


## 2.2 Trade in services by category

International **travel recovered** in 2022– but remained **25% below** the 2019 exports value




Transport services exports **↑ 24% up** in 2022



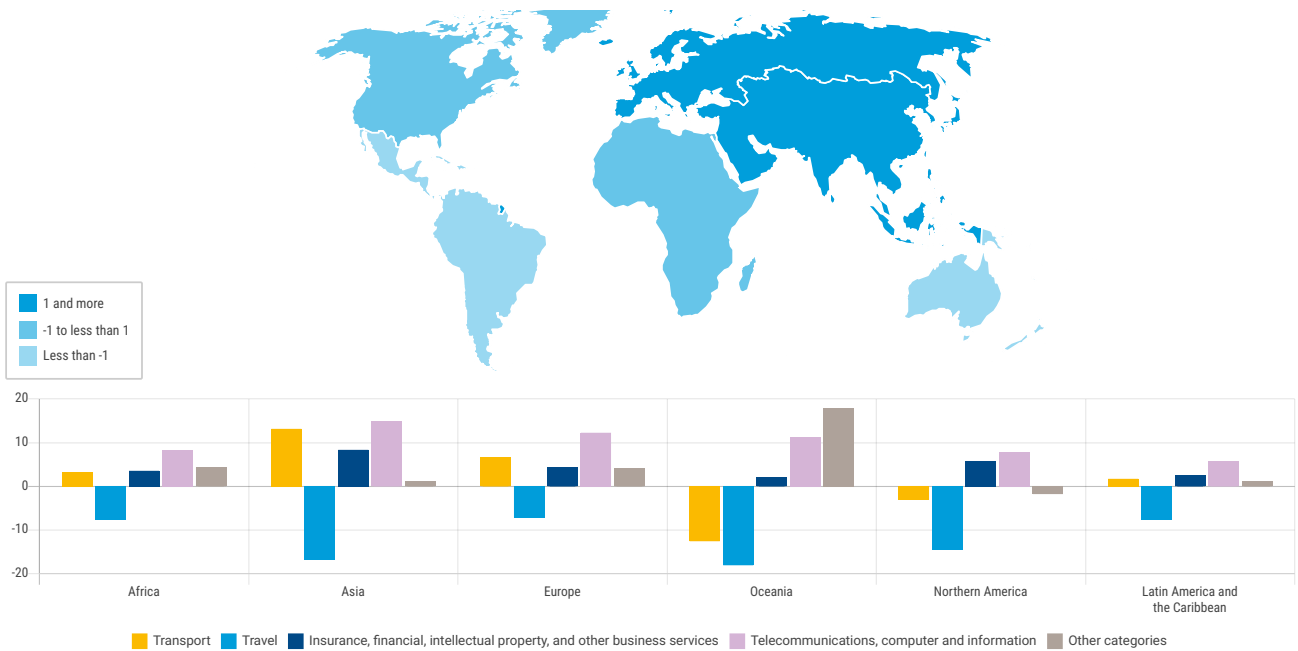
Transport and travel close to **60%** of services exports in developing Americas and Africa



Developing economies' market share **24%** in exports of **digitally deliverable** services



**Map 1. Growth in services exports, 2017–2022**  
(Average annual growth rate\*, percentage)



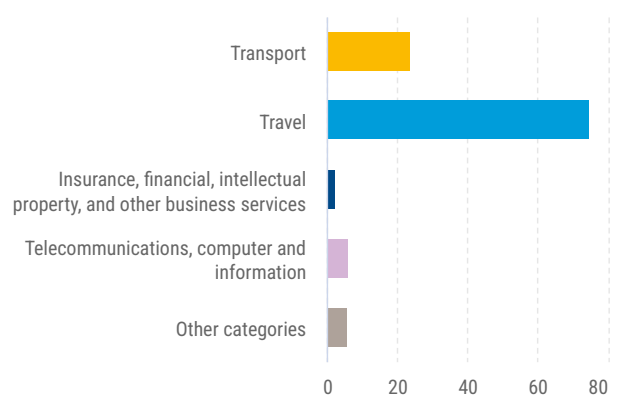
Note: Europe includes the Russian Federation and the French overseas departments.  
\* Least squares growth rate (see Calculation methods page).

### 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 well in 2021. By contrast, international travel, particularly long-distance, only saw significant recovery in 2022. At \$1 116 billion recorded for 2022 however, travel exports remained 25 per cent below their 2019 record value. Besides travel, construction was the only main service category not surpassing its 2019 exports value in 2022.

