



### LOGISTICS CARGO-HANDLING SERVICES 2021

#### Key findings

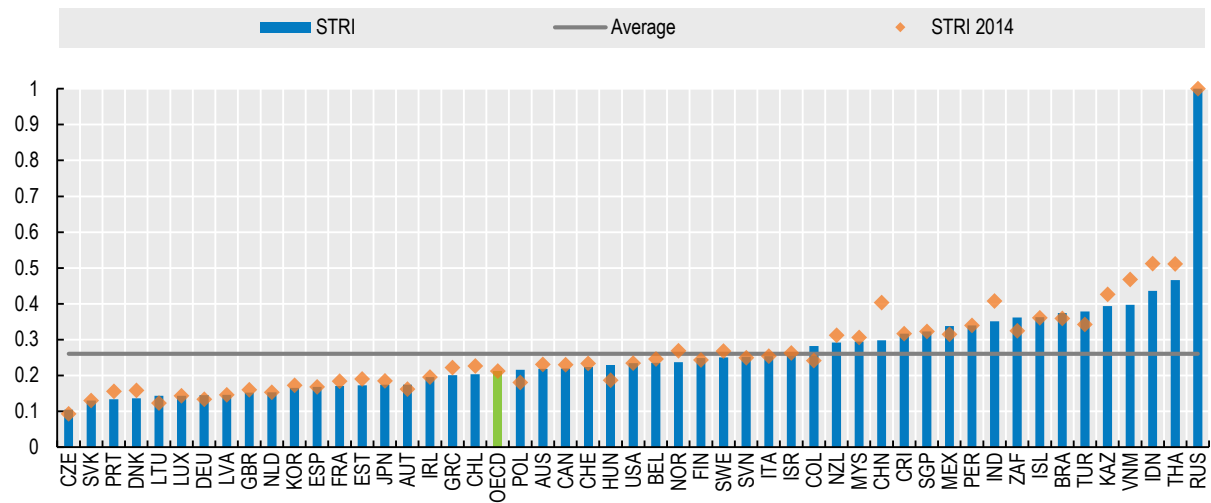
- The average 2021 STRI in the logistics cargo-handling sector is 0.26 out of a maximum of 1 (most trade restrictive) indicating a relatively low overall level of restrictiveness. However, individual country scores diverge considerably, ranging between 0.10 and 1.
- The best performing countries in the sector are the Czech Republic, the Slovak Republic and Portugal. Most regulatory changes in 2021 were recorded in the United Kingdom, Australia and New Zealand.
- Barriers to competition closely followed by restrictions on foreign entry are the main drivers of trade restrictiveness in the sector, with contributions to the total index values amounting to 29% in OECD economies and 30% in non-OECD economies, and 24% in OECD economies and 34% in non-OECD economies, respectively.
- OECD estimates suggest that on average for all countries halving the distance to best practice in this sector is associated with between 5% and 13% boost in trade in manufactured goods such as motor vehicles, electrical equipment and chemicals.

Cargo-handling services are auxiliary to all modes of transport, and have been considered as an important part of supply chain management. As trade in goods becomes widely connected across the border, access to smooth and reliable logistics services becomes more essential.

Logistics services in the STRI are defined as cargo-handling services (ISIC 5224), storage and warehousing services (including customs warehouse services) (ISIC 5210), freight transport agency services and customs brokerage services (ISIC 5229). Since the regulatory framework for these four sub-sectors can be different in many countries, separate indices are developed for each of them. This note presents the STRIs for logistics cargo-handling services.

