

REPUBLIC OF SERBIA

NATIONAL COORDINATION BODY FOR TRADE FACILITATION



**ANNUAL REPORT
FOR 2020**

Belgrade, March 2021

1. INTRODUCTION

The National Coordination Body for Trade Facilitation (hereinafter referred to as the “NTFB”) was established by a Decision of the Government of the Republic of Serbia¹ in November 2017. The aim of its establishment was to ensure more comprehensive and effective facilitation of foreign trade of the Republic of Serbia and to coordinate the work of competent authorities, organisations, business community and other stakeholders in the foreign trade system.

Chairperson of the National Coordination Body is Mr. Stevan Nikčević, State Secretary at the Ministry of Trade, Tourism and Telecommunications. **Deputy chairperson** is Mr. Duško Marinković, acting Assistant Director/Coordinator of the Customs Administration within the Ministry of Finance.

Expert, administrative and technical support to the activities of the National Coordination Body is provided by the **Ministry of Trade, Tourism and Telecommunications, in cooperation with the Customs Administration.**

The National Coordination Body submits regular annual reports on its activities to the Government by the 31st of March of the current year in respect of the preceding year, as well as extraordinary reports, whenever necessary. In line with this obligation, the 2019 Annual Report was **submitted to the Government for information purposes on 29 March 2020 under number 021-00-36/2020-10 and it covered the period from March 2019 to March 2020.** The Report set out activities planned for the coming period to ensure compliance with the obligations set forth in the Action Plans for 2020 and 2021.

The overall conclusion is that the objectives previously set for 2020 were largely achieved, notwithstanding the extraordinary circumstances caused by the pandemic, as shown in detail in this document, which covers activities implemented between March 2020 and March 2021.

1.1. COVID-19 Pandemic – Key Foreign Trade Measures

The reporting period was marked by the COVID-19 pandemic, which affected the world primarily through a massive public health crisis, but also consequently resulted in the imposition of trade barriers, restrictions and prohibitions at global, regional and national levels. In this context, after declaring a state of emergency in March 2020, the Republic of Serbia passed three Decisions aimed at protecting the population from potential shortages of basic foodstuffs and medical and other supplies for public health protection:

- The Decision on Temporary Ban of Exports of Essential Products Important for the Population (*Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia* No. 54 of 10 March 2020, No. 59 of 22 April 2020 and No. 63 of 30 April 2020);
- The Decision on Ban of Exports of Medicinal Products (*Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia* No. 55 of 14 April 2020);
- The Decision on the Conditions for Exemption from Customs Duties of Certain Goods, (*Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia* No. 48 of 31 March 2020).

These legal acts were of a temporary nature and were in effect until the lifting of the state of emergency. In compliance with our international commitments, all measures

¹ *Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia* Nos. 98/17 and 55/2019

were verified and timely updated in the World Trade Organisation (WTO) database on trade policy responses to the COVID-19 pandemic, established by the WTO Secretariat to ensure a transparent review of foreign trade measures. Information on the measures was also available on the website of the World Customs Organisation (WCO).

The Government of the Republic of Serbia took a proactive approach to foreign trade during the pandemic and, in this context, Serbia was one of the initiators of the so-called Green Lanes in the CEFTA region, which involved the opening of priority lanes for the trade in essential goods, to ensure efficient supply of priority goods such as food and medicinal products. When the Green Lanes mechanism demonstrated its effectiveness in the CEFTA region, an initiative was launched to extend this trade facilitation mechanism also to EU Member States and Western Balkan partners.

All these measures initiated both nationally and regionally certainly contributed to keeping the Serbia's foreign trade decline below the initially forecast figures. Thus, Serbian exports in 2020 declined by 2.7%, while imports saw a 3.8% decline. When compared with global trade flows or the EU, which saw its exports drop by as much as 9.4% last year, while its imports declined by 11.6%, Serbia's performance can be seen as satisfactory, **indeed even better than that of its key partners.**

2. REPORT ON ACTIVITIES OF NTFB EXPERT GROUPS

Pursuant to Article 4 of the Decision on the Establishment of the National Coordination Body, four expert groups were formed to perform NTFB's activities. The expert groups review specific issues and participate in proposing solutions to facilitate foreign trade, eliminate trade barriers, expedite and modernise the customs procedure and controls at export, import and transit of goods, simplification and cutting red tape, with active involvement and participation of stakeholders from the business community, chambers and other associations, other holders of public powers, members of scientific and education institutions and other organisations that may contribute to trade facilitation.

In January 2020, the NTFB adopted the new Decision on Establishing Expert Working Groups, based on the previously adopted amendment to the Decision on the Establishment of the NTFB. This Resolution of 15 January 2020 consolidates the list of members of all Expert Working Groups to incorporate the most recent replacements both among the representatives of state authorities and among the private sector representatives, with the inclusion of representatives of the National Alliance for Local Development (NALED) in the first Expert Working Group.

