



Welcome to the fourth edition of our Newsletter!

Welcome to the fourth edition of our Newsletter dedicated to the [European Union](#) (EU)'s 'Facilitating the process of Uzbekistan's accession to the WTO' project implemented by the [International Trade Centre](#) (ITC). Our project aims to support Uzbekistan's development plans to modernize its economy by leveraging its [World Trade Organization \(WTO\)](#) accession process.

This edition highlights some of the interventions that took place between July and September 2021 under this project. In this issue, you will find details about the recent advisory support provided as well as information about a series of capacity-building activities organized for national stakeholders relevant to the negotiations of the terms of accession of Uzbekistan.

Over the past three months, the private sector was sensitized about the benefits of WTO membership with a view to anticipate business opportunities likely to stem from WTO membership. Finally, an important milestone was achieved with a view to ensure the project has an enduring imprint, namely, an agreement was concluded with the prominent Swiss-based World Trade Institute to develop a dedicated academic course on Trade Law and Practice for the University of the World Economy and Diplomacy (UWED) in Tashkent.

This newsletter is also available in RUSSIAN and in UZBEK.

More information on our project is available on our websites in [English](#), [Russian](#) and [Uzbek](#) languages.

For any enquiries, contact us: WTOAccessionUZB@intracen.org

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Happy reading!



NOTA BENE from our team:

Kindly note that you have been included in the mailing list of our newsletter following your participation to one of our events. If you wish to unsubscribe, you can do so [here](#).

Обращаем внимание, что вы были включены в список нашей новостной рассылки по итогам участия в одном из наших мероприятий. Если вы хотите отказаться от рассылки, пожалуйста, пройдите по этой [ссылке](#).

Сиз ахборотнома почта рўйхатимизга бизнинг тадбирлар бирида иштирок этганлигиз натижасида киритилганлигизни эслатиб ўтамиз. Ушбу обунани бекор қилмоқчи бўлсангиз, келтирилган [хавола](#) орқали уни рад қилишингиз мумкин.

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IMPLEMENTATION: PROGRESS & ACHIEVEMENTS

The project operates against a set of targeted objectives:

	The Uzbek government will be better equipped to draft the documents and develop its negotiating positions as required by the WTO accession process
	The executive and legislative branches will be better informed to develop specific sectoral laws and regulations as needed to comply with Uzbekistan's new international commitments
	The policymakers' understanding of the WTO accession process and its legal framework will be reinforced
	Uzbekistan will have an increased capacity to comply with WTO Rules, in particular with regards to the SPS/TBT & Trade Facilitation Agreements of the WTO
	ITC's work will increase the business sector's - including women's associations- awareness of the WTO accession process and benefits

To provide a better overview of our activities and achievements so far, we have categorized them below along the project's five objectives

OBJECTIVE 1

Informed drafting of documentation & negotiating positions required for WTO accession process

A key part of the accession process is to update WTO Members about trade and economic policies in place through submission of required negotiating inputs. In light of this, the project continues providing advisory support with the review and development of the accession documentation.

The milestone event over the period was the release of the first Factual Summary of Points Raised in July 2021 that describes Uzbekistan's Foreign Trade Regime. The project also provided support with the preparation of other accession documents required for the 5th Working Party Meeting, that is, the replies to questions of the WTO Members posed after the 4th Working Party Meeting, the revised Legislative Action Plan and a list of Uzbekistan's legislation in English for consultation.

The project, in addition, facilitated a mission in July 2021 to Geneva of an Uzbekistan delegation, led by the Deputy-Minister of Investments and Foreign Trade, Mr. Badriddin Abidov, to meet with the WTO Secretariat and take part in bilateral negotiations with key WTO partners.

The delegation also met with the ITC Executive Director, Ms. Pamela Coke-Hamilton, to discuss project implementation and the government's future needs in this regard.

Seven high-level officials from Uzbekistan had an opportunity during this visit to participate in face-to-face capacity-building training on 23 July 2021 organized by the ITC. Sessions were held on the dynamics of integration into a world economy dominated by global value chains, and an historical overview of WTO negotiations was provided.



A high-level Uzbekistan delegation, visited Geneva in July to meet ITC chief and receive training

Uzbekistan's Deputy-Minister of Investments and Foreign Trade, Mr. Badriddin Abidov, during the mission hailed progress with the national project supporting the country's WTO accession bid and called for the pace to be maintained as the negotiations continue.