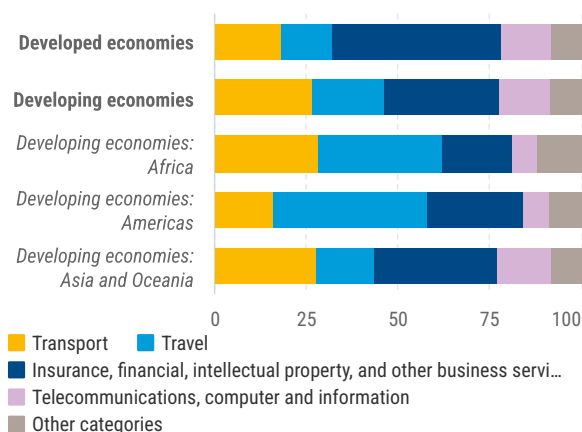
Over the period 2017-2022, Africa, Asia, Europe, and Latin America and the Caribbean recorded positive 5-year average growth for main service items other than travel, with the highest increase in telecommunications, computer, and information services. In Northern America and Oceania – in addition to travel – transport services also exhibited negative average annual growth rates over this time period.

**Figure 1. Annual growth rate of services exports, 2022**  
(Percentage)



## Global trends by service category in 2022

**Figure 2. Structure of services exports, 2022**  
(Percentage)



Among main service categories, travel exports recorded the highest annual growth in 2022 (75 per cent). They were followed by exports of transport services, which expanded by 24 per cent. Most other principal categories exhibited increases of less than 10 per cent, while financial services exports declined by 3 per cent.

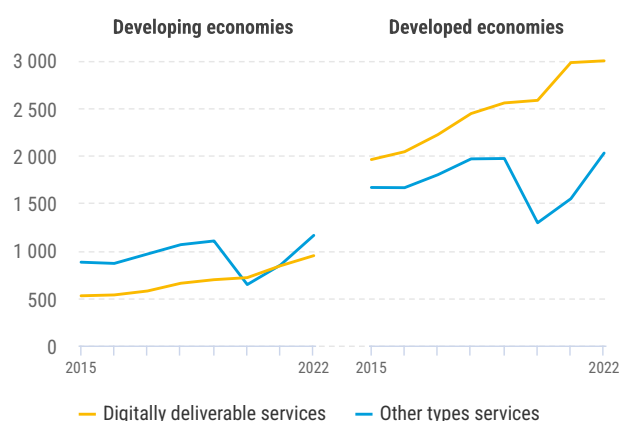
Transport and travel remained significant in services trade of developing economies of Africa and the Americas. They represented close to 60 per cent of all services exported. In developed economies, travel and transport accounted for about a third of total services sold abroad.

## Digitally deliverable services

In 2021, amid the COVID-19 lockdown that disrupted many traditional trade flows, world digitally deliverable services exports increased by a notable 16 per cent. The expansion continued in 2022 at the more moderate rate of 3 per cent. More than three quarters of digitally deliverable services exports originated from developed economies (some \$2 996 billion). Developing world exports were estimated at \$946 billion.

In 2022, the growth in exports of digitally deliverable services from developing economies was assessed at 12.6 per cent. The growth was prominent across all developing regions: Africa, Americas, Asia, and Oceania. At the same time, developed economies recorded a relatively modest 0.6 per cent increase. In 2022, the share of digitally deliverable services in total services exports of developed economies was 60 per cent, while for the developing world it stood at 45 per cent.

**Figure 3. Export trends of digitally deliverable services and other types of services, 2015–2022**  
(Billions of United States dollars)



Note: Digitally deliverable services figures are UNCTAD estimates. Digitally deliverable services include insurance, pension, financial, intellectual property usage, telecommunications, computer, information, research-and-development, professional-and-management, architectural, engineering, scientific, trade-related, other business, audiovisual, health, education, heritage, and recreational services.

## 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 [Classifications](#) page.

Digitally deliverable services comprise services that can be delivered remotely over computer networks. The value of trade in digitally deliverable services therefore provides the upper threshold for the value of digitally delivered trade.

The presented trade-in-services figures are jointly compiled by UNCTAD and WTO, except for the digitally deliverable services, which are estimated by UNCTAD on the basis of the joint UNCTAD-WTO services trade data set.

