

Support to Dialogue on the EU-Ukraine Free Trade Agreement

As part of the project "Support to implementation of trade-related aspects of the Ukraine-EU Action Plan" Funded by UK Foreign & Commonwealth Office under the Strategic Programme Fund

BACKGROUND

- FTA negotiations were officially launched on 18th February 2008 based broadly on the agenda set by the trade-related aspects of the EU-Ukraine Action Plan. Without clear objectives and stakeholder support, the Ukrainian authorities will have limited national support, which could slow progress.
- It is in both sides' economic interests to see the trade-related aspects of the EU-Ukraine Action Plan implemented quickly
- Current discussions (bi-lateral) under the enhanced agreement have discussed broad issues of interest to the EU and will provide an indication of the EU interests but these have not yet been detailed enough to provide impact assessments
- It is important that there is in-depth understanding amongst all stakeholders to create national consensus through informed and meaningful consultation, however, such a process is not common in Ukraine

OBJECTIVES

1. Improved level of understanding by the Ukrainian negotiating team, civil servants and civil society of the implications of trade-related aspects of the EU-Ukraine Action Plan
2. Improved Ukrainian awareness and understanding of the relevant issues based upon stakeholder dialogue facilitating and encouraging constructive discussions and consultation process between government and national stakeholders.
3. The capacity of the Government of Ukraine to implement the trade-related aspects of the EU-Ukraine Action Plan will be enhanced through the provision of specialist technical assistance and expert advice.

MAIN ACTIVITIES

Phase 1: Scoping Study on potential issues related to the EU-Ukraine Free Trade Agreement

A series of briefing notes have been prepared to introduce key issues of the EU-Ukraine Free Trade Agreement (FTA) to a wide audience of stakeholders in Ukraine. These briefing notes summarise the findings of various reports that have been previously undertaken on the likely impact of an EU-Ukraine FTA on Ukraine and highlight the specific issues which may concern stakeholders. The areas covered are:

- Trade in Goods
- Rules of Origin
- Trade Facilitation
- Technical Regulations
- Sanitary & Phytosanitary Measures
- Trade in Services
- Competition Policy
- Intellectual Property
- Public Procurement

These briefing notes are available for download at www.ctaeconomic.com/ukraine.htm

Phase 2: Facilitating Dialogue

To ensure effective dialogue between the stakeholders and Ukrainian negotiators, the project will facilitate and manage a number of stakeholder dialogue meetings which will help to articulate the positions of various groups. Through discussion and debate amongst themselves, stakeholders and Government Negotiators will be able to develop a common position on each priority issue.

Specifically, the project will:

- Prepare issue papers for each priority area to act as a stimulus to informed debate and discussion in Ukraine on the EU-Ukraine FTA;
- Identify potential participants and encourage active participation in the relevant interest group, supporting the analysis of their concerns to ensure their commitment and understanding of the process;
- Organise and manage a meeting programme and timetable for each priority issue;
- Present, as necessary, papers (as a stimulus) in discussion groups over time e.g. working groups private and public, by issue;
- Encourage open debate and participant contribution and research;
- Facilitate the preparation of position papers articulating interests and developing national consensus.

MAIN OUTPUTS

By ensuring national stakeholders are well informed of the issues and are actively contributing to the negotiating process, the Government of Ukraine will be able to engage effectively and more quickly with the EU to agree a mutually beneficial FTA between them and the early conclusion of the EU-Ukraine FTA.

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