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## INTERNATIONAL TRADE IN SERVICES SCALE – LIBERALIZATION – PROFITS

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**Summary:** The paper presents the scale of international trade in services as well as it outlines the course of service negotiations run within WTO and enumerates potential advantages which may be attained by states in case of the total liberalization of this sector. The analysis shows that the liquidation of protection barriers imposed on trade in services may generate a lot of advantages for the states. It should induce WTO members to finish negotiations held in the frameworks of Doha Development Agenda (DDA) quickly.

**Keywords:** services, international trade, liberalization, WTO, GATS, Doha Development Agenda.

### 1. Introduction

Services pose a significant part of economies of most of the states. A dynamically growing sector of services contributes to the higher degree of the world economic growth and it stimulates new working jobs than any other sector of economy. Without a functional structure of services, in particular without an efficient financial system, the system of insurance, telecommunication as well as transport, no state may participate in the economic growth of the world and be competitive on the world market. 60% of the world GDP is generated by services. This share depends on the level of the state's development and income per inhabitant. In developed states it amounts approx. to 70% GDP (in UE approx. 78%), while in newly-developed and developing economies from 55% to 44%<sup>1</sup>.

The scale of the international trade in services is not adequate to their meaning in national economies of particular states. Relatively low (in relation to goods exchange and potential opportunities) sale of trade in services arises from the heavy protection of this sector. Therefore, negotiations heading for liberalization have been held for many years and, consequently, there is an increase in sales in international trade in services.

The above-mentioned problems make up a subject of this paper. The paper presents the scale of the international trade in services and their meaning in the

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<sup>1</sup> WTO, *International Trade Statistics*, Geneva 2008, p. 14.

general world-scale trade as well as it outlines the course of service negotiations run within WTO. It also enumerates some potential advantages which may be attained in case of total liberalization of this sector.

## 2. Meaning of the services in the world-scale trade

Contrary to the international trade in goods, the exchange of services is difficult to be registered statistically. It is partially an effect of the nature of services since they are non-storable and ‘quickly-disappearing’. Moreover, it results from different ways of services provision and diverse ways of data collection, from the combination of many services connected with goods, the existence of ‘grey zone’ between goods and services in terms of electronics trade as well as from territorial uncertainty of an offer in case it is a consequence of foreign investments<sup>2</sup>. The aforementioned facts cause that the data below and the analysis based on it must be considered uncertain to some extent.

As it results from Table 1, from 1985 to 2007 a value of export of services in the world increased from 404.3 billion USD to 3337.5 billion USD, thus 8.3 times. In turn, the import of services in the same period increased from 435 billion to 3102 billion USD, which means sevenfold growth. This growth was different in particular groups of states. In developed states the export in services increased 7.5 times and the import 6.9 times. In developing states the growth rates attained accordingly 10.7 times and 7 times, while in the group of states under transformation – 27.3 times and 30.8 times. Just in the European Union the increase in trade in services was higher than in the total number of developed states and was 8.4 times higher in terms of the export and 8.7 times higher in terms of the import. The group of developed states, in particular the European Union member states, is the only one which in the entire period shows a positive balance of a turnover generated by services. Other group of states permanently shows a negative balance.

The consequences of diverse dynamics of growth in trade in services within the particular groups of states are alterations in their share in the world export and import of services (Table 2).

In the states there is a visible downward trend of this share in export of services (decrease by 7.6% from 1985 to 2007), inversely than in developing states and the states under transformation (increase accordingly by 5.8% and 1.9%). Only in the European Union there occurred a little increase in the share in the world export in services (by 1%). However, the share of import in developed states and developing states shows a little downward trend while in the states under transformation a little rise (by 2.6%). The largest increase in the share of import (by 7.8%) took place in the

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<sup>2</sup> Compare: P. Low, A. Mattoo, *Is There a Belter Way? Alternative Approaches to Liberalization Under GATS*, [in:] P. Sauve, R.M. Stern (Hrsg.), *GATS 2000: New Directions in Services Trade Liberalization*, Washington 2000.

