

Ready4Trade Central Asia

Supporting inclusive development
through trade and digitalization



International
Trade
Centre



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TURKMENISTAN

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Dear Readers,

Thank you for your continued support! This is the fourth issue of the Ready4Trade newsletter. Since our last publication, we have had plenty to report on from our various training sessions and events. We've made a lot of progress and we're starting to see great results from some of our MSME beneficiaries. We would like to express special gratitude to our project stakeholders, who provide key support in the project implementation in Turkmenistan and make this project possible.

Happy reading!

NEWS

Ready4trade project wraps up Export Management Coaching Initiative in Turkmenistan

Image by ITC



The Ready4Trade Central Asia project conducted an Export Management Coaching Initiative wrap-up event in Ashgabat on 2 December 2021.

The event gathered together around 70 participants and showcased project results and lessons learned from the Export Management Coaching Initiative (EMCI) in Turkmenistan to the local partners.

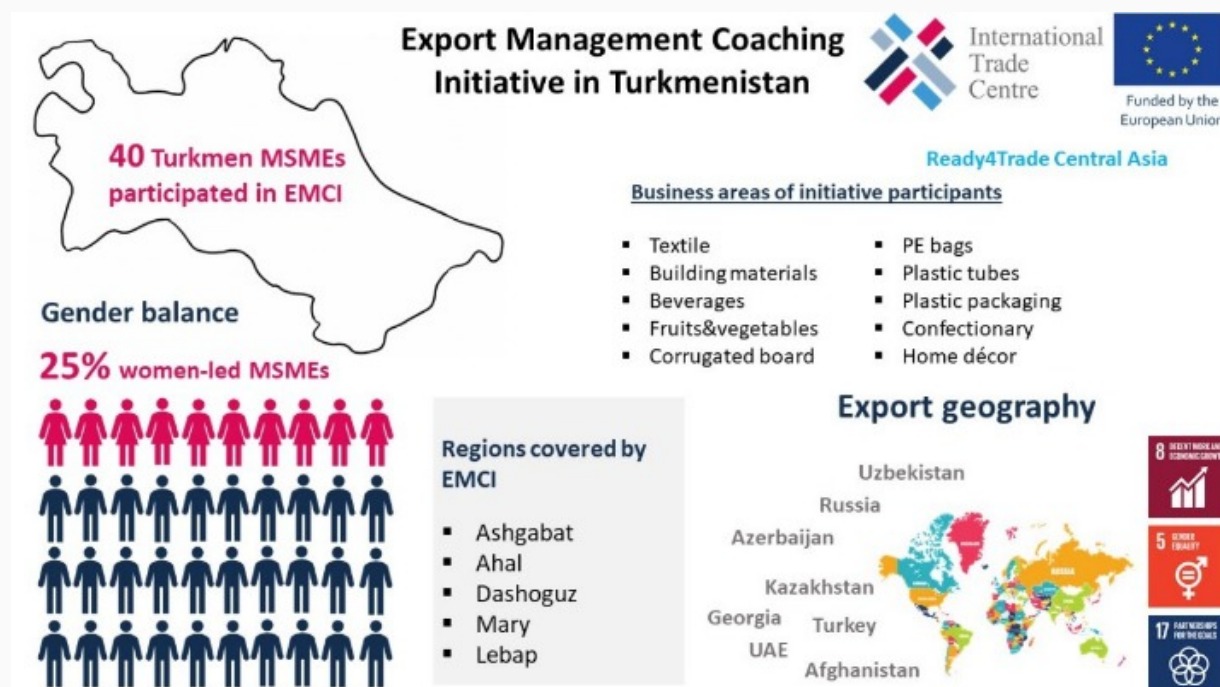
Representatives of the European Union (EU) Delegation to Turkmenistan, the Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs of Turkmenistan, local micro, small and

medium enterprises (MSMEs) as well as the Ready4Trade project team from the International Trade Centre (ITC) in Turkmenistan attended the event.