OBJECTIVE 2

Enhanced capacity for the development of specific sectoral laws and regulations to align Uzbekistan's national trade policy with the requirements for WTO membership

One of the crucial requirements for WTO accession is the compliance of specific national laws with the WTO agreements. The project continued its work on the review of Uzbekistan's national legislation on intellectual property rights to establish its compliance with the requirements of the WTO TRIPS Agreement and related international intellectual property conventions, notably the Paris Convention and the Bern Convention. By the end of September 2021, the entire body of Uzbekistan's legislation had been cross-checked against the TRIPS Agreement and recommendations were shared with the national partners that aim to facilitate the WTO accession negotiations.

OBJECTIVE 3

Increased understanding by policymakers of the WTO accession process and legal framework

Our project continued to provide capacity-building activities to support government officials to enhance their expertise on issues related to the WTO agreements and the WTO legal framework. Several training workshops were organized, including the following:

- A series of workshops over four days on the key subjects of services trade and the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS), notably on services negotiations, scheduling of commitments in services and a dedicated session on financial services trade.
- A workshop on the implementation of industrial policies that are aligned with the WTO rules.

In addition, our project facilitated the participation of four MIFT officials in the week-long (online) Summer Academy Courses, organized by the World Trade Institute (WTI) in Bern, Switzerland that took place in June-July 2021. The Uzbekistan's participants benefited from the following courses:

- International Investment Law and Dispute Settlement

- Current Developments in Trade and Agriculture: New Challenges
- Trade and Sustainable Development

Along with that, during the period covered by this issue, key steps were taken to cooperate with one of Uzbekistan's universities on the development of training modules on WTO and trade policy-related topics. A tender procedure and the identification of a service provider to collaborate with the University of the World Economy and Diplomacy (UWED) in Tashkent was finalized. The World Trade Institute in Bern, Switzerland, was selected as an implementing partner to develop the academic module. Work to develop the course on **WTO Law and Practice** is currently underway.



Uzbekistan benefited from a wide range of training activities in July and August 2021, including a four-part workshop between 23 and 30 July 2021 on the key area of services trade

As part of Uzbekistan's accession bid to the WTO, the country's negotiators benefited from training on the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS), organized by the ITC under the EU project 'Facilitating the process of Uzbekistan's accession to the WTO'. The training series included sessions on how to schedule the country's services commitments as well as a two-day workshop on the intricacies of financial services trade and its standalone Annex in the GATS.

OBJECTIVE 4

National institutional capacity strengthened on Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) issues, Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) and Trade Facilitation (TF) compliance in line with WTO obligations

Our project continued to provide technical support to strengthen the institutional capacity of the government agencies responsible for TBT- and SPS-related issues. This included the review of TBT-related laws and assistance to reform them to comply with WTO rules and incorporate good practice.

In this regard, and building on work initiated earlier this year, further support was provided with the redrafting of the **Law on Technical Regulation**. In addition, a new **Law on Accreditation of Conformity Assessment** was prepared for review and a translation of the **Law on Food Safety** was produced, which will be reviewed to ensure that it is technically accurate.

In addition, building on previous technical training sessions, the following additional workshops were organized between July and September 2021:

- A training workshop on the audit of integrated management system, namely, ISO 9001:2015 Quality Management Systems, ISO 14001:2015 Environmental Management Systems, ISO 45001:2018 Occupational health and safety management systems, and ISO 50001:2018 Energy Management Systems
- Training workshops on the theory of measurement, measurement uncertainty, and calibration technical procedures, on the verification of laboratory competence by means of interlaboratory comparison tests and on verification of laboratory competence by means of interlaboratory comparison tests, ISO/IEC 17043.

OBJECTIVE 5

Enhanced awareness of stakeholders, including women's associations, about WTO accession

One of our project's key goals is to contribute to raising awareness among both the private sector and civil society, including women and youth, about WTO Membership and the benefits stemming from successful integration into the global economy. This will ultimately contribute to:

- building consensus on Uzbekistan's WTO accession among government agencies and the private sector
- addressing potential misconceptions about the WTO by accounting for all interested stakeholders' views when calibrating negotiating stances

To meet the objectives, a workshop was held in August 2021 in coordination with the lead negotiating body – i.e. the MIFT – on the topic “Benefits and Challenges of WTO Membership” for private sector representatives with a view to raise their awareness about the WTO accession process and its anticipated effects. The event was attended by the Chamber of Commerce and Industry, business associations of a range of sectors, and export-import enterprises across Uzbekistan.

Our project will continue to provide the relevant support on this front in the next stages of implementation, in conjunction with the MIFT.

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