**Table 1.** Trade in services in selected groups of states (in billion USD)

Specification	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005	2007
World						
Export	404.3	830.2	1230.2	1526.6	2537.9	3337.5
Import	435.0	870.9	1261.2	1536.6	2459.9	3102.9
Balance	-30.7	-40.7	-31.0	-10.0	78.0	234.6
Developed states						
Export	321.6	673.6	934.9	1155.2	1858.2	2399.0
Import	300.3	658.2	889.0	1090.1	1690.6	2082.2
Balance	21.3	15.5	45.9	65.1	167.6	316.9
Developing states						
Export	79.4	150.2	277.0	348.1	622.5	848.1
Import	131.3	197.7	345.8	419.0	699.0	916.1
Balance	-51.9	-47.5	-68.8	-70.9	-76.5	-68.0
States under transformation						
Export	3.3	6.4	18.2	23.4	57.3	90.4
Import	3.4	15.0	26.4	27.5	70.3	104.7
Balance	-0.2	-8.6	-8.2	-4.1	-13.0	-14.3
European Union <sup>a</sup>						
Export	183.8	403.5	556.6	662.1	1174.4	1549.8
Import	154.5	376.6	534.3	640.6	1067.7	1343.8
Balance	29.3	26.8	22.3	21.6	106.7	206.0

<sup>a</sup>Until 1990 UE-15, from 1995 UE-27 (member and associate countries)

Source: *UNCTAD Handbook of Statistics* 2008, UN, New York-Geneva 2008.

European Union which, to a large extent, results from the extension of the Union by states characterized by a negative balance of trade in services.

Generally, one may conclude that in the period under examination no significant alteration of a share in the world trade in services occurred when it comes to the group of states. There dominated the developed states which performed 2/3 to 3/4 of the total trade in services in the world. In case of developing states this share amounted from 20% to 30% while the share of the states under transformation, despite high dynamics in trade in services, may be rated as marginal (from 1 to 3%). Unquestionably, the most significant role in terms of trade in services is played by the European Union which exports and imports services of value equal half of the world-scale value. Minus the intra-Community trade this share amounts to 25.9% (in 2007). The following positions in the world ranking are held by United States (16.9%), Japan (5.9%) and China (5.4%)<sup>3</sup>.

As it was mentioned before the share of services in total trade in goods and services is non-proportionally low in relation to their meaning in terms of the world product and GDP of particular states. The share does not exceed 20% of the total

<sup>3</sup> *WTO, International Trade Statistics* 2008, Charts 10, <http://www.wto.org>.

**Table 2.** Share of selected groups of states in the world-scale trade in services (in %)

Specification	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005	2007
Developed states						
Export	79.5	81.1	76.0	75.7	73.2	71.9
Import	69.0	75.6	70.5	70.9	68.7	67.1
Developing states						
Export	19.6	18.1	22.5	22.8	24.5	25.4
Import	30.2	22.7	27.4	27.3	28.4	29.5
States under transformation						
Export	0.8	0.8	1.5	1.5	2.3	2.7
Import	0.8	1.7	2.1	1.8	2.9	3.4
European Union <sup>a</sup>						
Export	45.5	48.6	45.2	43.4	46.3	46.4
Import	35.5	43.2	42.4	41.7	43.4	43.3

<sup>a</sup> as in Table 1.

Source: *UNCTAD...*

world trade and has not been subject to change for 22 years (Table 3). A little bit higher share – than the world-scale – was observed in developed states (in 2007 – in terms of export – 22.8% while in terms of import – 20.2%) but the increase in this share within the examined period amounted to less than 3%. Such values are similar in the European Union. Developing states hold the position definitely below the general world results. The share of services in their total export amounted to approx.

**Table 3.** Total share of trade in services of selected groups of states (in %)

Specification	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005	2007
World						
Export	17.0	19.3	19.2	19.1	19.5	19.4
Import	18.9	20.9	20.8	20.1	19.9	19.3
Developed states						
Export	19.0	21.1	20.5	21.4	22.7	22.8
Import	18.2	21.3	21.1	20.4	20.5	20.2
Developing states						
Export	13.7	15.1	16.2	14.5	14.1	14.0
Import	23.4	21.2	20.1	19.2	18.3	17.7
States under transformation						
Export	3.2	5.1	13.0	13.1	13.8	14.5
Import	3.8	10.5	20.0	22.2	21.9	19.6
European Union <sup>a</sup>						
Export	19.3	21.2	20.3	21.2	22.4	22.7
Import	17.6	20.8	21.5	21.7	21.9	21.2

<sup>a</sup> as in Table 1.