In the coming period, the NTFB Secretariat intends to further update NTFB membership in cooperation with the chairpersons of the Expert Working Groups and to amend the currently applicable Decision if necessary.

2.1. Report on activities performed by Expert Working Groups pertaining to compliance with the obligations set out in the 2020 and 2021 Action Plans

At its fifth meeting held on 27 December 2019, the NTFB adopted the Action Plans for the next two years, i.e. for 2020-2021. The new APs were developed in close cooperation with representatives of the business community. The AP format has been modified and improved to provide a table representation of the planned activities and

measures, the responsible institutions and performance indicators. **A full review of the 2020-2021 APs is provided in Annex 1 to this Report.**

I – EXPERT WORKING GROUP ON AGRICULTURE AND SANITARY AND PHYTOSANITARY MEASURES

Chairperson: Milanka Davidović, head of Division, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management

1. Shorten the duration of import procedures for agricultural and food products

1.1. Enable electronic filing of requests for goods control and supporting documentation in order to improve import risk analysis

Applications for the control of goods and supporting documents in the importation and transit of shipments are filed electronically in the ITCM system by authorised customs brokers (freight forwarders) at border crossing points where veterinary and phytosanitary controls of shipments are performed. This service has been available at the Horgoš border crossing point since 1 August 2018, while all other border crossing points implemented the ITCM system on 1 July 2018.

The development of a new software solution, which would expedite the work of border phytosanitary inspectors, began in late 2020. At present, inspectors at border crossing points are required to enter data into two systems (the so-called FITO and FIBEX) when inspecting food and animal feed of plant origin under the Law on Plant Health and the Law on Food Safety.

The new system will support electronic filing of applications for phytosanitary examination and will integrate the two existing systems into one. This system will also support electronic issuing of orders to laboratories that perform specific tests, as well as receipt of test reports once the laboratories have conducted the tests.

1.2. When sampling goods during the import, allow a random selection of authorized laboratories that can perform analyses for all required parameters and are geographically closer, in order to shorten the time needed to obtain the results of analysis

When sampling shipments and choosing laboratories to conduct analyses, border veterinary inspectors take into consideration both the accredited methods and accredited laboratories and the geographical proximity of a laboratory to the border crossing point.

In this context, it should be borne in mind that the actual time required to obtain the results will depend primarily on the choice of laboratories, as well as the required testing parameters. Certain analyses will take days to complete and nothing can be done to influence that.

Another aspect to consider is that border veterinary inspectors at a single border crossing point should be able to send samples also to other authorised laboratories that are geographically more remote from their border crossing point, so as to avoid discriminating against other authorised laboratories.

If shipments with a short shelf life are sampled at a border crossing point, their marketing is not banned during that time. They can be marketed before the results of laboratory analyses are obtained.

1.3. Ensure effective electronic communication between laboratories and competent inspectorates regarding sampling of goods and submitting the results of analysis.

Laboratories submit the results of laboratory tests in one of the following ways: by e-mail, by regular mail or by personal delivery to a border veterinary inspector.

1.4. Publish on the website of the ministry responsible for agriculture or health updated lists of authorized laboratories according to the types of accredited analysis carried out

The list of laboratories authorised to perform laboratory tests concerning safety and quality of food of animal origin and animal feed for their production, processing and sales, including imports, with information on the scope of accreditation, is available on the website of the Veterinary Directorate:

<https://www.vet.minpolj.gov.rs/srb/component/content/article/900-laboratorije>

1.5. Establish an effective mechanism for supervision and control of authorized laboratories with the possibility to revoke authorization due to malpractice

Pursuant to Article 7 of the Agreement on the Assignment of Laboratory Testing Services concerning Safety and Quality of Food of Animal Origin and Animal Feed for their Production, Processing and Sales, including Imports, between the Veterinary Directorate of the MAFWM and authorised laboratories, the latter have a duty to timely, professionally and diligently perform their obligations under the Agreement.

2. Establishment of an effective risk analysis system in the control of goods by all inspectorates to reduce barriers and facilitate imports and exports

Acting on an initiative by their community and with their support (AmCham), a French expert was hired in 2019 to analyse the entire system of border controls of agricultural and food products and prepare a proposal for improvements and for the implementation of an effective risk analysis system by all inspectorates. Subsequent implementation of measures under this project will largely depend on the information systems and availability of adequate inputs for risk analysis. The Plant Protection Directorate is currently migrating to the ITCM imports control system, which is expected to significantly improve the ability to keep up with the volume of imports and the quality of available data. Furthermore, the model proposed by the French expert could also be used in the development of a risk analysis module for the future National Single Window.

