

Ready4Trade Central Asia

Supporting inclusive development
through trade and digitalization



International
Trade
Centre



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the European Union

KAZAKHSTAN

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Dear Readers,

Thank you for your continued support! This is the third issue of the Ready4Trade newsletter. The Ready4Trade Central Asia project is implemented by the International Trade Centre (ITC) and funded by the European Union (EU). Since our last publication, we have had plenty to report on from our various events. We've made a lot of progress and we're starting to see great results from some of our beneficiaries. Read on to see what we have been up to.

Enjoy!

NEWS

Ready4Trade conducts gender-responsive trade facilitation workshops for border officials in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan

Ready4Trade initiated a series of workshops on gender-responsive trade facilitation for customs officials in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan in September and October.

In Kazakhstan, the workshops were conducted in close cooperation with the State Revenue Committee of the Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Kazakhstan and Training and Methodological Center (TMC) and were held in Nur-Sultan (9 September 2021) and two customs posts of Altynkol (22 September 2021) and Nurly Zhol (23 September 2021).

More than 50 local officials from state agencies attended the seminars. The sessions were delivered by local customs experts, who had previously successfully completed ITC trainings on the methodology and content of the workshop.

Thanks to the training, customs officials increased their understanding of why inclusion of women in trade is important, what constraints women face when engaging in international trade and how to create conducive border environments through trade facilitation reforms.

The first workshop was opened by Youri Skaskevitch, Programme Manager of EU Delegation to the Republic of Kazakhstan and Jalil Bulatov, National Project Manager of the Ready4Trade project in Kazakhstan.

“Gender-sensitive activities are carried out on an ongoing basis in international practice. This seminar touches upon a topic relevant for Kazakhstan. In the long term, these kinds of initiatives will help to increase the competitiveness of women entrepreneurs in the labor market, which contributes to the further development of self-employment among women and the economy as a whole”, says Yermek Ktanov, Chief specialist of HR Management and Organizational Work Department of TMC.



Workshop held in Nur-Sultan.

9 September 2021.

Photo by ITC.



Workshop held
at Altynkol Customs Post.

22 September 2021.

Photo by ITC.



Workshop held
at Nurlı Zhol Customs Post.

23 September 2021.

Photo by ITC.

Coaching small businesses in Kazakhstan through the challenges of exporting



Midterm Event in Almaty.

2 September 2021. Photo by ITC.

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As small companies set out to grow their business, they look to expand their consumer base by exporting to other countries, but often lack the knowledge and tools to do so.

This is the situation Toktalyk Ziekenov found himself in. Managing his enterprise Billion Filters, the first polypropylene filter plant in Kazakhstan, is not an easy job. Ziekenov needed advice on export management so he could navigate every aspect of his business, from customs to compliance with standards. The International Trade Centre Ready4Trade Central Asia project stepped in to close this gap.

“Our coach gave us hands-on training on packaging, labelling and certification,” explains Ziekenov, who participated in the project’s Export Management Coaching Initiative. *“In addition, we were able to optimize our filter production and reduce the number of defects to zero. In just five days, the project helped me save years of frustration, time and costs.”*

Small businesses participating in this initiative receive training from coaches with extensive experience in each stage of production and distribution. For each session, coaches visit the premises of each company and deliver detailed, tailored instructions and recommendations over five days. At the end, each company receives an export compliance checklist to follow, useful export planning tools to put to practice, and a final assessment of their export practices.

More than half of the 40 Kazakh participating businesses have so far completed their training in the past five months, successfully meeting Ready4Trade's mid-term benchmarks for the initiative.

On 2 September 2021, the International Trade Centre hosted a hybrid event to commemorate the occasion together with the EU Delegation to the Republic of Kazakhstan and its national partners, the Ministry of Trade and Integration and the Center for the Development of Trade Policy, QazTrade.

The event brought together high-level representatives, coaches, participants, representatives of international organizations and Kazakhstani businesses, who shared their experiences.

Success stories from the Export Management Coaching Initiative (EMCI) missions

Case of Asiana Production

Asiana Production is a Kazakhstani manufacturer of hair removal products. The SME uses European-standard quality products and organic ingredients. Currently, the company is producing 20+ types of hair removal cosmetics based on unique formula.

