



## Welcome to the seventh edition of our Newsletter!

With the recent WTO 12<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Conference and the 5<sup>th</sup> Working Party Meeting on the Accession of Uzbekistan to the WTO, it is an opportunity to provide an update in our seventh Newsletter on the [European Union](#) (EU)'s '[Facilitating the process of Uzbekistan's accession to the WTO](#)' project, that is implemented by the [International Trade Centre](#) (ITC). The project supports Uzbekistan's accession application to the [World Trade Organization](#) (WTO), which will see the country integrate into the world economy, thereby bringing its economy and trade-related laws and policy on par with those of modern economies.

This issue focuses on the assistance given to Uzbekistan in the period from April to June 2022. The big highlight this quarter was the project's technical assistance to prepare the Uzbekistan's negotiators for participation in the 5<sup>th</sup> Working Party Meeting (WPM) that took place on 21 June 2022. Assistance was also extended to facilitate the participation of Uzbekistan's delegation in the 12<sup>th</sup> WTO Ministerial Conference (12-15 June 2022) in Geneva. The project also continued with technical training sessions on a range of topics during the quarter.

This newsletter is also available in RUSSIAN and in UZBEK.

For more information on our project: [intracen.org/UZBWTO](https://intracen.org/UZBWTO)

For any enquiries, contact us: [WTOAccessionUZB@intracen.org](mailto:WTOAccessionUZB@intracen.org)

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Happy reading!

NOTA BENE from our team:

(EN)

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](#).

(RU)

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.

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Сиз ахборотнома почта рўйхатимизга бизнинг тадбирлар бирида иштирок этганлигиз натижасида киритилганлигини эслатиб ўтамыз. Ушбу обунани бекор қилмоқчи бўлсангиз, келтирилган хавола орқали уни рад қилишингиз мумкин.

## **IMPLEMENTATION: PROGRESS & ACHIEVEMENTS**

The project operates against a set of targeted objectives:

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

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

One of the pillars of accession to the WTO is the discussion of the acceding country's existing trade and economic policies with the WTO Members. This forms the basis for the WTO accession negotiations. In support of this process, the project aids Uzbekistan to prepare its participation in the Working Party Meetings (WPM). Over the past three months, the project helped intensively with the **preparation to the 5th WPM**, which took place on 21 June 2022.

The Uzbekistan negotiations delegation was given a tailor-made advisory support to field questions that may be posed by the WTO Members during the meeting. Technical discussions were arranged for the negotiators on the WTO's rules on subsidies and local

content requirements, as well as the WTO rules on key aspects of services trade. A team of ITC experts also travelled to Tashkent to assist with technical preparations on the ground.



*During the meeting between the Deputy Minister of Investments and Foreign Trade of the Republic of Uzbekistan, Mr. Badriddin Abidov, and the ITC Deputy-Executive Director, Ms. Dorothy Tembo, 27 June 2022. Photo: ITC*

The project also ensured the participation of six delegates of the negotiating team (five MIFT officials and one official from the Cabinet of Ministers) to Geneva to attend the 5<sup>th</sup> WPM. To facilitate discussions between Tashkent and Geneva, the project assisted with enabling direct Russian-English interpretation during the meeting.

Using the opportunity of the Uzbekistan negotiators' presence in Geneva, the project arranged a meeting between the Chief Negotiator and Deputy-Minister of Investments and Foreign Trade, Mr. Badriddin Abidov, with ITC Deputy-Executive Director, Ms. Dorothy Tembo, on 27 June 2022. They discussed Uzbekistan's prospective needs from the project going forward.

Earlier in June, the project facilitated participation of the Uzbekistan delegation in the **12<sup>th</sup> WTO Ministerial Conference (MC12) in Geneva**, from 12 to 15 June 2022, by covering



travel expenses of two delegates from Tashkent. On the fringes of the 12<sup>th</sup> WTO Ministerial Conference, the Chief Negotiator on Uzbekistan's accession to the WTO, Mr. Abidov, also chaired the meeting of acceding governments showing the country's proactive and strong commitment to the accession process.



*During his visit to Geneva to attend the 12<sup>th</sup> WTO Ministerial Conference, Uzbekistan's Deputy-Minister of Investments and Foreign Trade, Mr. Badriddin Abidov, informally met with the ITC's Executive Director, Ms. Pamela Coke-Hamilton. Photo: ITC*

## **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**

The compliance of national laws with the WTO agreements is another benchmark for the WTO accession. To facilitate this key component, the project assists with the review of Uzbekistan's national laws. In the past quarter, the project completed the analysis of **15 national laws in relation to subsidies** to check their compliance with two relevant Agreements of the WTO: Agreement on Subsidies and Countervailing Measures (ASCM) and Agreement on Trade-Related Investment Measures (TRIMS). An ITC expert travelled to Tashkent in April 2022 to present the work and discuss further steps with MIFT officials.

The project also made progress with ensuring compliance of **Intellectual Property Rights-related national legislation** with the WTO rules. To account for the earlier provided recommendations, the go-ahead to draft the actual amendments to the national laws was given by the government. With the support of the project, a local law firm in Tashkent was identified and contracted through a competitive tender process to draft the required amendments. This work has commenced and is expected to be finalized in the third quarter.

### **OBJECTIVE 3**

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

To support the technical adjustments to laws and their implementation in line with WTO regulations, the project provides encompassing capacity-building of and technical assistance to government officials involved in all areas that touch on accession.

In the past quarter, the focus on training in the area of the services trade (covered by the WTO's General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS)) continued with an online workshop on **Capital Market Regulations and GATS commitments** that was held on 23 and 25 May 2022. This was the sixth sector that came under the lens in the MIFT-requested series on services trade.

On 21 and 22 April 2022, an onsite training session was also held in Tashkent on **Subsidies and other Export Promotion Measures**. The participants benefited

from the discussion of the rules on subsidies stemming from the Agreements on Subsidies and Countervailing Measure and from the Agreement on Agriculture. The results of the gap-analysis of 15 laws on subsidies have been also discussed with the participants.

On another track, the project progressed with the initiative to **develop the WTO Law and Practice course**, to be taught at the selected Tashkent-based university – **University of World Economy and Diplomacy (UWED)**. A series of guest lectures for the students and academic staff, and short-tailored training courses for UWED professors, were organized by the World Trade Institute (WTI) as a partner university over the period April – June 2022.



*During the Guest Lecture on “Recent Developments in China’s Trade Policy” by Prof. Hong Zhao, organized by the WTI in the framework of the initiative on the development of the “WTO Law and Practice” course financed under the project, 6 June 2022. Photo: UWED*

## **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 the review of TBT-related laws and assistance to reform them in compliance with WTO rules is completed, and the recommendations of the project on the revision of TBT- and SPS-related national laws are currently under consideration by Uzbekistan.

## **OBJECTIVE 5**

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

As one of its ultimate objectives, the project seeks to create more private sector awareness about the benefits from WTO Membership and the country's concomitant integration into the global economy. Among those earmarked as target groups are included women and youth groups. It is hoped that this will ultimately help to:

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

To further this objective, the project received a request to organize **awareness-raising workshops** in different regions of Uzbekistan. The first workshop will take place in Khiva (Khorezm region) on 22 July 2022. This will be followed by a series of workshops in the ten other regions of Uzbekistan (Djizak region, Kashkadarya region, Samarkand region, Navai region, Bukhara region, Fergana region, Andijan region, Namangan region, Syrdarya region and Tashkent region), which will take place over August 2022.

Further outreach opportunities to the private sector continue to be explored in cooperation with the MIFT.

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