Source: *UNCTAD...*

14%-16% within the entire period, and the share in import decreased from 23.4% to 17.7%). Nowadays the states under transformation have the shares similar to developing states but one should emphasize an increasing growth in share in services in general export (by more than 11%) and in import (by nearly 20%).

### 3. Negotiations over liberalization of trade in services

From the specificity of services turnover which is characterized by – among others – direct contact of a foreign bidder and a domestic purchaser, there results a different (than in trade in services) nature of measures used for protection in this sector. They usually take on a form of norms of international law regulating particular fields of services and their objective is to make a contact between sellers and purchasers difficult or impossible. A large number and diversity of such restrictions hamper both uniform classification as well as survey of their restrictive operation<sup>4</sup>.

For many years protectionism in the domain of trade in services was supported by the lack of multi-party regulations and consequent freedom of particular states regarding an access to their markets. The problem was not solved by bilateral and sector agreements since the states, which were not the signatories of such agreements, were discriminated. The conclusion of the General Agreement on Trade in Services – GATS raised hope for gradual liberalization of this trade. The General Agreement became an integral part of the World Trade Organization – WTO, which commenced its activity on 1 January 1995.

Let us remind that GATS divided services into four categories based on a manner they are provided<sup>5</sup>:

- manner 1: cross border provision (it does not require a physical re-location of a vendor or a client),
- manner 2: re-location of a consumer to a vendor's state,
- manner 3: services provided in the territory of a particular state by foreign entities having established commercial presence,
- manner 4: provision of services requiring a temporary re-location of natural persons.

Liberalization commitments in GATS consists in publishing – by each member – a positive and negative list separately for each sector of services, divided into four ways of provision, both for access to the markets and for the national treatment. The positive list encompasses sectors for which the liberalization commitments were established. The negative list includes all protective means in branches subject to liberalization, which are not liquidated but restricted. In relation to the access to the

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<sup>4</sup> Compare: J. Rymarczyk, *Protekcjonistyczne i liberalne tendencje w polityce handlowej Wspólnoty Europejskiej*, Wydawnictwo AE we Wrocławiu, Wrocław 1996, p. 180-185.

<sup>5</sup> B. Hoekman, M.M. Kostecki, *Ekonomia światowego systemu handlu*, Wydawnictwo AE we Wrocławiu, Wrocław 2002, p. 237.

market and the national treatment rule, the agreement lists the types of restrictions which must be maintained or implemented by the states. GATS members are provided with an opportunity to use them if they inform on deviations from such rules in lists of detailed commitments.

Carrying out the GATS decisions after 5 years they have come into force, has been rated negatively. The attention was paid mostly to the unequal treatment of four ways the services are provided. The structure of commitments' shape in terms of the liberalization was unfavorable for services requiring the re-location of natural persons abroad and favorable for technical and communication services not requiring re-location of factors. It could result in a harm to the quality of services requiring a direct contact between consumers and manufacturers<sup>6</sup>.

The share of restrictive commitments significant in terms of liberalization was drastically low. It concerned all GATS members but mostly the states with large incomes. The share of all commitments without any restrictions amounted to 3% in relation to total commitments<sup>7</sup>. It resulted from a fear that the liberalization of this manner of provision of the services could result in the circumvention of migration barriers. In developing states this manner of services provision was also discriminated but migration barriers between developing and developed states were much lower.

A second, frequently touched issue was a problem of liberalization in the field of public services. It was underlined that none competition pressure in relation to this type of services existed as an effect of the GATS conclusion<sup>8</sup>. Services are not subject to the agreement if they do not have commercial character. Only their privatization in particular states gives an opportunity for negotiations among WTO member states in terms of access to the market and the national treatment. But also then the member states may refuse negotiations. The type and scale of an offer depends exclusively on particular member states and is subject to bilateral negotiations.

