

Press release

Stakeholder workshop for the assessment of the current non-tariff measures and technical regulations in the Republic of Kazakhstan

The original article in Russian is available at <http://trade.gov.kz/ru/news/id=74> (accessed on the 10th of April 2013). The text below is an unofficial translation.

Only 30% of the exporting companies are affected by non-tariff measures (NTMs) and other obstacles to trade, said experts of the International Trade Centre (ITC), at the workshop assessing non-tariff measures and technical regulations.

Among countries where a similar study was conducted, only Hong Kong SARC has a lower share (23%) of affected exporters. Countries with low GDP per capita, such as Kenya, Malawi and Rwanda, have the highest proportion of affected companies (75%, 81% and 71%, respectively).

The workshop was organised by the International Trade Centre and the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), in collaboration with the Centre for Trade Policy Development (CTPD) of Kazakhstan on March 14, 2013 in Astana, Republic of Kazakhstan. The workshop discussed the results of the study and recommendations for streamlining NTMs. In general, ITC and UNECE studies focus on procedural and regulatory barriers to trade, trade facilitation measures, technical regulations and standardization policies.

The results of the study aim at:

- Assisting to countries in their efforts to achieve greater regional and global economic integration;
- Informing financial donors on where assistance might be required;
- Discussing within the Committee on Trade and its subsidiary bodies on where additional work is required.

In 2012, experts engaged by ITC conducted a survey among exporting and importing companies. In total, the survey comprised 387 phone interviews. During the interview, 61 affected companies were identified and invited for face-to-face interviews for a more detailed analysis of the trade barriers.

UNECE experts conducted face-to-face interviews with 57 respondents, including representatives from the public and private sectors, logistics and transport companies. UNECE study also includes an annex with the administrative and regulatory procedures affecting trade in alimentary products, such as candy and confectionary products, flour, pasta and biscuits. The objective of the study was to identify trade restricting measures with the aim of their elimination or streamlining.

The Centre for Trade Policy Development of Kazakhstan was created by the Decree of the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan in June 2006. The Centre specialises in providing analytical support for trade policy development.

NTMs cover a wide range of issues, such as sanitary and phytosanitary measures, technical regulations, certification and licensing requirements. When applied to protect human, animal and plant lives, NTMs have a legitimate aim that is justified. These measures, however, can also be applied as a protectionist tool, in which case they do not only act as barriers to trade, but can have a negative impact on the competitiveness of the country's economy.

In this regard, in order to analyse the impact of non-tariff measures on foreign trade activities of exporters and importers of Kazakhstan the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Budget Planning of Kazakhstan and the Centre for Trade Policy Development initiated the above project, carried out by UNECE and ITC.

Pictures from the event:







