



International
Trade
Centre



Ministry of Investment,
Industry and Trade of the
Republic of Uzbekistan



Funded by
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EUROPEAN UNION TRADE-RELATED ASSISTANCE

Facilitating the Process of Uzbekistan's Accession to the WTO



Welcome to the thirteenth edition of our Newsletter!

We are pleased to share the thirteenth Newsletter on the [European Union](#) (EU)'s '[Facilitating the process of Uzbekistan's accession to the WTO](#)' project, with the [International Trade Centre](#) (ITC) as implementing partner. By supporting Uzbekistan's accession to the [World Trade Organization](#) (WTO), the project aims to assist the country's economic development through its integration into the global economy.

The issue covers the support extended to Uzbekistan between October and December 2023. A highlight in the quarter was the 7th Working Party Meeting, where Uzbekistan's accession is negotiated, which took place at the WTO in November. Uzbekistan's needs in this regard guided several of the project's activities in the quarter. First, it helped prepare Uzbekistan's negotiating team for the meeting through a seminal 3-day workshop on a cornerstone aspect of the negotiations, namely, market access on goods.

It provided inputs and advice in preparation for the bilateral tracks of the negotiations in the areas of trade in goods and trade in services. Another highlight in the quarter was the completion of the review of the draft Law on Food Safety and Quality. The final draft was transmitted to Uzbekistan in October.

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

Stay connected: #WTOAccessionUZB

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

For a clear view the activities and achievements in the past quarter are discussed along the project's five objectives.

OBJECTIVE 1

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

An acceding country's prevailing trade and economic laws and policies are at the heart of a country's [WTO](#) accession as they form the basis of the terms on which membership is negotiated. The negotiations take place in the context of the Working Party Meetings (WPMs) – the forum for the multilateral negotiations, as well as in bilateral negotiations. The project supports Uzbekistan in this key element of the accession.

In preparation for the 7th WPM, held on 16 November 2023, the project provided support in the bilateral tracks of the negotiations in the areas of trade in goods and trade in services, helping to edge the negotiations forward. This process is gathering pace.

At the 7th WPM it was announced that negotiations on goods were finalized with four additional WTO Members, bringing the total number of concluded negotiations to seven countries – Angola, Georgia, Republic of Moldova, Mongolia, Nigeria, Saudi Arabia, and Turkey.

In the area of trade in services, the project continued providing turn-key advisory assistance to advance the negotiations on services commitments that will define the conditions of foreign services' and service providers' access to the market of Uzbekistan.

The project also provided tangible support for Uzbekistan's participation in the 7th WPM and related bilateral meetings with WTO Members by covering the travel expenses of seven delegates of Uzbekistan's negotiating team to Geneva. (See [web story](#) for more on the 7th WPM.)



Uzbekistan's chief negotiator, Mr. Azizbek Urunov, and ITC Executive Director, Ms. Pamela Coke-Hamilton, had an opportunity to meet in Geneva after the 7th WPM at the WTO to discuss further priorities for support to Uzbekistan's WTO accession process.

Photo: ITC

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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

Another key component of WTO accession is to make sure that national laws are aligned with the relevant WTO agreements. To support this pillar the project assists with the review of Uzbekistan's national laws.

In the past quarter, support commenced in two key areas, namely those of trade remedies and of trade-related investment measures (regulated by the WTO's TRIMS Agreement). With regard to the latter, the project will aim to assess existing rules and programmes related to investment to establish their compliance with the TRIMS Agreement.

The project is furthermore part of an international group of experts that is developing new legislation for Uzbekistan in trade remedies, notably on anti-dumping, countervailing duties and safeguard measures. This work builds on an earlier analysis by the project of the compliance of Uzbekistan's trade remedies with WTO prescriptions.

OBJECTIVE 3

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

The development of know-how and key skills to implement the technical requirements of the WTO agreements is a fundamental tenet in supporting a country's WTO accession. The project helps to build the requisite capacity among government agencies on the WTO agreements and the technical aspects of the accession by means of training and technical assistance.

As market access on goods constitutes the cornerstone on which a country agrees to become a WTO Member, a 3-day workshop was held in Tashkent from 4 to 6 October 2023 to orient Uzbekistan's negotiating team around this seminal topic in preparation for the 7th WPM. The first two days navigated the schedule of commitments and the mechanics of the bilateral negotiations on market access to goods. The last day included the participation of key representatives of Tajikistan and Kazakhstan who shared their countries' accession experiences. (See [web story](#) for more detail).



Representatives of Uzbekistan's negotiating team
attend the 3-day workshop on market access in goods
in preparation for the 7th Working Party Meeting at the
WTO.

Photo: ITC

A week-long training on WTO Rules in Accession Negotiations, organized by the WTO in collaboration with ITC, was held from 4 to 8 December 2023 for the government officials from acceding governments, including Uzbekistan.

The project facilitated the ease of understanding of the training by providing Russian-English interpretation (See [WTO | 2023 News items - Training course on WTO rules in accession negotiations opens in Geneva](#) for more detail).

The project continued directing its support to building deep knowledge within government ranks on international trade and the multilateral trading system.

At this juncture, six senior government officials will participate in the World Trade Institute's (WTI) Winter Academy 2024 in Bern, Switzerland. The WTI Winter Academy covers cutting-edge issues in trade and investment law and policy.



Representatives of Uzbekistan's negotiating team
attend the one-week training course on WTO rules in
accession negotiations at the WTO, Geneva.

Photo: WTO

Officials' enrollment was arranged by the ITC. The officials represent Uzbekistan's Ministry of Investment, Industry and Trade, the Competition Committee, the Competition Promotion and Consumer Protection Committee, the Customs Committee, and the Uzbek State Asset Management Agency.

The courses are taking place during January and February 2024 and cover the following areas: WTO Law on Border Measures and Trade Facilitation; WTO Law on Anti-dumping and Safeguard Measures; WTO law on Subsidies and Countervailing Measures; and The Law and Policy of Trade in Services (See [Winter Academy | WTI](#)- for more information).



Director of the World Trade Institute (WTI), Prof. dr. Peter L.H. Van den Bossche, opening the sessions at the WTI, Bern. Photo: WTI

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

Work on building capacity in the technical areas of TBT and SPS gathered momentum during the past quarter.

The review of the draft Food Safety Law, which was requested by the Sanitary-Epidemiological Welfare and Public Health Committee, was completed during the quarter. The work commenced in the previous quarter, with several review-adjustments cycles to ensure the draft law's compliance with the WTO's SPS Agreement and the CodexAlimentarius – the international standard that undergirds the SPS Agreement. The law was submitted for Uzbekistan's consideration in October. This can now inaugurate the parliamentary process towards its enactment.

In the area of TBT, a niche training workshop series that commenced in July on the Adoption of International Standards by Selected International Standardization Bodies concluded in October with a final module on good practices in developing standards, and the financing of national standards bodies. The full course was presented online to some 300 technicians, several of whom attended multiple modules. Technical agencies across the spectrum benefited from the training, including the Agency for Technical Regulation, the Institute of Standards and the National Institute of Metrology. (See [web story](#) for details about the full course).

OBJECTIVE 5

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

A key objective is to create awareness among the business sector about the potential opportunities that could arise for exporters from the WTO accession. A comprehensive series of awareness-raising workshops on agricultural trade for private sector participants, organized in the different regions of the country, was wrapped up in the previous quarter. The parameters of further assistance to the private sector will be discussed with the national partners.

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