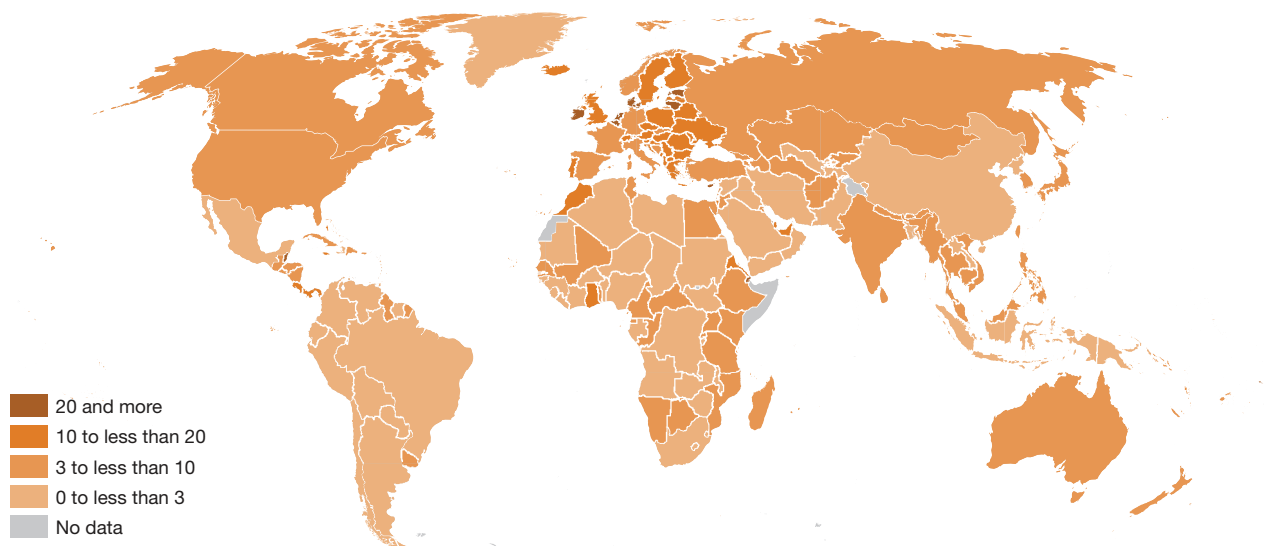




Fact sheet #5: Total trade in services

Map 1 Exports of services as a ratio to gross domestic product, 2020
(Percentage)



Concepts and definitions

In this chapter, in accordance with the concepts of the balance of payments (International Monetary Fund, 2009) and national accounts (United Nations et al., 2009), services are understood as the result of a production activity that changes the conditions of the consuming units, or facilitates the exchange of products or financial assets.

International trade in services takes place when a service is supplied in any of the following modes: from one economy to another (services cross the border); within an economy to service a consumer of another economy (consumer crosses the border); or through the presence of natural persons of one economy in another economy (supplier crosses the border) (United Nations et al., 2012).

Trade-in-services figures are jointly compiled by UNCTAD and WTO, in cooperation with ITC and UNSD.

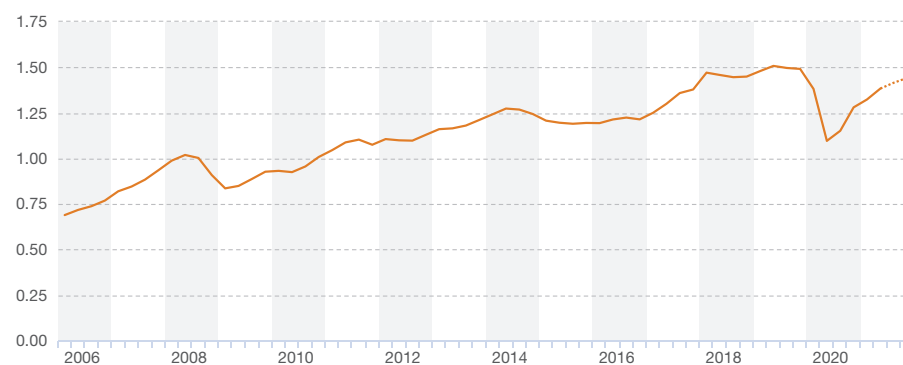
Seasonal adjustments are based on UNCTAD secretariat calculations using X-11.

