

THE MAIN RULES, PROCEDURES AND OBLIGATIONS GOVERNING ACCESSION TO THE WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION.

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Abstract: The World Trade Organization (WTO) is the principal global organization that regulates international trade. WTO membership entails trade policy liberalization and integration into the international trading system. This abstract reviews the key rules, procedures, and obligations governing WTO accession, while also analyzing the opportunities and challenges for member states.

Keywords: World Trade Organization, foreign trade, Marrakesh Agreement, Former Soviet Union countries,

Introduction: With the global economy becoming increasingly interconnected, international trade has become a key factor in the economic growth and development of countries. The World Trade Organization (WTO) plays a key role in regulating this process and ensuring that trade relations are fair and predictable. The WTO, established in 1995 to replace the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), is the only global organization that sets international trade rules, resolves trade disputes, and facilitates trade negotiations.

Membership in the WTO is an important stage in the integration of each country into the international trading system. This process involves not only economic, but also political and legal changes. Membership in the WTO allows countries to participate more actively in international trade relations, gain wider access to foreign trade

markets, help attract investment, and stimulate economic growth. At the same time, the membership process may be associated with a number of challenges, including increased competitive pressure on domestic producers, the need to restructure some industries, and the need to align trade policy with WTO requirements.

Main part

The purpose of this study is to analyze the main rules, procedures and obligations governing accession to the World Trade Organization. The study examines the procedure for joining the WTO, the main obligations of member states, as well as the economic and political consequences of membership. The study aims to identify the advantages and disadvantages of WTO membership for countries, as well as to develop recommendations for successful integration into the international trading system.

This introductory part defines the importance of the WTO accession process and highlights the main areas of the topic. The following sections examine each stage of this process in detail.

The basic WTO provision governing membership (Article XII of the Marrakesh Agreement Establishing the WTO) simply states that “any State or separate customs territory which has full autonomy in the conduct of its external trade relations and in respect of other matters provided for in this Agreement and the Multilateral Trade Agreements may accede to this Agreement on such terms and conditions as may be agreed between the WTO and itself.” While the terms of accession are determined on a case-by-case basis and vary from applicant to applicant, accessions are sufficiently similar that patterns can be identified. The main objective at this stage is to uncover these patterns where they exist and to identify exceptions to them. This will provide an idea of what is generally expected of members. However, it should be noted that WTO members are not bound by precedent; practice has developed over the course of the WTO’s existence and may develop further in the future.

Since they are outside the system, all candidates need expert advice on the complexities of the WTO and the requirements of the accession process. Technical Assistance and Training (TRTA) is not part of the accession process itself, but the

WTO Secretariat provides TRTA to least developed countries (LDCs), developing countries and low-income countries in transition at all stages of the accession process, with priority given to NRCs.

The WTO TRTA programme aims to provide information on WTO agreements and developments in the organisation. In recent years, funding for the WTO TRTA has increased significantly, mainly through voluntary contributions paid by individual WTO members. However, some form of prioritisation is required to ensure that all eligible beneficiaries benefit, and acceding countries should bear this in mind when submitting their requests. It should also be recognised that the WTO alone cannot meet all needs.

It is desirable and necessary to work with other agencies providing the necessary TRTAs for accession and with individual WTO members providing technical assistance and training to acceding countries. The procedures governing accession negotiations are based on proposals made by the Secretariat shortly after the organization's establishment in 1995. They have provided a framework for negotiations and have generally provided transparency and predictability, while allowing accession working groups to adapt to specific circumstances as needed. The WTO has recently adopted a set of specific guidelines for LDC accession, designed to streamline and simplify the procedures for these countries.

The first step in the WTO accession process is for the applicant government to apply to the Director-General of the WTO. In this application, the applicant must indicate that it wishes to accede in accordance with Article XII. The WTO General Council examines the application and establishes a Working Party with the authority to submit a report with recommendations, which may include a draft instrument of accession. Membership of the Working Party is open to all interested WTO Members. In most cases, working parties are established quickly. From the date of establishment of the Working Party, all applicant governments become observers in the General Council, with these rights and obligations, including the obligation to pay financial contributions. All matters relating to accession are considered by its Working

Party and are normally not invited to consider such matters until the General Council has received the final report of the Working Party, which terminates the mandate of the Working Party.

Having described the processes, it is important to note the conditions for candidates to become WTO members. Each new WTO member undertakes to comply with the WTO Agreement and the provisions of the Multilateral Trade Agreements annexed thereto, as well as the provisions of the Protocol obligations on (i) rules, (ii) tariffs, (iii) agricultural support and export subsidies, and (iv) services. Since WTO rules are discussed in other guides in this series and in many other publications, this guide focuses on the obligations under the Protocol.

The Eurasian region, which includes the fifteen states of the former Soviet Union (FSU), provides important insights into the hypothesis of competitive dynamics among acceding states. The simultaneous independence of these states after the collapse of the Soviet Union provides a fortuitous historical experiment to test our hypothesis. These states faced common challenges in their early years, ranging from managing the transition from centrally planned economies to managing their foreign relations with each other and the international community.

Below are descriptive statistics on the evidence for WTO membership for each country (Table 1.1.1). Of course, these statistics are a snapshot over time and do not capture the significant internal changes that have occurred in each country over the past two decades. However, to the extent that the preliminary data reflect eleven characteristics of the samples, they may indicate opportunities that warrant further investigation.

Descriptive statistics for the countries of the former Soviet Union (2016)

(indicates countries whose largest trading partner is Russia) Photo 1.1.1

Countries	Year of submission applications	Year entry	% of total trade with WTO members	% of total exports to WTO member countries	% of all trade with Russia	Polity IV
Kyrgyzstan	1996	1998	15	16	23	-3
Latvia	1993	1999	68	73	17	8
Estonia	1994	1999	75	73	15	6
Georgia	1996	2000	44	34	15	5
Lithuania	1994	2001	57	65	25	7
Moldova	1993	2003	28	29	46	10
Armenia	1993	2003	35	30	22	3
Ukraine	1993	2008	35	35	45	7
Russia	1993	2012	66	67		3
Tajikistan	2001	2013	42	41	21	-6
Kazakhstan	1996	2015	32	32	54	-4
Belarus	1993		46	51	51	0
Uzbekistan	1994		50	50	29	-9
Azerbaijan	1997		48	33	15	-6
Turkmenistan			39	39	6	-9

Source: Data compiled by the author based on data from the WTO and the World Bank

Of the fifteen countries, eleven are WTO members, three are in the process of joining, and one has not yet applied. Judging by the degree of trade dependence of each country on existing WTO members, there does not appear to be any correlation between trade dependence and earlier accession or application. The only exceptions

are Latvia and Estonia, which have relatively high trade dependence (around 70%) and joined the EU relatively early compared to other countries. **Xulosa**

JSTga kirish - bu murakkab va ko'p bosqichli jarayon bo'lib, davlatlardan savdo siyosatini JST qoidalariga muvofiqlashtirish va muhim majburiyatlarni bajarishni talab qiladi. Shunga qaramay, JSTga a'zo bo'lish davlatlar uchun xalqaro savdoda ishtirok etish va iqtisodiy o'sishni rag'batlantirish uchun muhim imkoniyatlar yaratadi.

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