

Trade in Services

Key Facts

1

The UK will be outside the European Single Market, including services

2

Local (host-country) rules and World Trade Organisation rules will apply

3

There may be no mutual recognition of professional qualifications

4

In some cases service providers will have to be based in the EU, appoint a representative or have an EU-hosted website

5

Access to UK and EU services markets is being negotiated

From next year UK firms will be in an outside country when selling services to the EU. This means they cannot freely provide their services, and barriers can be expected. World Trade Organization rules (the [General Agreement on Trade in Services - GATS](#)) will become the baseline for accessing the EU and UK services markets, and local rules will apply when trading with EU countries (“host-country” rules).

To do

To anticipate the new commercial environment for trade in services, businesses need to consider the following aspects:

Laws

- Read the Government’s [general factsheet on the services sector](#)
- Find out about changes to rules for your [specific sector](#): e.g. audiovisual, finance, transport, e-commerce etc.
- Find out [here](#) about the local rules in your customer’s country or through the [Government’s country-by-country guides](#)

Professional qualifications, licences and authorisations

- Examples include doctors, nurses, midwives, dental practitioners, pharmacists, architects, surgeons, auditors
- Find out if your qualifications and licences will be recognised in the country you are active in via the [Centre for Professional Qualifications](#) (0871 226 2850, 11p per minute)

- Visit the national contact points in the EU member states via [this website](#) and the [EUGO Points of Single Contact](#), and consider whether to create commercial presence in the EU

Employment and mobility requirements

- Find out about [local immigration policies and work permits in EU member states](#), in particular if staying more than 90 days in any 180 day period

Tax

- Consider the [VAT implications](#) of selling your services to the EU
- [Sign up](#) for the London Growth Hub’s business resilience training to help you identify risk areas for your services business

What's next

From next year, barriers to services trade are expected to happen. They may be mitigated in the long term if the UK and the EU negotiate a trade agreement that includes a comprehensive Services Chapter. This is an example of a Services Chapter in a Free Trade Agreement.

For more information on the changes next year:

Visit [London Growth Hub](#) or [sign up](#) for free business resilience training

London Growth Hub
growthhub@london.gov.uk