Heavily hit in 2020, recovering in 2021

After the pandemic-driven decline of 20 per cent in 2020, world services exports have been on a recovery path over the first six months of 2021. Growth of 23 per cent year-on-year is nowcast for the third quarter of 2021, and 13.6 per cent growth is nowcast for the whole of 2021 compared with 2020.

In 2020, global services exports were valued at US\$5 trillion, representing 5.9 per cent of world GDP and 22.6 per cent of total world trade in both goods and services. Given the weaker resilience of services trade – travel in particular - to the pandemic conditions, exports of services lost more ground than goods' exports in 2020. Yet, in more than a third of the world's economies, services exports' share in GDP surpassed 10 per cent. Luxembourg and Malta recorded services exports higher than 100 per cent of their GDP. Many small island states, for which international tourism is important, saw their services exports, and their contribution to GDP, drop considerably in 2020.

Figure 1 World services exports, quarterly
(Trillions of United States dollars)



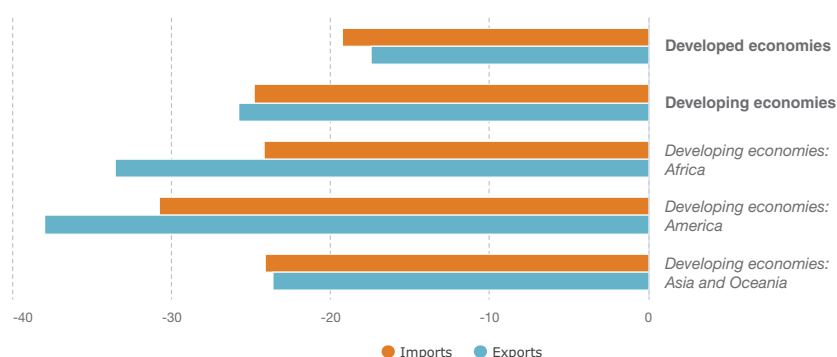
Note: Seasonally adjusted series, the dotted line indicates UNCTAD nowcasts. For the methodology, see annex 6.3. For UNCTAD's Nowcast Bulletin, see UNCTAD (2021f).



No region was spared

Looking at the trends by development status and region, a heavy decline in services exports was observed in all groups of economies. The highest relative drop was measured in American developing economies and in Africa, where travel and transport hold a more prominent role. Services imports also decreased everywhere, with the highest relative decline measured for the group of American developing economies (Latin America and the Caribbean).

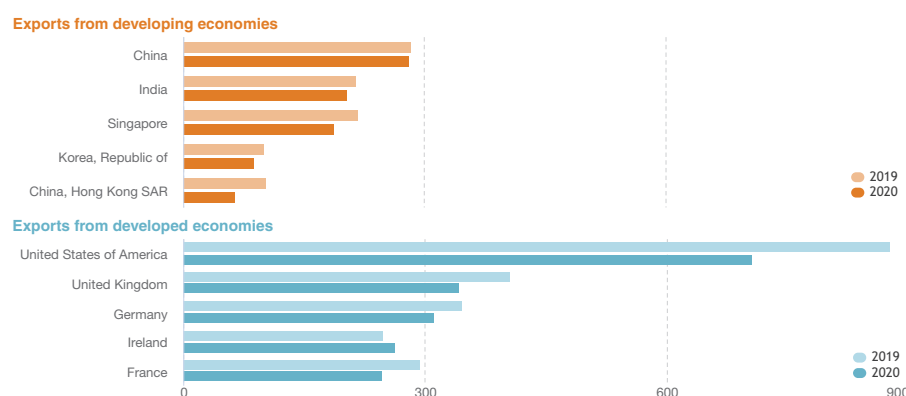
Figure 2 | **Services trade annual growth rates, 2020**
(Percentage)



