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Welcome to the ninth edition of our Newsletter!

We are pleased to share the ninth Newsletter on the [European Union](#) (EU)'s '[Facilitating the process of Uzbekistan's accession to the WTO](#)' project, which is implemented by the [International Trade Centre](#) (ITC). The project was conceived to assist Uzbekistan's accession application to the [World Trade Organization](#) (WTO), to facilitate the country's participation in the global economy, leveraging WTO membership to modernize its economic activity.

The issue focuses on support extended to Uzbekistan between October and December 2022. The activities included support provided with the update of the accession documentation and preparation of answers to questions raised during the 5th Working Party Meeting (WPM), which was held on 21 June 2022. This documentation will be discussed with the WTO Members during the next 6th WPM, slated to take place in the first quarter of 2023. In November, a mission was also undertaken to Tashkent that straddled several activities. A highlight was meeting with agencies and laboratory staff dealing with technical barriers to trade (TBT) and sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) subjects. On-the-ground training in these subjects further helped to strengthen technical capacity. A further highlight was the training of 55 women entrepreneurs about Uzbekistan's proposed membership of the WTO and raising awareness about the opportunities that could stem from accession.

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:

(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](#).

(UZ)

Сиз ахборотнома почта рўйхатимизга бизнинг тадбирлар бирида иштирок этганилигиз натижасида киритилганлигизни эслатиб ўтамиз. 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 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

In the accession process to the WTO a key goal for the acceding country is to share its existing trade and economic policies with the WTO Members. Upon this basis the negotiations consider how the policies and laws should be adjusted to confirm with the WTO Agreements. The project assists with this process through reviewing key documents and drafting amendments that then feed into the negotiation process, which takes place in the context of the Working Party Meetings (WPMs) under the multilateral track of the negotiations. In June 2022, at the 5th WPM, Uzbekistan received a set of questions from WTO Members based upon the accession documentation tabled at the meeting. Over the

past three months, the project assisted with the preparation of the written replies to these questions. Advisory assistance has also been provided with updating other accession documentation that had served at the 5th WPM. The factual summary – which provides a synopsis of the current trade situation in Uzbekistan – was updated by the WTO Secretariat, marking the next development in the accession negotiations that will be discussed during the 6th WPM, which is expected to take place in the first quarter of 2023.

Apart from the multilateral track of the negotiations, the project also supports two other negotiating tracks, namely, the bilateral track, dealing with trade in goods and services and the plurilateral, dealing with trade in agriculture. In these contexts, assistance was given during the quarter with the revision of the schedule of commitments on goods and services, and domestic support tables in agriculture.

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 adherence of national laws with the relevant WTO agreements is another key target for WTO accession. The project helps with the review of Uzbekistan's national laws to support this objective. In the past quarter, the project reviewed 10 legislative acts related to **natural monopolies** and **subsidies**, that are subject to the Anti-Monopoly Commission's activities, to assess their compliance with the WTO Agreements. The results were also discussed with the national partners to undertake further amendments.

OBJECTIVE 3

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

When a country joins the WTO, its relevant officials require the requisite skills and know about technical requirements of WTO membership. In this respect, the project assists with building capacity among government staff about the WTO's legislative framework and the technical aspects of the accession through training sessions and technical assistance.

In support of these endeavours, two online workshops were held in October 2022, respectively on trade in educational services and trade in health services, thereby concluding a comprehensive training series on services trade.

Also, adhering with a request made by the Ministry of Investments and Foreign Trade (MIFT), the project, during a mission in November, offered on-the-ground training in Tashkent on several aspects of WTO law to contribute to building the capacity of government officials of the regions, who work closely with the business sector.



Government officials of different regions attend a workshop in Tashkent on WTO-related topics.
Photo: ITC

Work on the development of a WTO Law and Practice course to be taught by the Tashkent-based University of World Economy and Diplomacy (UWED) also progressed apace. During the past quarter, a series of tailored training sessions and guest lectures were offered from 24-27 October and 21-24 November to relevant personnel and students of the UWED. In the case of the personnel, the aim was to build their capacity to be able to teach courses in key areas, such as trade in services, trade remedies, trade-related intellectual property rights and TBT and SPS-measures.

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

Efforts to strengthen the technical ability and institutional capacity of government agencies working in the areas of TBT- and SPS-related issues, received an injection through two in-person technical workshops during a mission to Tashkent.



*Participants at the technical training offered by the ITC in Tashkent in November 2022.
Photo: ITC*

A first training reiterated compliance requirements dealing with scientific justification, harmonization, risk assessment and transparency. A second technical workshop on export quality focused on standards and technical regulations and considered national quality infrastructure, which establishes and implements standardization. Ten laboratories received training on how to test and certify agricultural goods to be able to meet international standards. The workshops were supplement by meetings with agencies and laboratories dealing with quality and safety checks on export-directed agricultural products, to identify future technical training needs.

OBJECTIVE 5

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

As one of its key objectives, the project seeks to engage the private sector about the effects and advantages of WTO membership and integration into global markets, and the opportunities this could create for private businesses. Target groups include women and to this aim, the project, during a mission to Tashkent, held a workshop for women entrepreneurs on 25 November 2022, to explain the effects and business opportunities that could open for women-owned enterprises when Uzbekistan joins the WTO.



Women entrepreneurs at the workshop in Tashkent to raise awareness among the private sector about the country's proposed WTO membership. Photo: ITC

Fifty-five women entrepreneurs who are members of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of the Republic of Uzbekistan, the Businesswomen's Association, the Association of Women of the Agrarian Sector of Uzbekistan and Regional Centers for Women's Entrepreneurship, participated in the workshop.

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