In 2021, the coaching missions were delivered to about 40 Turkmen MSMEs. The EMCI, which was launched in early 2021, has been offering practical and action-oriented advisory services to businesses through on-the-job coaching delivered by the local experts. These local experts have extensive experience in the fields of import/export, certification, freight forwarding and logistics.

This initiative was possible thanks to funding from the EU, and was implemented by the ITC, in close cooperation with the Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs of Turkmenistan – the national institutional partner for the project.

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Better data for women-inclusive trade policy: Ready4Trade Central Asia hosts workshops on gender-disaggregated data collection





Image by ITC

How do we set benchmarks and gauge progress on topics like gender equality by gathering relevant data? That is what Ready4Trade set out to do with its latest trainings in its five Central Asian project countries.

At the end of 2021, Ready4Trade conducted a set of workshops on gender-disaggregated data for trade policymaking. The workshops were comprised of four training modules and focused on demonstrating the importance of collecting data that not only accounts for the number of people present in a data set, but also considers how many women or men have been surveyed in order to assess differences and limitations and present more accurate data.

The sessions were geared towards national statistics agencies, policymakers, customs officers, border officials and other relevant stakeholders involved in the design and implementation of trade policies. They provided participants with an in-depth understanding of how collecting gender-disaggregated data can prove why the inclusion of women in trade is important, what constraints women face when engaging in international trade, and how to enhance women's participation in trade through data collection and examination.

The workshops held group exercises, provided examples of existing trade policies crafted with a gender lens in mind and illustrated the different types of data sets that can be collected for better-informed policy design. Participants also learned about the limitations and biases to keep in mind while collecting and examining this data.

Renata Wrobel, First Counsellor, Deputy Head of the Delegation of the EU to Turkmenistan underlined exactly why gathering gender-disaggregated data is important.

“Understanding the gender-based challenges that women face in trade are particularly important to ensure equal access to markets, fair competition and a healthy business environment. Based on the gender mainstreaming concept, this is relevant not only to women, as there are issues that men face as well, so it will

also be part of the promotion of the gender equality in trade. This approach to policymaking helps to avoid the creation or reinforcement of inequalities, which can have adverse effects on both women and men,” she said.

“Since trade and business have no face, it is vital to ensure that the newly adopted policies create equal opportunities for all without stereotyping or holding back one or another group of participants,” Ms. Wrobel added.

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Ready4Trade Central Asia conducts high-level online training on commercial diplomacy and trade negotiations in Turkmenistan



Image by ITC

The EU funded project Ready4Trade has conducted online training on commercial diplomacy and trade negotiations in Turkmenistan on October 13–15. The aim of the training was to discuss the practical aspects of the work of diplomats related to commercial activities and the work of trade policy makers, including the development of a negotiation strategy.

The training program included a two-day session on commercial diplomacy and a one-day session on trade negotiations and accession to the World Trade Organization (WTO). At the end of the first session, experts presented ITC

market analysis tools to study market access, export potential, trade standards and statistics.

During the session dedicated to WTO accession, participants discussed the process and results of accession to the WTO, and also considered the preparation and development of a negotiating strategy.

The trainings were conducted by ITC experts and attended by more than 30 representatives of the government agencies, public organizations, embassies and Turkmenistan delegations in foreign countries.

Turkmenistan obtained observer status at the WTO in July 2020 and has also adopted a new Foreign Trade Strategy for the period 2021-2030, which includes cooperation with ITC and the WTO. The Ready4Trade project aims to provide initial support to the government in preparing for Turkmenistan's WTO accession.

Ready4Trade contributes to e-commerce capacity building of Turkmen MSMEs



Image by Freepik

The Ready4Trade Central Asia project completed a series of e-commerce webinars to support small to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in Turkmenistan looking to increase their online sales presence. Shifting to e-commerce is now crucial for many SMEs in the country. But increasing online sales requires much more than just creating a website - it requires investing in digital marketing strategies to draw significant customer traffic and increase online visibility.