Leading services exporters

With US\$706 billion worth of services sold internationally in 2020, the United States of America remained the world's leading exporter, maintaining a 14 per cent share of the global market. It was followed, at some distance, by two European countries that jointly captured a 13 per cent market share. China, the leading exporter among developing economies, ranked fourth overall, with US\$281 billion of services sold. All top five services exporters from the developing world were Asian. In 2020, they captured 16 per cent of the global market.

Figure 3 | **Top 5 services exporters, 2020**
(Billions of United States dollars)

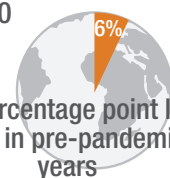


Services exports nowcast to recover by 14% in 2021 after a 20% decline in 2020

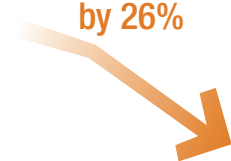


International trade in services accounted for 6% of world GDP in 2020

= 1 percentage point less than in pre-pandemic years



In 2020, developing economies' services exports declined by 26%



Top 5 exporters from the developing world supplied 16% of internationally traded services in 2020

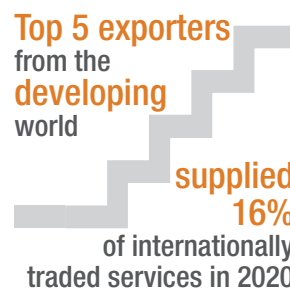



Table 1 Trade in services by group of economies

Group of economies	Exports				Imports			
	Value		Share in world	Annual growth rate	Value		Share in world	Annual growth rate
	(Billions of US\$)		(Percentage)	(Percentage)	(Billions of US\$)		(Percentage)	(Percentage)
	2019	2020	2020	2020	2019	2020	2020	2020
World	6 227	4 984	100.0	-20.0	5 947	4 681	100.0	-21.3
Developed economies	4 333	3 578	71.8	-17.4	3 764	3 039	64.9	-19.3
Developing economies	1 894	1 406	28.2	-25.8	2 183	1 642	35.1	-24.8
Developing economies: Africa	124	83	1.7	-33.5	188	143	3.1	-24.2
Developing economies: America	200	124	2.5	-38.0	224	155	3.3	-30.7
Developing economies: Asia and Oceania	1 570	1 200	24.1	-23.6	1 771	1 344	28.7	-24.1
Selected groups								
Developing economies excluding China	1 611	1 126	22.6	-30.1	1 683	1 261	26.9	-25.0
Developing economies excluding LDCs	1 845	1 373	27.6	-25.6	2 112	1 582	33.8	-25.1
LDCs	49	33	0.7	-32.7	71	61	1.3	-14.7
LLDCs	46	30	0.6	-35.5	70	54	1.1	-23.5
SIDS (UN-OHRLLS)	290	231	4.6	-20.6	250	206	4.4	-17.7
HIPCs (IMF)	43	31	0.6	-27.5	66	59	1.3	-10.7
BRICS	610	567	11.4	-7.0	865	659	14.1	-23.8
G20	4 843	4 014	80.5	-17.1	4 596	3 659	78.2	-20.4

Table 2 Leading services exporters and importers by group of economies, 2020

Developed economies

Exporter (Ranked by value)	Value	Share in world total	Annual growth rate	Importer (Ranked by value)	Value	Share in world total	Annual growth rate
	(Billions of US\$)	(Percentage)	(Percentage)		(Billions of US\$)	(Percentage)	(Percentage)
United States of America	706	14.2	-19.5	United States of America	460	9.8	-22.1
United Kingdom	342	6.9	-15.5	Germany	309	6.6	-16.8
Germany	311	6.2	-10.4	Ireland	296	6.3	-11.0
Ireland	263	5.3	6.0	France	232	4.9	-14.2
France	246	4.9	-16.5	United Kingdom	205	4.4	-26.2
Developed economies	3 578	71.8	-17.4	Developed economies	3 039	64.9	-19.3

