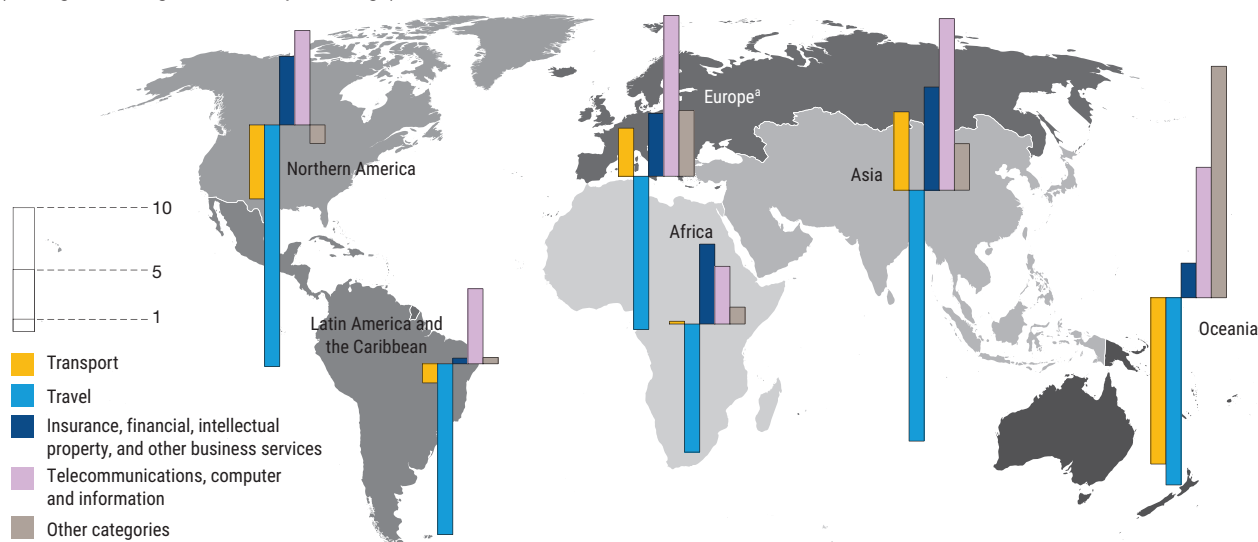


Fact sheet #6: Trade in services by category

Map 1 Growth in services exports by category, 2016–2021

(Average annual growth rate*, percentage)



* Least squares growth rate (see UNCTAD Handbook of Statistics 2022, annex 6.3).

^a Including the Russian Federation and the French overseas departments.

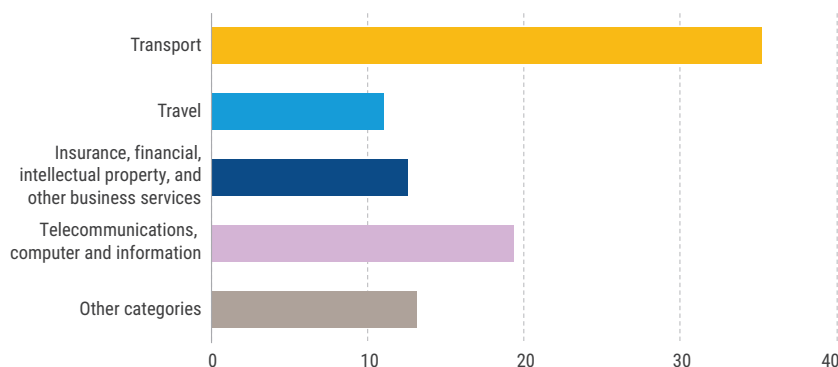
Regional trends over the last five years

International trade in services was more severely hit by the COVID-19 pandemic than merchandise trade. Among services, travel and transport were most affected. Owing to a renewed demand for goods, transport recovered rapidly and strongly in 2021, especially in Asia and Europe. By contrast, travel, particularly long-distance travel, continued to suffer, pinning the five-year average growth rate of global international travel receipts to -16 per cent.

From 2016 to 2019, services trade enjoyed growth across main services categories on all continents. Africa’s travel exports rose substantially, while other regions registered solid gains in telecommunications and computer services. Financial, insurance, business, and intellectual property services rose globally before and then remained afloat during the pandemic. Expectedly, telecommunications and computer services’ exports grew during the pandemic, especially in Europe and Asia.

Figure 1 Annual growth rate of services exports, 2021

(Percentage)



Concepts and definitions

The breakdown by service category in this section has been built from the division of services in the balance of payments statistics, known as the 2010 Extended Balance of Payments Services Classification (EBOPS 2010) (United Nations et al., 2012). For the correspondence to the EBOPS 2010 categories and to the main groups presented in UNCTADstat, see UNCTAD Handbook of Statistics 2022, annex 6.2.