After a few years of GATS existence it was obvious that in the previous form it had not become a flywheel for liberalization of the international trade in services. From commitments made in terms of liberalization it was not obvious if the agreement implicated market opening or it strengthened the real situation. Nevertheless it is a fact that due to GATS there was a wide inspection of restrictions imposed on foreign service providers and partners' commitments regarding freezing of existing restrictions were documented for the first time.

GATS members undertook service negotiations after 5 years from the date of coming the agreement into force. The negotiations commenced in January 2000 and then they were included into Doha Development Round, which was inaugurated by the Fourth Ministers' Conference in Doha in November 2001. From that time there

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<sup>6</sup> Compare: P. Low, A. Mattoo, op. cit.

<sup>7</sup> *WTO Services Database*, [www.tsb.wto.org/wto/WTOHomepublic.htm](http://www.tsb.wto.org/wto/WTOHomepublic.htm).

<sup>8</sup> R.J. Langhamer, *Das GATS: Noch kein Liberalisierungsmotor für den internationalen Dienstleistungshandel*, "Die Weltwirtschaft" 2003, Heft 2, p. 170-173

were held talks on the manner of negotiations and their scope as well as member states lodged offers in terms of the liberalization. Tiding these issues up and extending them to new elements was carried out at the Sixth WTO Ministers' Conference.

In the Declaration of Ministers established in December 2005 it was emphasized that an essential purpose of negotiations over services held in the frameworks of GATS was the subsequent liberalization of trade in services which should generate an economic growth in all states<sup>9</sup>. The talks should – first of all – result in:

1) increase in numbers of sectors of services where commitments liberating the access will be under too,

2) increase in manners of services provisions, subject to commitments,

3) liquidation or liberating restrictions recorded in previous commitments.

The declaration referred in details to such issues as: the method of negotiation, directions of negotiations on access to the market and the national treatment principle, negotiations over the GATS rules, inclusion of the public procurements into negotiations, problem of subsidies in negotiations and negotiations over domestic regulations. There was also accepted a schedule of negotiations with a reservation that final versions of detailed obligations should be outlined until 31 October 2006.

Despite certain progress in the negotiations over services and making a lot of agreements between states, the negotiations did not come into force. It was caused by the suspension of the entire negotiations run in the frameworks of the Doha Development Round because of the lack of agreement on agricultural issues on 26 July 2006. The subsequent round of negotiations at the stage of ministers was held after two years – in July 2008. Preceding talks, which resulted in the clarification of positions regarding the issues of agriculture, raised a hope to complete the round. Nevertheless, different opinions concerning quite detailed and rather secondary issue – as there was the special safeguard mechanism (SSM) in trade in agricultural products – caused that subsequent negotiations were postponed and no specific date was established.

In terms of trade in services the following rule appeared to be harmful: *if something is not agreed then nothing is agreed*. It turned out that separate negotiations in particular fields would be more effective (services, industrial goods, agriculture). Some economists rightly mentioned the hazard of making the issue of services to be 'a tender card' during the negotiations over agricultural issues. The developing states considered the issues of agriculture as the priorities and did not appreciate the advantages of liberalization of the trade in services. They thought that only developed states would gain profits<sup>10</sup>.

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<sup>9</sup> More info: D. Mongiałło, *Szósta Konferencja Ministerialna WTO i jej skutki dla sektora usług Unii Europejskiej*, "Wspólnoty Europejskie", IKC HZ, 2006, nr. 1, p. 20-23.

<sup>10</sup> Compare: Ch. Roberts, *Promoting International Trade and Services: a Priority for Europe*, "European Business Journal" 2000, p. 201-202.

#### 4. Profits from liberalization of trade in services

The lack of progress in multi-party negotiations over services persuades both developed and developing states to conclude bilateral contracts in terms of liberalization of trade in services. Till the half of 2009 64 bilateral contracts had been notified in WTO which, apart from agreements regarding trade in agricultural and industrial products, included agreements in terms of services exchange<sup>11</sup>. A significant part of these contracts was concluded after a failure of WTO Ministers' Conference in 2005.