The Border Veterinary Inspection Division and the Veterinary Inspection Division of the Veterinary Directorate, MAFWM, are still not included in the e-Inspector system.

3. Reduce the volume of required documents and formalities in import, export and transit procedures

Draft amendments have been prepared for the Bylaw on the Conditions for Shipments exempted from the Requirement to obtain an Import and Transit Decision, which will expand the list of these shipments.

4. Implement a programme for harmonisation and mutual recognition of documents and other trade facilitation initiatives for agricultural and food products under Additional Protocol 5 to CEFTA 2006

Decision No. 1/2020 on Facilitating Trade in Fruit and Vegetables between CEFTA Parties was adopted on 25 February 2020 at a special meeting of the CEFTA Joint Committee in Tivat. Preparations for its implementation are underway and include a capacity assessment through a project organised by the CEFTA Secretariat to ensure full implementation of the Decision on Facilitating Trade in Fruit and Vegetables. Application of this Decision will simplify border procedures and expedite the flow of fruit and vegetable shipments between the CEFTA Parties.

II – EXPERT WORKING GROUP FOR TECHNICAL BARRIERS AND MEASURES WITH EQUAL EFFECTS IN TRADE

Chairperson: Zoran Bakić, head of Group, Ministry of Economy, Sector for Product Quality and Safety

1. Further harmonisation of technical regulations with EU legislation

As part of its regular activities, the Ministry of Economy passed and published in the *Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia* No. 21/2020 of 6 March 2020 the following bylaws amending the existing bylaws:

- Rulebook amending the Rulebook on Protective Systems and Equipment intended for Use in Explosive Atmospheres (ATEX)
- Rulebook amending the Rulebook on Electromagnetic Compatibility
- Rulebook amending the Rulebook on Electrical Equipment intended for Use within Certain Voltage Limits
- Rulebook amending the Rulebook on Machine Safety

These Rulebooks repeal the provisions concerning the placement of the Serbian Mark of Conformity two years after Serbia's EU accession or signing of the ACAA and impose an obligation of obtaining a **Certificate of Conformity**, the application of which is delayed until **1 January 2022 and, in the case of ATEX, until 1 January 2023**.

2. Acceptance of foreign declarations of conformity

From 23 to 27 November 2020, the Accreditation Body of Serbia (ABS) hosted the Director General of NAH (Hungarian National Accreditation Body), Mr. Miklós Devecz. The two accreditation bodies had bilateral meetings and agreed and signed the 2021 Action Plan on implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding between NAH and ABS, signed in December 2017.

In parallel with this, in 2020 the ABS took part in the implementation of ongoing activities under the following projects:

1. EU for Serbia – Support for Safer Products - Strengthening Capacities of National Quality Infrastructure and Market Surveillance Authorities (IPA 2017);

2. Regional Consultancy Fund for Quality Infrastructure – South East Europe (PTB);

3. Establishment and capacity building of bodies for assessing product conformity to Energy Labelling Directive 2010/30/EU and Ecodesign Directive 2009/125/EC (EU4Energy Labelling and Ecodesign).

In 2020, the ABS continued participating in the meetings of the European Accreditation Agency (EA) and international accreditation organisations.

Furthermore, on 16 July 2020, a meeting was held between representatives of the ABS, the Ministry of Construction, Transport and Infrastructure and the Ministry of Economy to address the issue of recognition of foreign declarations of conformity in the field of pressure equipment.

To ensure its customer conformity assessment bodies (COBs), prospective applicants and interested customers and all other stakeholders are informed to the fullest extent possible of the work of the ABS, the accreditation process and current issues and new developments in the fields of accreditation, standardisation and metrology in Serbia and internationally, the ABS has continued promoting its activities on the ABS website and publishing its Newsletter. Three issues of the Newsletter were published in 2020.

3. As regards shortening the delay in issuing of registrations for new medicinal products and renewal of existing registrations, progress has been made, especially regarding expedited emergency registration of vaccines and medicinal products, in particular where necessary to contain a pandemic.

III - EXPERT WORKING GROUP ON CUSTOMS PROCEDURES

Chairperson: Snežana Karanović, Assistant Minister, Ministry of Finance

1. Mutual recognition and promotion of Authorised Economic Operator (AEO) Programmes

The Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Serbia and the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia on mutual recognition of Authorised Economic Operator for Safety and Security Programmes was signed in 2019 and came into force in 2020.

In an online meeting held 4 February 2021, representatives of the Customs Administration and the Embassy of PR China signed the Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Serbia and the Government of the People's Republic of China on mutual recognition of the Authorised Economic Operator for Safety and Security (AEOS) Programme of the Customs Administration, Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Serbia and the Enterprise Credit Management of the General Administration of Customs of the People's Republic of China.

Activities have been initiated to protect the logo of the national authorised economic operator programme.

