



Ministerio de Producción  
Presidencia de la Nación



UNIVERSIDAD  
DE CHILE

# Global Services Forum

in association with REDLAS Conference 2018:

Knowledge-based services for sustainable development

13–14 September 2018

University of Buenos Aires – Faculty of Economic Sciences – Annex Building  
Córdoba 2122 (Day 1) / Uriburu 781 (Day 2) – Buenos Aires – Argentina

CONCEPT NOTE

## MAIN OBJECTIVES

The Global Services Forum (GSF) of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) is convened to advance the development agenda connected to the services' economy and trade, to raise awareness on the direct and indirect effects of services on inclusive and sustainable development, and to promote and strengthen partnerships between stakeholders.

The Conference from the Latin American Network for Research on Services (REDLAS) is organized to disseminate high quality and multi-disciplinary research on diverse aspects of services to inform public and private policies, to increase knowledge on key topics in services, and to promote international cooperation between services experts and researchers.

On 13–14 September 2018, the GSF and the REDLAS Conference will come together in Buenos Aires, Argentina, to focus on the important role of knowledge-based services for sustainable development, productive and export diversification, innovation and internationalization. The outcome of the GSF-REDLAS 2018 will be to discuss viable options and strategies to strengthen knowledge-based services economy and trade as a fundamental component of the services contribution to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals.

## BACKGROUND

Globally, services accounted for 68 per cent of output (2016), 59 per cent of jobs (2017), and 50 per cent of investment (2017). In the same years, services were responsible for 56 per cent of output and 54 per cent of employment in developing countries. Although these major contributions already confirm the central role of services for development, the importance of services goes well beyond their direct weight in the economy. Services provide many intermediate inputs, are bundled with goods, have a coordination role of production processes and are central activities within manufacturing firms. Through these effects, services are responsible for two thirds of total productivity growth in developing countries and a key avenue for diversification and upgrading.

## BACKGROUND (Continued)

Trade in services is growing more than trade in goods, is more resilient and is growing more in developing countries. When the indirect effects are considered, including services activities within manufacturing firms, the contribution of services to overall exports was close to two-thirds. International trade in services, by allowing access to foreign services and to inputs and factors that support domestic services, can strengthen services' contribution to the whole economy, to structural transformation and shifts in comparative advantages. The importance of trade for services is supported by the higher productivity of exporting services firms, than of non-exporting services firms, in low income countries.

Knowledge-based services - services that use high technology and/or have the relatively highly skilled workforce that is required to benefit fully from technological innovations - are instrumental in these pro-development effects. They create formal, qualified and high-quality jobs, can have a good export performance and have an intermediation role in the diversification and upgrading of productive and export capacity.

## ORGANIZERS

- United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, UNCTAD
- United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, ECLAC
- Secretariat of Productive Transformation, Ministry of Production, Argentina
- University of Buenos Aires, Argentina
- Konrad Adenauer Stiftung
- University of Chile

## PARTICIPANTS

The GSF was launched in Doha, Qatar (2012) and since then it has taken place in Beijing, China (2013), and in Nairobi, Kenya (2016). It brings together high-level policy-makers, services regulators, representatives of international organizations, business leaders and other private sector delegates such as heads of coalitions/associations of services industries, renowned academics, and other stakeholders from all regions to openly discuss strategies and approaches to strengthen the development impact of services.

REDLAS has held six Conferences in Brazil (2010), Chile (2012), Mexico (2014), Uruguay (2015), Brazil (2016) and Costa Rica (2017). REDLAS is a community of experts and researchers actively involved in the study and formulation of services public policies, mainly located in Latin America and the Caribbean. Its members come from a wide range of areas in services, including from academia, governments, international organizations and private sector.

**Registration:** <https://gsf-redlas2018.eventbrite.com.ar/>

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