Bilateral contracts for liberalization, means both a chance and an obstacle for negotiations and multi-lateral agreements. On the other hand multi-party agreements like e.g. GATS may have higher political and economic weight than a sum of bilateral agreements of particular states. From this point of view there are interesting – quoted below – examinations of potential economic effects on liberalization of trade in services in the multi-lateral fields.

There were selected examinations which include a period from the beginning of the Doha Development Round (2001), relatively from the end of the Uruguay Round (1995). The difficulties of this type of examination consist in a situation when liberalization effects are not directly measurable and many factors, which affect them, are not possible to be quantified. While the effects of liberalization in trade in services by the reduction of duties on customs may be interchangeably computed, when it comes to services which restrictions are of non-tariff nature, it is possible to compute customs duty equivalents which were calculated by every research group according to their model assumptions.

P. Dee and K. Hanslow<sup>12</sup> compare the effects of elimination of barriers in terms of trade in goods after the Uruguay Round in 1995 to total liberalization in trade in services. The examination covered other twenty developed and developing states, mostly Asian states, as well as Australia, New Zealand, NAFTA states, Chile, the European Union and others. The authors concluded that the total elimination of all still existing trade barriers would generate profits for the world amounting to 260 billion USD annually. From this amount 50 billion USD would be derived from agricultural trade and another 80 billion from the liberalization of the trade in goods. The remaining 130 billion, which is 50% of the entire growth in income, would be an effect of liberalization in trade in services.

Even larger benefits are forecasted by D.K. Brown, A.V. Deardoff and R.M. Stern<sup>13</sup>. The elimination of other barriers in the field of the trade in services

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<sup>11</sup> WTO, <http://www.rtais.wto.org/UI/PublicAIRTA-List.aspx>.

<sup>12</sup> P. Dee, K. Hanslow, *Multilateral Liberalization of Services Trade*, [in:] *Services in the International Economy*, ed. R.M. Stern, Ann Arbor 2001, p. 117-139.

<sup>13</sup> D. K. Brown, A.V. Deardoff, R. M. Stern, *Computational Analysis of Multilateral Trade Liberalization in the Uruguay Round and Doha Development Round*, Discussion Paper 489, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor 2002.



– left after the Round – by 33% after the conversion into customs duty equivalent would result – according to them – in the increase in the world income by 413 billion USD. It would be much more than expected effects of total liberalization of the trade in services. The increase in GDP arising from such decisions would be obtained by all states and regions (20) under examination. The largest effects in absolute numbers would be obtained by the European Union – 142 billion USD and USA – 131 billion USD but also other developed and developing states could count on significant profits.

Also T.W. Hertel and R. Keeney, after their examinations, conclude that the inclusion of the services into the liberalization process may exceed expected profits from the reduction on barriers in the field of the trade in services by 80%. As a result of the total elimination of the barriers in trade in services they expect an annual growth in incomes by 66 billion USD. A large part of this amount would fall to developed states and India. Lower benefits would be obtained by developing states with exception of African states situated to the south of Sahara since they have rather limited service markets and do not stimulate any interesting foreign enterprises.

Y. Decreux and L. Fontagnè examined potential effects of negotiations within the Doha Round until 2020. Three scenarios posed the basis for calculations: no liberalization and maintenance of conditions of trade in services valid in 2006 (base scenario), reduction on existing barriers by 25% and by 50%. The consideration was given to three sectors of economy. The results prove additional growth of GDP by 0.1% (25% reduction) and by 0.18% (59% reduction) compared to the base scenario. Only the reduction on trade barriers in the sector of services could generate more profits for the world economy than the reduction on customs duties on agricultural products in connection with the reduction and liquidation of export subsidies in trade in these goods by half. Benefits for particular states would be different. Similarly as in previously quoted examinations losses would be suffered by African states situated to the south of Sahara. These states, in accordance with GATS regulations, do not have to liberate their own markets. This privilege which should – for granted – generate benefits to the poorest states turns out to be harmful for them.

