

Abstract

Postal and courier services are both subsectors in the communication services under the GATS. Compared to telecommunication and audiovisual services, WTO Members apparently paid less attention to the two subsectors. As a result, in general, the level of commitments in the subsectors is relatively low. However, as the pace of globalization accelerates, postal and courier services could improve the efficient flows of physical documents and shipments, and could play a more important roles to the integral economic development. Therefore, at the outset of new round negotiations on trade in services, postal and courier services became the key items of the negotiations, and related issues were also put on the table and dicussed frequently by the Members.

The thesis first introduces the practices of trade in postal and courier services, and summarizes the trade profiles, industrial characteristics, and trade barriers on trade in postal and courier services. Then the thesis discusses the related regulations and commitments of postal and courier services under the GATS framework, explains the related GATS articles for postal and courier services, and clarifies their influence. Besides, the thesis also analyzes Members' existing commitments and offers. Finally, the thesis focuses on the classification and terminal dues issues: the main point of the former is analyzing existing GATS classification on postal and courier services, and submitting the future adjustment solutions; the main point of the later is examining whether the terminal dues system of the Universal Postal Union is inconsistent with the GATS MFN treatment principle, and submitting the future harmonization solutions.

Key words: postal services, courier services, express services, classification, terminal dues, Universal Postal Union