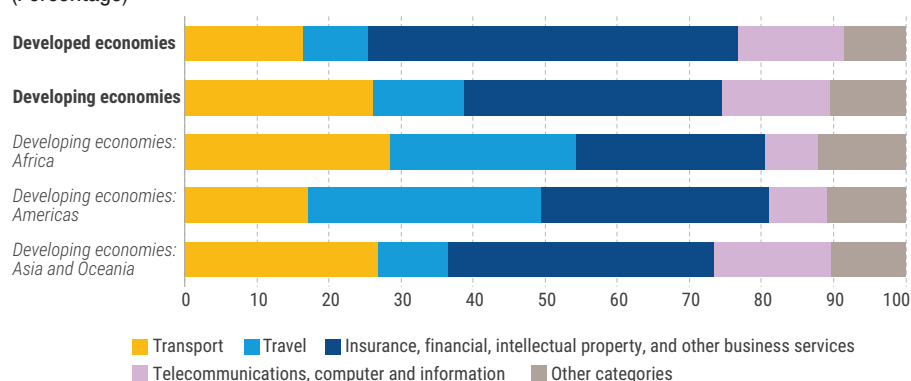
The presented trade-in-services figures are jointly compiled by UNCTAD and WTO.



Global trends by service category in 2021

Among main service categories, transport exports recorded the highest annual growth in 2021 (+35 per cent). They were followed by exports of telecommunications, computer, and information services, which rose by 19 per cent. After plummeting by over 60 per cent in 2020, travel recovered just partially during 2021, rising by 11 per cent. This sector remained particularly significant in services trade of Africa and developing America. Transport and travel together accounted for over half of their services exports. In developed economies, travel and transport represented one quarter of total services sold abroad.

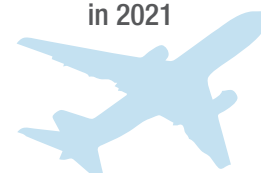
Figure 2 Structure of services exports, 2021
(Percentage)



Transport services exports
↑35% up in 2021 – more than a recovery from the pandemic



International travel struggled to regain ground in 2021



Telecommunications, computer, and information services

In 2021, 73 per cent of global services were supplied from developed economies, whose exports were dominated by insurance, financial, intellectual property, telecommunications, computer, and other business services. Telecommunications, computer, and information services continued to build on the strong demand during the pandemic. Globally, they expanded by 19 per cent in 2021, more than double their growth from the year before. African exports of those services were 14 per cent higher in 2021 than in 2020. With 20 per cent growth, American developing economies caught up with the increasing trend in other regions for this service category. These services often underpin intra-firm collaboration, business-to-business and business-to-clients connectivity, and digital trade.

Developing economies supplied 27%
of global services exports in 2021

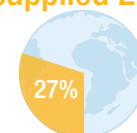
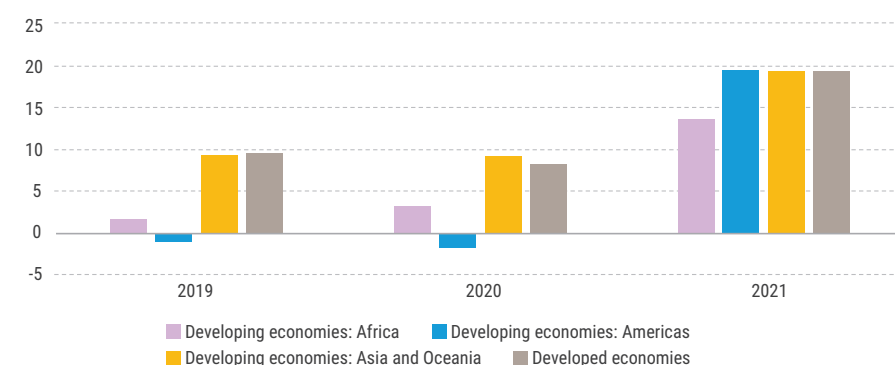


Figure 3 Growth of exports of telecommunications, computer, and information services, by group of economies, 2019–2021
(Percentage)



Solid growth of IT services exports in African and American developing economies



Table 1 | Trade in services by service category and group of economies

World

Service category	Exports			Imports		
	Value		Annual growth rate	Value		Annual growth rate
	(Billions of US\$)		(Percentage)	(Billions of US\$)		(Percentage)
	2016	2021	2021	2016	2021	2021
Total services	5 091	6 072	17.2	4 930	5 623	14.6
Transport	861	1 158	35.3	1 018	1 374	34.0
Travel	1 234	615	11.1	1 212	610	9.4
Others	2 996	4 298	14.0	2 701	3 639	9.4

Note: Exports do not equal imports at world level, due to imperfect geographical coverage and cross-country differences in compilation methods.