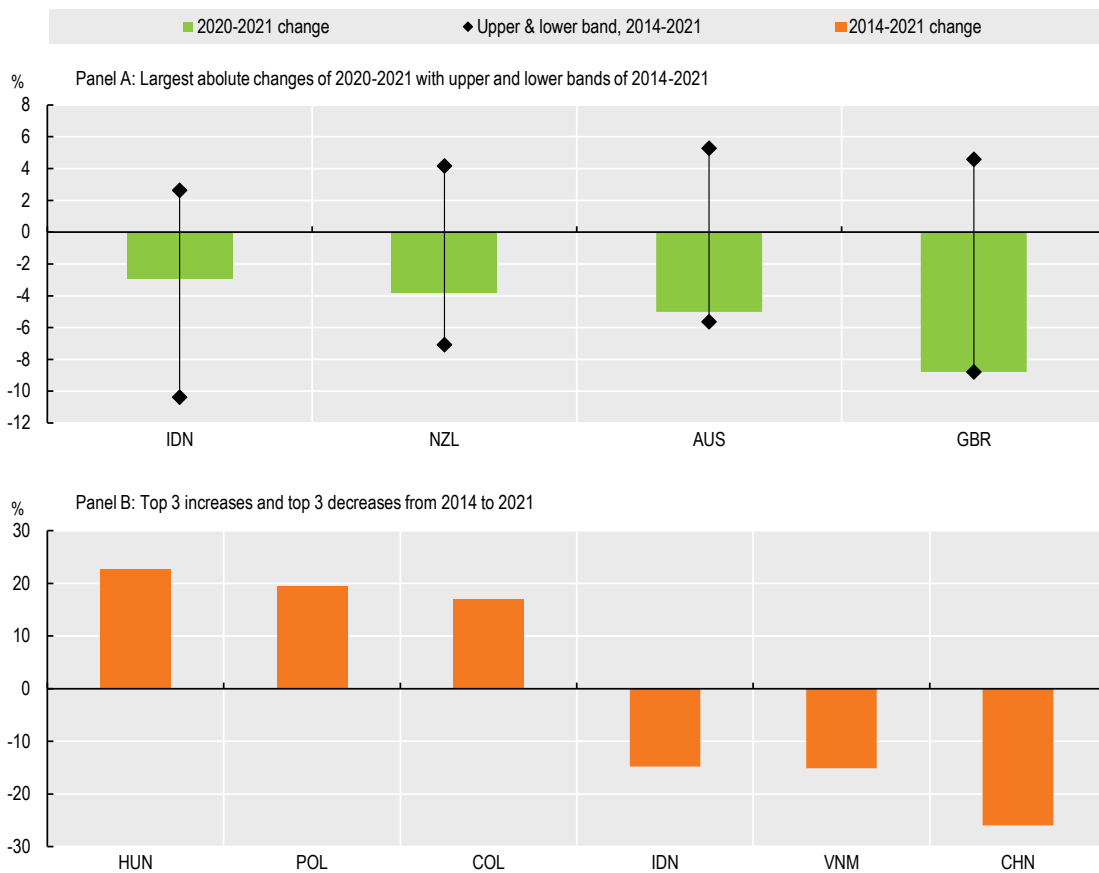
The 2021 STRIs in this range between 0.10 and 1, with a sample average of 0.26 (Figure 1). There are 31 countries below and 19 countries above the average. The best performing countries in the sector are the Czech Republic, the Slovak Republic and Portugal.

Figure 1. STRI in logistics cargo-handling services, 2021



Note: The STRI indices take values between zero and one, one being the most restrictive. The indices are based on laws and regulations in force on 31 October 2021. The STRI regulatory database covers the 38 OECD countries, Brazil, China, India, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Peru, Russian Federation, Singapore, South Africa, Thailand, and Viet Nam. The statistical data for Israel are supplied by and under the responsibility of the relevant Israeli authorities. The use of such data by the OECD is without prejudice to the status of the Golan Heights, East Jerusalem and Israeli settlements in the West Bank under the terms of international law. Source: OECD STRI database (2021).

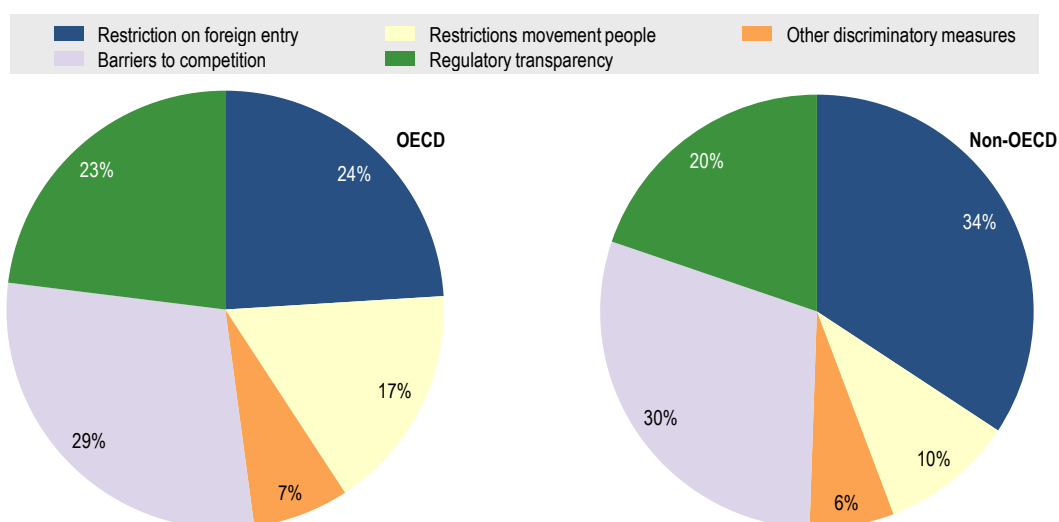
Figure 2. Change since 2014 and change in the last year, by country



Note: Selection criteria for Panel A was based on largest absolute changes since 2020. Panel B selection is the three largest increases, and the three largest decreases in the STRI since 2014. Source: OECD STRI database (2021).

