



**UNITED NATIONS SPECIAL PROGRAMME FOR THE ECONOMIES OF CENTRAL ASIA
(SPECA)**

Sixteenth session of the SPECA Working Group on Trade

SPECA/PWG-Trade/2021/EN/X

**DRAFT PROGRAMME OF WORK FOR 2022-2023
OF THE SPECA WORKING GROUP ON TRADE**

In line with the overall objectives of SPECA to support its participating countries in developing subregional economic cooperation, integrating their economies into the world economy, and attaining the Goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the WG on Trade fosters subregional cooperation to promote national and regional development of sustainable trade in the SPECA participating countries. To achieve this through subregional cooperation, the Working Group: (i) Provides a platform for supporting progress towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals through subregional cooperation in trade and trade facilitation with a focus on SDGs directly related to trade development, notably SDG 17 on partnerships, taking into account interlinkages between the SDGs; (ii) Assists in improving the awareness of SPECA countries on the trade-related SDGs; helps provide information and share best practice experiences, taking into account interlinkages between the SDGs; (iii) Promotes policy dialogue to support: trade policy cooperation among the SPECA countries and their trade negotiators; trade facilitation; aligning positions on sustainable trade, dealing with non-tariff measures, and investment policies; and (iv) Provides analysis and capacity-building in the areas of trade facilitation, sustainable trade development, regulatory harmonization, agricultural quality standards, elimination of non-tariff barriers to trade, investment, and other areas, including identification of funding modalities for SPECA activities.

The thematic orientation of the activities of the Working Group on Trade includes: (i) sustainable trade development among the countries in the region and with the main trading partners; (ii) trade facilitation and promotion of trade facilitation norms, standards and best practice recommendations; (iii) public-private cooperation for trade facilitation; (iv) regulatory harmonization, market surveillance and risk management; (v) agricultural commercial quality standards; (vi) investment and trade development; and (vii) other areas of competence of UNECE and ESCAP related to the development of trade, regional markets and harmonization of standards in these areas. The deliverables of the WG on Trade focus on five areas: (i) trade policy cooperation, including on the WTO negotiations; (ii) implementation of the SPECA Trade Facilitation Strategy; (iii) implementation of the SPECA Principles for Sustainable Trade; (iv) non-tariff measures and barriers to trade; and (v) digitalization of multimodal transport information exchange. The latter is an area, on which the WG is just starting to work.

TRADE DEVELOPMENT		
Name of Project/Activity	Timeframe	Budget
Ongoing and planned projects/activities with funding secured or expected. These activities will be implemented in mutually reinforcing way. Additional support from interested partners could expand the scope and the number of beneficiaries of these projects/activities		
Enhancing the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development through strategic cooperation among the SPECA countries (this is an overall project in support of the SPECA process, where trade is the subject of one of the segments)	2020 - 2022	US\$ 250,000
UNDA COVID-19 connectivity response project (Trade and Transport Connectivity in the Age of Pandemics: https://unttf.org) – segments dedicated to the support for the Regional SPECA Trade Facilitation Strategy and the UN/CEFACT standards for the digitalization of multimodal transport data and document exchange	May 2020 – March 2022	US\$ 477,000 (UNECE overall budget in support of many activities)
Building Cross-border Cooperation for Sustainable Trade in the SPECA subregion	September 2021 – December 2024	US\$ 249,370
Strengthening the capacity of the Central Asian countries to implement trade facilitation measures and better integrate into the international rules-based trading system	January 2021 – December 2022	US\$ 160,350
UN Regular Programme for Technical Cooperation (RPTC)	January – December 2021	US\$ 40,000