

Even if measures depart from these core principles and obligations, they will not necessarily be inconsistent with our trade agreements. This is because of various exemptions and exceptions that remove municipalities from the coverage of those agreements in many circumstances. This is discussed further below.

Most Relevant Agreements for Municipalities: GATS and NAFTA

The online Guide provides details on a number of agreements that could affect municipalities but with a focus on the World Trade Organization (WTO) General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) and the services and investment chapters of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). These contain the provisions that are most likely to be relevant, and will therefore be the focus of attention in this booklet.

It should be noted, however, that the online Guide provides details on the WTO Agreements on Technical Barriers to Trade and Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures as well as the Agreement on Subsidies and Countervailing Measures. Readers are encouraged to consult the online Guide for information about the potential applicability of these agreements.