For references, see UNCTAD Handbook of Statistics 2023, annex 6.4

 **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 \$)		(Percentage)	(Billions of \$)		(Percentage)
	2017	2022	2022	2017	2022	2022
<b>Total services</b>	5 554	7 127	14.8	5 372	6 602	14.7
Transport	934	1 481	23.6	1 125	1 713	23.0
Travel	1 337	1 116	74.8	1 308	1 034	65.1
Others	3 282	4 530	3.6	2 939	3 854	3.2

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 \$)		(Percentage)	(Billions of \$)		(Percentage)	(Billions of \$)	
	2017	2022	2022	2017	2022	2022	2017	2022
<b>Total services</b>	4 017	5 022	11.0	3 482	4 404	13.7	534	618
Transport	636	913	22.8	620	909	25.9	16	3
Travel	821	708	69.3	718	655	83.3	103	54
Others	2 559	3 400	1.2	2 144	2 840	1.7	415	561

## Developing economies

Service category	Exports			Imports			Balance	
	Value		Annual growth rate	Value		Annual growth rate	Balance	
	(Billions of \$)		(Percentage)	(Billions of \$)		(Percentage)	(Billions of \$)	
	2017	2022	2022	2017	2022	2022	2017	2022
<b>Total services</b>	1 538	2 106	24.8	1 890	2 198	16.7	-352	-92
Transport	298	568	24.9	505	804	19.9	-207	-236
Travel	517	407	85.3	591	380	41.0	-74	28
Others	723	1 130	11.6	794	1 014	7.5	-71	116

## Developing economies: Africa

Service category	Exports			Imports			Balance	
	Value		Annual growth rate	Value		Annual growth rate	Balance	
	(Billions of \$)		(Percentage)	(Billions of \$)		(Percentage)	(Billions of \$)	
	2017	2022	2022	2017	2022	2022	2017	2022
<b>Total services</b>	110	133	31.0	160	191	18.0	-49	-58
Transport	28	38	28.4	57	83	25.6	-29	-45
Travel	44	45	66.4	26	25	39.7	19	20
Others	38	50	11.3	77	83	6.5	-39	-33

## Developing economies: Americas

Service category	Exports			Imports			Balance	
	Value		Annual growth rate	Value		Annual growth rate	Balance	
	(Billions of \$)		(Percentage)	(Billions of \$)		(Percentage)	(Billions of \$)	
	2017	2022	2022	2017	2022	2022	2017	2022
<b>Total services</b>	190	214	37.9	233	276	31.0	-43	-62
Transport	28	35	30.7	63	110	32.1	-35	-75
Travel	89	90	75.0	62	45	102.5	27	45
Others	73	89	15.8	108	122	15.1	-35	-32

## Developing economies: Asia and Oceania

Service category	Exports			Imports			Balance	
	Value		Annual growth rate	Value		Annual growth rate	Balance	
	(Billions of \$)		(Percentage)	(Billions of \$)		(Percentage)	(Billions of \$)	
	2017	2022	2022	2017	2022	2022	2017	2022
<b>Total services</b>	1 237	1 759	22.9	1 497	1 731	14.6	-260	28
Transport	242	496	24.2	385	612	17.2	-143	-116
Travel	383	273	92.6	502	310	35.1	-119	-37
Others	612	991	11.2	609	810	6.6	2	181



**Table 2. Exports of selected services, by region, 2022**

(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
<b>World</b>	184 307	622 650	446 912	968 558	1 736 808
Northern America	24 426	179 946	135 224	82 415	284 851
Latin America and the Caribbean	7 499	5 997	1 459	14 713	41 102
Europe	95 838	317 522	215 449	548 056	863 423
Sub-Saharan Africa	666	4 668	349	4 519	10 813
Western Asia and Northern Africa	33 246	7 351	6 974	55 931	54 161
Central and Southern Asia	3 770	8 316	1 328	105 054	126 929
Eastern and South-Eastern Asia	17 897	95 816	83 810	151 603	344 370
Oceania	965	3 035	2 320	6 267	11 158
<b>Selected groups</b>					
Developing economies excluding China	56 166	98 977	24 017	200 048	369 491
Developing economies excluding LDCs	60 453	103 446	37 423	280 224	466 387
LDCs	257	703	134	2 747	4 086
LLDCs	467	807	192	4 060	5 938
SIDS (UN-OHRLLS)	15 615	42 435	12 432	25 402	90 914
BRICS	9 691	15 901	16 403	193 572	252 613
G20	128 610	505 641	391 740	818 489	1 449 297