R. Chadha<sup>14</sup> deals with the issue of different effects in terms of welfare arising from the liberalization of services in Asia, Europe and USA. He concludes that the benefits in terms of growth in welfare measured by the growth of GDP in percentage would be higher in developing states than in developed, while when expressed in absolute numbers – reversely. The increase in GDP, which would occur as a result of liquidation of trade barriers in the sector of services by 25% in relation to 1995, would amount to: 0.8% in Japan (42 billion USD), 1% in European Union states (66 billion) and 1.2% in USA (72 billion USD). Newly developed Asian states would together achieve 1.7% of GDP growth (15.3 billion USD), ASEAN states 1.8% (9.4 billion

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<sup>14</sup> R. Chadha, *GATS and Developing Countries: A Case Study of India*, [in:] *Services in the International Economy*, ed. R.M. Stern, Ann Arbor 2001, p. 245-266.

USD) and India 0.7% (2.4 billion). The author also concludes that for the OECD states the profits arising from the liberalization of trade in services would be higher than those arising from the liberalization of the goods flow. Moreover, advantageous effects would arise from the liberalization of trade in services when, at the same time, restrictions on trade in agricultural and industrial goods were eliminated.

Giving consideration to empirical data from sixty states (1991-1999) A. Mattoo, R. Rathindran and A. Subramanian<sup>15</sup> examined the results of liberalization in the financial sector and telecommunication sector. They estimated that additional GDP increase resulting from the total liberalization of both sectors totally in the period shall amount to 1,5% in relation to states which would not open those markets. Then, they examined both sectors separately and calculated that the total liberalization of the financial sectors might result in the increase in GDP by 1.2% (in developing states by 2.3%) while in telecommunication sector by 1% (in developing states by 1.9%).

In turn, A. Winters<sup>16</sup> examines the economic effects of liberalization in the sector of services, which provision is related to temporary re-location of natural persons (manner 4). The author concludes that the increase in annual growth in the migration of labour force in developed states by 3% may result in positive effects in terms of welfare of value amounting to 156 billion USD which responds to the growth in the world product by 0.6%. Such effects would result mostly from the mobility of less qualified workforce and benefits from liberalization would be obtained by developed and developing states.

## 5. Conclusion

From the analysis of the statistic data and considerations presented in the article it results that the scale of the international trade in services is still too low in relation to their meaning in the economy of the world. One of the significant reasons is protectionism, which, despite several years of negotiations over liberalization in the frameworks of GATS, stays at the high level. Hope for serious effects on liberalization, after they have been included into the negotiations in the frameworks of Doha Development Round, failed since this Round was suspended.

The results of the quoted studies show that due to liberalization in trade in services one may expect positive economic results which usually exceed liberalization in trade in agricultural and industrial goods. Forecasted benefits for developing states are not higher than for the developed ones. It results from the fact that the service markets in developing states are nowadays characterized by higher level of protectionism than markets in other states. The growth of GDP may be affected in particular by services which are not consumed, directly but they are related to the process of goods manufacture (e.g. telecommunication or financial services).

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<sup>15</sup> A. Mattoo, R. Rathindran, A. Subramanian, *Measuring Service Trade Liberalization and Its Impact on Economic Growth*, The World Bank Policy Research Paper, No. 2655, Washington D.C. 2001.

<sup>16</sup> A. Winters, *The Economic Implications of Liberalizing Mode 4 Trade*, [in:] *Moving People to Deliver Services*, ed. A. Carsaniga, Oxford 2003, p. 59-92.

Forecasted effects of liquidation of barriers in trade in services pose only estimations and they must be treated with a dose of uncertainty. However, their scales are large enough to persuade WTO members to enhance the dynamics of negotiation over liberalization in trade and to lead to the successful end of the Doha Development Round.

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## MIĘDZYNARODOWY HANDEL USŁUGAMI. ROZMIARY – LIBERALIZACJA – KORZYŚCI

**Streszczenie:** W artykule zaprezentowano rozmiary międzynarodowego handlu usługami, przedstawiono w zarysie przebieg negocjacji usługowych prowadzonych w ramach WTO oraz wskazano na potencjalne korzyści, które kraje mogą osiągnąć w razie pełnej liberalizacji tego sektora. Z analizy wynika, że zniesienie barier ochronnych w handlu usługami może przynieść krajom świata znaczne korzyści. Powinno to skłonić członków WTO do szybkiego zakończenia negocjacji prowadzonych w ramach Rundy Katarskiej.