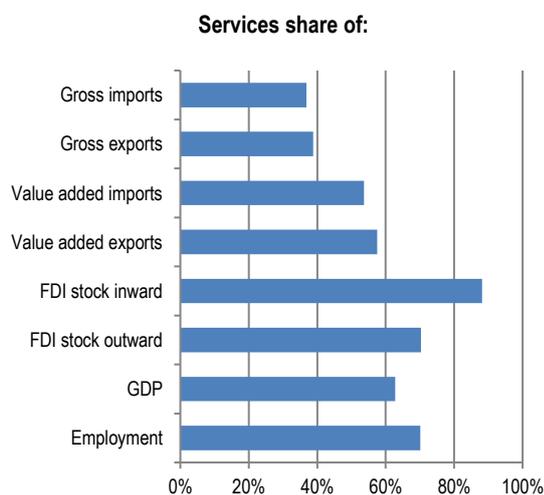
The sectors with the relatively highest STRI scores

Sound recording services, broadcasting and engineering are the three sectors with the highest score relative to the average STRI across all countries. Eligibility for some subsidies for audio-visual work is limited to productions in which the directors and majority of the cast and crew are Austrian nationals. This limitation applies in both sound recording and broadcasting. In broadcasting, Austria requires that the majority of the shares in broadcasters must be owned by Austrian or EEA nationals. In addition, a majority proportion of broadcasters' transmission time must be reserved for European works. Regarding engineering, the manager as well as the majority of board members of an engineering company must be licensed professionals. Foreign engineers have to take a local examination and commercial presence in Austria is required to provide engineering services.

Recent reforms

A new permit for intra-corporate transferees was introduced in October 2017. The period of validity has been extended from one year to three years for managers and specialists. In addition, parts of the fixed line telephony market were deregulated in May 2017. The EU General Data Protection Regulation (Regulation 2016/679) entered into force on 25 May 2018, providing a comprehensive update on the EU data protection regime.

Efficient services sectors matter



Services account for 38% of Austria's gross exports, but 58% of value-added exports, indicating that Austria's exports of goods rely intensively on services inputs. The services share of inward investment is relatively high. Services account for 70% 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 Austria. 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, Austria 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