The Ready4Trade e-commerce training program takes SMEs through a digital transformation, providing them with the online tools and technologies, innovative solutions and research, and collaborative structures and partnerships to reach success.

The webinars were attended by 10 Turkmen companies and marketplaces in the textile, food, fruit and vegetable, and consulting industries. The overall goal was to enhance their online business presence to increase their reach in domestic as

well as export markets.

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Ready4Trade supports Turkmen food and consumer goods enterprises in exporting their quality products across borders



Image by ITC

Turkmenistan exports have grown significantly in the past few years, particularly in the food and beverage industry. ES Parakhat, one of the biggest fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) producers in Turkmenistan, is a part of that trend.

The company started out of a small workshop with a couple of employees manufacturing meat products in 1993. Over time, it has diversified into other products: natural juices and nectars, baby food, iced tea, carbonated drinks, fruit and vegetable purees, fermented milk products, as well as concentrates. Today, the company has grown to over 200 employees and is well known throughout Turkmenistan for delivering high quality products to market.

But after reaching a critical point in their growth, the company wanted to take one step further, to go beyond Turkmenistan's borders and become an exporter abroad. This is where Ready4Trade stepped in.

Through the Export Management Coaching Initiative (EMCI), export professionals with experience in logistics, customs document management, international quality standards, conditions for production, storage, labeling, transport, and procedures such as entering international markets, provide tailored on-the-job trainings delivered on the premises of each enterprise.

Ready4Trade's national export coach, Ms. M. Gulamova, noted that for Parakhat's training session, special attention was given to international quality standards, since the company exports food products. They were also given recommendations on how to improve their packaging and cargo transportation. Coach Gulamova noted the ease of working with the Parakhat team and commended their professionalism and their vision for what their company needed.

Parakhat's employees and management also responded positively about the EMCI, indicating that the training met their expectations and proved to be very

useful, timely and productive. For the long term, the company is not only aiming to boost profits but to also help contribute to the development of national agriculture by increasing the consumption of local fruits, vegetables and milk.

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Ready4Trade conducts the onboarding training for Trade Portal Management in Turkmenistan



Image by Freepik

In October 2021 Ready4Trade conducted an online on-boarding training for six representatives of the State Customs Service of Turkmenistan. Participants strengthened their knowledge on participation of customs officials in the development of the Trade Facilitation Portal (TFP) for consistency review and to ensure its understanding and purpose, as well as to manage the main content of the portal. The online training, developed by ITC, is part of a comprehensive program aimed to build capacity and improve the effectiveness of the development of a national TFP.

The training program, composed of five sessions, covered an introduction to the functions of the portal, an overview of the user and admin interfaces, a data collection methodology and content management. During the sessions, attendees had simulation exercises to practice the methodology for data collecting and apply the key principles of the portal.

At the end of the training, the customs officials had a more comprehensive understanding of how the portal works and how its implementation will affect the activities of private enterprises.

Once launched, the national TFP will become an important addition to the existing portals in Central Asia, which will help Turkmenistan comply with international trade standards, increase competitiveness and provide guarantees and transparency to attract foreign investment, as well as speed up the automation of some customs processes and procedures. The online portal will include practical steps necessary for import, export and transit, access to agreements, laws, regulations, forms and documents, useful information on international trade statistics.

Stay connected: #Ready4Trade #CentralAsia

With the project 'Ready4Trade Central Asia', the European Union (EU) and the International Trade Centre (ITC) are joining forces to contribute to the overall sustainable and inclusive economic development of Central Asia by boosting intra-regional and international trade in the region. Beneficiaries of the Ready4Trade Central Asia project include governments, micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs), in particular women-led enterprises, and Business Support Organizations (BSOs). The project operates in five countries: Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.



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