To capitalize on the company's achievements and ensure it fully benefits from exporting, Marzhan Jiyessova, ITC EMCI coach made several recommendations to the company:



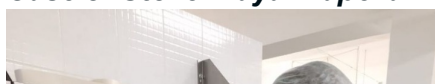
*EMCI coach Marzhan Jiyessova
at Asiana Production factory.
Photo taken by ITC.*

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- Proper labelling is essential to ensure product safety, avoid damage and spoilage during long haul transportation.
- Displaying clear handling information on external packaging for freight operators.
- Consulting the State Revenue Department regarding the use of proper HS codes for exports. This is critical for exporting products outside the EAEU countries as correct product classification determines customs duty and tax rates in the recipient countries.

Case of Stolichnaya Trapeza



'Stolichnaya Trapeza' is a young Kazakhstani meat processing brand. The company, which started in 2018, has been producing natural meat with no



Stolichnaya Trapeza Factory.

Photo taken by ITC.

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additives or genetically modified ingredients and is already in the top 15 producers in its product category.

The company management seized the opportunity to take part in the EMCI to learn more about the intricacies of cross-border export management. During the 5-day mission, their EMCI coach, Ainur Tleuova, taught them about the various aspects of exporting and answered their questions.

Since Stolichnaya Trapeza aspires to start exporting meat products to the Gulf states, Ainur advised to research HALAL compliance and certification requirements. To meet market expectations towards packaging, the company also faces the challenge of finding a suitable biodegradable packaging that holds up to the challenge of transporting chilled meat.

They are currently “concluding agreements for the export of frozen beef to Uzbekistan and have future plans to export premium chilled beef to China, Iran, Saudi Arabia,” says Aidar Nigmatov, company director. “As part of coaching, [our] company acquired valuable knowledge on the packaging, labelling and promoting the export of its products to foreign markets, using the ITC Tool Portal for marketing.”

BILLION FILTERS is the only manufacturer of polypropylene filters in Kazakhstan. The company produces 340,000 filters annually, supplying around 2 million people with clean sediment-free water. The company produces filters for the Kazakh market and exports them to Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan. To avoid damage to goods in transit and to save on packaging costs, Alikhan Kanapiya (EMCI Coach), proposed replacing their outer packaging materials from cardboard to plywood.

BILLION FILTERS has started to put the proposed suggestions into practice and has seen positive results with fewer occurrences of transportation-related product damage. Throughout the training, Coach Kanapiya highlighted the importance of networking with state organizations to support market expansion and suggested using the following ITC trade facilitation tools: TradeMap, Market Analysis Tool and Market Access Map to facilitate their exports.

Case of BILLION FILTERS



*Founder of BILLION FILTERS
Toktalyk Ziyekenov and
EMCI coach Alikhan Kanapiya .
Photo taken by ITC.*

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Thanks to the EMCI missions, the company signed a contract for export to Macedonia. The company also plans to enter the EU market in the future. And they believe that the knowledge gained during the training on the sustainable packaging requirements and documentation and other export procedures will definitely help BILLION FILTERS succeed.

Doing business digitally: Kazakh businesses benefit from e-commerce trainings and individual coaching

On 8 September 2021, Ready4Trade national coaches in Kazakhstan were invited to an e-commerce Training of Trainers program to help identify suitable online channels and relevant payment solutions for 40 participating SME beneficiaries interested in improving their e-commerce presence.

Over the course of September, a series of webinars were offered to SMEs along with their national advisors to learn about various e-commerce platforms. Following this in October, the companies received offline training and individual consultations from 8 national advisors.

The webinars held in September covered variety of topics, such as an overview of marketplaces and internet stores in Kazakhstan, website creation with Bitrix, registering to sell goods on platforms like Flip.kz and Halyk Market, as well as a discussion with Kazpost on payment and logistics solutions for small parcels.

Kazakhstan SMEs and national advisors also participated in regional webinars in September with guest speakers from Qoovee and Satu, who discussed opportunities for B2B trade across Central Asia, as well as B2C opportunities to sell to Kazakhstani consumers. Another Central Asian regional webinar was held on international payment solutions for cross-border transactions. A representative from Payoneer, an international financial services company, discussed digital payment services.

Additional offline sessions will be held in Nur-Sultan, Almaty, Aktau, Karaganda and Shymkent until the end of the year and will include deep dives into online channels and how to select the ones most relevant to each business depending on their business model and target markets.

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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.



5 Central Asian Countries
Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan,
Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan



4 Objectives

- ✓ Address regulatory and procedural obstacles to international trade
- ✓ Improve **SMEs capacities to comply with cross-border requirements**
- ✓ Improve SMEs readiness to **conduct cross-border e-commerce**
- ✓ Increase opportunities for **women-led enterprises to participate in international trade**

3 types of Beneficiaries



Governments



SMEs



BSOs

3 Sustainable Development Goals

The project contributes to the realization of **SDGs**:



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