

Glossary: General agreement on trade in services (GATS)

Statistics Explained

The **General Agreement on Trade in Services** , abbreviated as **GATS** , is a treaty of the [World Trade Organization \(WTO\)](#) that entered into force in 1995 following the Uruguay Round negotiations. It was created to include services in the multilateral trading system. Ranging from architecture to voice-mail telecommunications, services today form the largest and most dynamic component of developed and developing countries' economies (accounting for more than 60 % of global production and employment, although no more than 20 % of total trade).

The GATS applies in principle to all service sectors, with two exceptions:

- services supplied in the exercise of governmental authority (examples include social security schemes and any other public service, such as health or education, provided at non-market conditions);
- services related to air traffic rights.

Further information

- [World Trade Organization - The General Agreement on Trade in Services \(GATS\): objectives, coverage and disciplines](#)

Related concepts

- [Tertiary sector](#)
- [World Trade Organization \(WTO\)](#)