Developed economies

Service category	Exports			Imports			Balance	
	Value		Annual growth rate	Value		Annual growth rate	Balance	
	(Billions of US\$)		(Percentage)	(Billions of US\$)		(Percentage)	(Billions of US\$)	
	2016	2021	2021	2016	2021	2021	2016	2021
Total services	3 694	4 421	15.5	3 182	3 768	13.7	512	653
Transport	579	726	30.2	563	718	31.8	16	8
Travel	760	404	10.8	644	345	21.2	116	59
Others	2 355	3 290	13.2	1 975	2 705	8.9	380	585

Developing economies

Service category	Exports			Imports			Balance	
	Value		Annual growth rate	Value		Annual growth rate	Balance	
	(Billions of US\$)		(Percentage)	(Billions of US\$)		(Percentage)	(Billions of US\$)	
	2016	2021	2021	2016	2021	2021	2016	2021
Total services	1 397	1 651	22.1	1 748	1 855	16.4	-352	-204
Transport	282	432	44.7	455	656	36.6	-173	-224
Travel	473	211	11.5	568	265	-2.8	-95	-54
Others	641	1 008	16.6	726	934	11.2	-84	74

Developing economies: Africa

Service category	Exports			Imports			Balance	
	Value		Annual growth rate	Value		Annual growth rate	Balance	
	(Billions of US\$)		(Percentage)	(Billions of US\$)		(Percentage)	(Billions of US\$)	
	2016	2021	2021	2016	2021	2021	2016	2021
Total services	95	100	20.6	142	160	8.8	-47	-59
Transport	26	29	16.0	55	64	18.7	-28	-36
Travel	35	26	33.9	20	19	10.2	14	7
Others	34	46	17.0	66	76	1.3	-32	-31



Developing economies: Americas

Service category	Exports			Imports			Balance	
	Value		Annual growth rate	Value		Annual growth rate	Balance	
	(Billions of US\$)		(Percentage)	(Billions of US\$)		(Percentage)	(Billions of US\$)	
	2016	2021	2021	2016	2021	2021	2016	2021
Total services	179	158	25.1	210	198	22.1	-31	-40
Transport	26	27	22.4	55	73	58.4	-28	-45
Travel	83	51	46.7	55	22	23.1	29	29
Others	69	79	15.1	100	103	4.9	-31	-23

Developing economies: Asia and Oceania

Service category	Exports			Imports			Balance	
	Value		Annual growth rate	Value		Annual growth rate	Balance	
	(Billions of US\$)		(Percentage)	(Billions of US\$)		(Percentage)	(Billions of US\$)	
	2016	2021	2021	2016	2021	2021	2016	2021
Total services	1 123	1 393	21.9	1 397	1 498	16.6	-274	-105
Transport	229	377	49.5	345	519	36.5	-116	-143
Travel	355	133	-0.9	493	223	-5.8	-137	-90
Others	538	883	16.8	559	755	13.2	-21	128

Table 2 Exports of selected services, by region, 2021
(Millions of United States dollars)

Group of economies	Insurance and pension services	Financial services	Charges for the use of intellectual property n.i.e.	Telecommunications, computer, and information services	Other business services
World	183 262	630 319	452 082	896 418	1 595 661
Northern America	24 459	183 471	133 149	72 889	254 069
Latin America and the Caribbean	6 593	5 812	1 263	12 865	36 019
Europe	97 582	330 189	223 462	525 374	827 053
Sub-Saharan Africa	1 028	3 985	299	3 667	13 048
Western Asia and Northern Africa	32 154	5 579	7 557	48 514	41 608
Central and Southern Asia	3 370	5 813	949	87 128	97 510
Eastern and South-Eastern Asia	17 414	91 692	83 028	140 385	315 900
Oceania	663	3 778	2 375	5 595	10 454
Selected groups					
Developing economies excluding China	52 132	87 565	23 598	168 437	311 369
Developing economies excluding LDCs	57 228	92 073	35 492	243 124	401 044
LDCs	210	599	54	2 305	3 942
LLDCs	357	597	106	2 866	4 107
SIDS (UN-OHRLLS)	14 846	39 664	11 705	21 744	81 334
HIPCs (IMF)	400	1 446	92	2 091	9 019
BRICS	9 912	13 822	15 094	170 336	218 262
G20	132 740	523 132	396 928	765 620	1 338 244