OECD Services Trade Restrictiveness Index (STRI): Finland 2019

Finland exported services worth USD 33 billion (0.6% of world services exports) and its services imports amounted to USD 36 billion (0.6% of world services imports) in 2018. Other business services are the largest category of services imports and telecommunications the largest category of services exports. Finland’s score on the STRI index in the 22 sectors is shown below along with the average and the lowest score among the 46 countries included in the STRI database for each sector. Finland has a lower score on the STRI than the average in 14 out of 22 sectors.

### STRI by sector and policy area (2019)

- **Restrictions on foreign entry**
- **Restrictions to movement of people**
- **Other discriminatory measures**
- **Barriers to competition**
- **Regulatory transparency**
- **Average**
- **Minimum**

#### Horizontal policy measures

Finland applies 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. These categories may stay in the country for up to 12 months on their first entry permit. At least one board member and the manager (CEO) in corporations must be residents of Finland or the European Economic Area. Furthermore, rights of access to public procurement are limited to regional trade agreement partners and members of the WTO’s Government Procurement Agreement. The standards for cross-border transfer 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. Finally, Finland has a restriction on the establishment of foreign branches and a minimum amount of capital must be deposited in a bank or with a notary in order to register a business.
The sectors with the relatively lowest STRI scores

Legal services, accounting services and architecture services are the three sectors with the lowest score relative to the average STRI across all countries. Finland applies one of the most open regulatory regimes for legal services in the sample. The title “advocate” is protected and membership of the bar association is subject to similar qualifications and practice requirements as in most other countries, but with very few exceptions, advocates do not have exclusive rights to provide legal services. Accounting covers auditing and accounting. While auditing is a regulated profession in Finland, accounting is not. A majority of board members and the manager of auditing firms must be licenced auditors, and a license requires a local exam and local practice of at least three years. The profession of architecture is not a regulated profession in Finland.

The sectors with the relatively highest STRI scores

Road freight transport, distribution services, and computer services are the three sectors with the highest score relative to the average STRI across all countries. Distribution and road freight are among the least restricted sectors in the STRI database. Road freight transport is subject to EU regulation that requires EEA residence for the manager of a road transport operator and partly exempts road carrier agreements from anti-trust regulation. The major sector-specific regulation in distribution services is a state monopoly for retail sale of alcoholic beverages. In addition, regulations on large format retailers and on seasonal sales contribute to the index. In the computer services sector, economy-wide regulations contribute to the relatively high score.

Recent policy changes

In March 2019, EU-wide requirements on accounting separation entered into force for port authorities in receipt of public funds. In the distribution sector, shop opening hours were deregulated in 2015 and labelling standards were reformed in 2016. The new 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. As of 2016, revised conditions, including on economic needs, apply for authorisations for the operation of storage facilities for the customs warehousing of goods pursuant to Regulation (EU) No 952/2013.

Efficient services sectors matter

Services account for around 34% of Finland’s gross trade, and over half of its value added trade, indicating that Finland’s exports and imports of goods rely intensively on services inputs. Services account for 68% of GDP and an even higher share of employment, showing that labour productivity is lower in services than in other sectors. The information and communication technology revolution opens new opportunities for inclusive growth in a services economy like Finland. 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, Finland could benefit from more open markets for services trade.

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