Developing economies

Exporter (Ranked by value)	Value	Share in world total	Annual growth rate	Importer (Ranked by value)	Value	Share in world total	Annual growth rate
	(Billions of US\$)	(Percentage)	(Percentage)		(Billions of US\$)	(Percentage)	(Percentage)
China	281	5.6	-0.9	China	381	8.1	-23.9
India	203	4.1	-5.4	Singapore	173	3.7	-17.1
Singapore	188	3.8	-13.6	India	(e) 154	(e) 3.3	(e) -14.2
Korea, Republic of	(e) 87	(e) 1.8	(e) -12.0	Korea, Republic of	(e) 103	(e) 2.2	(e) -18.8
China, Hong Kong SAR	64	1.3	-37.4	United Arab Emirates	60	1.3	-32.5
Developing economies	1 406	28.2	-25.8	Developing economies	1 642	35.1	-24.8



Developing economies: Africa

Exporter (Ranked by value)	Value (Billions of US\$)	Share in world total (Percentage)	Annual growth rate (Percentage)
Egypt	15	0.3	-39.9
Morocco	14	0.3	-28.4
Ghana	(e) 8	(e) 0.2	(e) -18.4
South Africa	8	0.2	-48.9
Ethiopia	4	0.1	-7.9
Developing Africa	83	1.7	-33.5

Importer (Ranked by value)	Value (Billions of US\$)	Share in world total (Percentage)	Annual growth rate (Percentage)
Nigeria	20	0.4	-48.8
Egypt	18	0.4	-14.1
Ghana	(e) 13	(e) 0.3	(e) -7.2
South Africa	10	0.2	-37.1
Algeria	(e) 8	(e) 0.2	(e) -19.5
Developing Africa	143	3.1	-24.2

Developing economies: America

Exporter (Ranked by value)	Value (Billions of US\$)	Share in world total (Percentage)	Annual growth rate (Percentage)
Brazil	28	0.6	-16.9
Mexico	(e) 17	(e) 0.3	(e) -46.1
Argentina	9	0.2	-33.5
Panama	9	0.2	-38.6
Costa Rica	(e) 7	(e) 0.1	(e) -28.8
Developing America	124	2.5	-38.0

Importer (Ranked by value)	Value (Billions of US\$)	Share in world total (Percentage)	Annual growth rate (Percentage)
Brazil	49	1.0	-29.6
Mexico	(e) 25	(e) 0.5	(e) -32.2
Argentina	12	0.3	-39.2
Chile	11	0.2	-21.2
Colombia	(e) 9	(e) 0.2	(e) -33.7
Developing America	155	3.3	-30.7

Developing economies: Asia and Oceania

Exporter (Ranked by value)	Value (Billions of US\$)	Share in world total (Percentage)	Annual growth rate (Percentage)
China	281	5.6	-0.9
India	203	4.1	-5.4
Singapore	188	3.8	-13.6
Korea, Republic of	(e) 87	(e) 1.8	(e) -12.0
China, Hong Kong SAR	64	1.3	-37.4
Developing Asia and Oceania	1 200	24.1	-23.6

Importer (Ranked by value)	Value (Billions of US\$)	Share in world total (Percentage)	Annual growth rate (Percentage)
China	381	8.1	-23.9
Singapore	173	3.7	-17.1
India	(e) 154	(e) 3.3	(e) -14.2
Korea, Republic of	(e) 103	(e) 2.2	(e) -18.8
United Arab Emirates	60	1.3	-32.5
Developing Asia and Oceania	1 344	28.7	-24.1