



China committed to a dramatic opening of its services sector when it acceded to the World Trade Organization in 2001. The sector has grown strongly, but it is still smaller than it should be for an economy at China's stage of development. Unlocking the enormous potential of the services sector is needed to strengthen the business sector, provide jobs for a rapidly growing labour force, facilitate trade, accelerate the adoption of advanced management methods and increase overall economic efficiency.

This report analyses China's commitments to open the services market and finds that implementation of liberalisation measures is not yet complete and has not been without problems. The regulatory process and overly burdensome licensing and operating requirements continue to frustrate foreign providers of services. Further reform – in both liberalisation and implementation – is needed. The free trade agreement currently being negotiated between China and Australia provides an opportunity to reduce barriers further and enhance trade in services.

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