Several countries introduced regulatory changes affecting the STRIs in 2021 and more so since 2014 (Figure 2). In 2021, the STRIs in this sector saw the biggest changes in Indonesia (-3%), New Zealand (-4%), Australia (-5%), and the United Kingdom (-9%). Since 2014, on the one hand, we have observed countries that have had the strongest restrictive trends such as Hungary (23%), Poland (19%) and Colombia (17%). On the other hand, we have strong liberalising trends in Indonesia (-15%), Viet Nam (-15%), and China (-26%).

**Figure 3. STRI policy areas for logistics cargo-handling services by OECD and non-OECD economies, 2021**



Source: OECD STRI database (2021).

The measures in the STRI database are organised under five policy areas (Figure 3). Restrictions on foreign entry include barriers related to establishing and operating companies such as foreign equity limits or requirements on board of directors and cross-border data flows. Restrictions on the movement of people cover barriers that affect the temporary entry of foreign services providers through quotas, labour market tests and short durations of stay. Other discriminatory measures include discrimination of foreign services suppliers as far as taxes, subsidies and public procurement are concerned. Barriers to competition include information on anti-trust policy, government ownership of major firms and the extent to which government-owned enterprises are exempt from competition laws. Regulatory transparency includes information on consultations and dissemination prior to laws and regulations entering into force. It also records information on obtaining a license or a visa. In this sector, barriers related to competition closely followed by restrictions on foreign entry are most prominent, amounting to 29% in OECD economies and 30% in non-OECD economies, and 24% in OECD economies and 34% in non-OECD economies, respectively.

Table 1 lists the most common restrictions identified in each policy area. Under restrictions on foreign entry, a license to operate cargo-handling services is required across most countries, while economy-wide measures related to the acquisition of land and real estate are also prominent. As logistics services is considered a strategic sector across many countries, the screening of foreign investments are common as well. Restrictions to the movement of people are relatively common across the board and include mostly short permitted durations of initial stay and labour market tests. Under other discriminatory measures, barriers related to accessing public procurement markets for foreign tenderers remain the most common challenge. Under barriers to competition, accounting separation requirement and prohibition of cross-subsidy are impediment in most of the countries. Government controls at least one major firm in more than half the countries covered. Under barriers related to regulatory transparency, cumbersome visa procedures are the most common challenges in this sector.

**Table 1. Top 5 most relevant measures by policy area, 2021**

Policy area	Measure	Countries having a restriction
Restrictions to foreign entry	Memo: Licence/authorisation is required to enter the market	35
	Acquisition and use of land and real estate by foreigners is restricted	34
	Screening exists without exclusion of economic interests	27
	There are limits to the proportion of shares that can be acquired by foreign investors in publicly-controlled firms	20
	Board of directors: at least one must be resident	18
Restrictions to movement of people	Limitation on duration of stay for contractual services suppliers (months)	38
	Labour market tests: intra-corporate transferees	37
	Limitation on duration of stay for independent services suppliers (months)	36
	Other restrictions to movement of people	8
Other discriminatory measures	Public procurement: Procurement regulation explicitly prohibits discrimination of foreign suppliers	43
	Public procurement: Explicit preferences for local suppliers	24
	Public procurement: The procurement process affects the conditions of competition in favour of local firms	24
	Memo: The procurement process below the value thresholds affects the conditions of competition in favour of local firms	20
	National standards on transport packages deviate from international standards	3
Barriers to competition	Separation of accounts is required	42
	Cross-subsidisation is prohibited	42
	National, state or provincial government control at least one major firm in the sector	31
	Minimum capital requirements	30
	Restrictions on advertising	5
Regulatory transparency	Visas on arrival or visa exemption are available for temporary entry/transit of crew: truck drivers	38
	Individual licensing/registration requirements are imposed on warehousing, freight forwarding and customs brokerage services	29
	Range of visa processing time	29
	Number of documents needed to obtain a business visa	27
	A <i>de minimis</i> regime is in place: Import duties	16

Note: Top most relevant measures are selected on the basis of the following criteria: (1) most restricted horizontal measures (i.e. same answer across sectors), (2) most restricted sector-specific measures, (3) key measures or (4) memos affecting the score of other measures through hierarchy rules.

Source: OECD STRI database (2021).

### More information

- » Access all country notes, sector notes, and interactive STRI tools at <http://oe.cd/stri>.
- » Read more about services trade policies and their impacts in [Services Trade Policies and the Global Economy](#).
- » Benz, S. and A. Jaax (2020), "The costs of regulatory barriers to trade in services: New estimates of *ad valorem* tariff equivalents", *OECD Trade Policy Papers*, No. 238, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/bae97f98-en>.
- » Contact the OECD Trade and Agriculture Directorate with your questions at [stri.contact@oecd.org](mailto:stri.contact@oecd.org).