As regards promotion and training of the private sector concerning the procedure for acquiring the AEO status, the benefits available to AEO status holders and the signed agreements on mutual recognition, these activities did take place, but on a smaller scale than originally planned, due to the declared state of emergency and the pandemic.

2. Expediting the flow of goods at the Preševo-Tabanovce border crossing point

A separate lane has been established for the entry and exit of goods vehicles in road transport under TIR and T1 (joint transit) procedures and for the transport of

perishables. Once the verification of the AEO Programme with North Macedonia has been verified and mutual recognition becomes effective, this separate lane will also be available to AEO-accredited companies.

3. Improve the auction process for the sale of seized goods

The project of establishing an electronic sales system for seized goods is in the final stage of implementation. The working group tasked with monitoring this project previously tested the software and demanded additional modifications. An electronic sale of goods is scheduled to take place at one customs office in early 2021 to determine whether the software is fully functional in a production environment. If successful, it would open the door for introducing electronic sales of goods across all customs offices. The public will be informed about the electronic sales system once the software is ready to be put into production.

4. 6. IT linking of the Customs Administration with: the Veterinary Administration of the Ministry of Agriculture and the Border Sanitary Inspectorate of the Ministry of Health (up to a level that will be determined by the Customs Administration)

Regarding measures undertaken to implement the activities under **numbers 4 and 6**, on 7 May 2019 the Government of the Republic of Serbia signed the Loan Agreement with the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (Western Balkans Trade and Transport Facilitation Project under the Multiphase Programmatic Approach), in respect of which the Law on ratification of the Agreement was passed. This project includes subcomponent 1.1 Development and Implementation of a National Single Electronic Window, which would connect all participants in foreign trade, including both government authorities and the business community. The Customs Administration was designated as the implementing body for this subcomponent.

5. IT connection of the Serbian Radiation and Nuclear Safety and Security Directorate and the Customs Administration

Regarding measures required for IT linking, the dataset which the Directorate will submit to the Customs Administration has been defined, as follows: reports by designated bodies on dosimetry measurement of radioactivity and gamma spectrometry measurement of radioactivity; and Decisions of the Directorate's inspectorates banning or authorising the import of goods. The following activities have also been completed: a link has been established between the Directorate and the Customs Administration and Directorate staff have been trained; the trained Directorate staff upload these documents to the Portal in real time, at which point they become available to representatives of the Customs Administration; customs officers at the customs offices who are authorised to access the Portal with the uploaded documents (scanned, in PDF format) have been designated; the time required to deliver the documents to importers has been shortened, as each document is scanned once it is created and then e-mailed to the importer and simultaneously uploaded to the CA's Portal, thus becoming available to the relevant customs officer. The importer encloses a copy of the document (received by e-mail) with the customs declaration submitted to the customs officer, who checks and compares it and completes the customs clearance procedure if all the conditions are met.

7. Implementation of the Time Release Study

A Time Release Study according to the methodology of the World Customs Organisation (WCO) was conducted in March 2017. As Time Release Studies are scheduled to be conducted once every three years, one should have been implemented in March 2020. However, it was cancelled because of the COVID-19 pandemic. If circumstances allow, a Time Release Study will be conducted in the course of 2021.

8. Reducing the time required to issue binding tariff information decisions

Two assignments set out in the schedule of activities have been completed, namely:

- Representatives of *Smart Berry Solutions doo* had consultations at the Customs Tariff and ICT Division of the Customs Administration to fully understand the professional and technical requirements needed to develop and implement an IT application for issuing binding notices of classification of goods according to the Customs Tariff. Notes were made of the consultative meeting.
- A Technical Specification was developed for the IT application and a Report on Acceptance of Assignment No. 2 was drawn up. Development of the application is currently underway, with support from IFC's TFSP.

9. Analysis of the current situation and undertaking of the measures and activities that will, enable electronic communication between commercial entities and the Budget Revenue Collection Department of the Customs Administration regarding collection of claims in relation to due customs duties, interest on late payments, repayment of overpaid duties, re-entry of incorrect payments, warnings for settlement of customs debt and communication with the guarantor bank

As regards the implementation of this activity, the Budget Revenue Collection Department did not have the expected expert assistance from European and donor organisations that support trade facilitation within the NTFB. In our opinion, this activity, taking into account also the powers of other organisational units of the CA and importance of revenue collection, with emphasis on the safety of refund, reverse booking and collection processes, could only be implemented properly with additional expert assistance in 2021.

At the moment, the Budget Revenue Collection Department acts to ensure collection and process safety only pursuant to requests in writing from economic operators or guarantor banks, delivered to and registered by the Customs Administration's Registry Office. Economic operators can receive electronically general information, such as the manner of filing a request, required elements of a request, processing time etc.

The possibility of enlisting expert assistance should be considered, so that in 2021 a Current Situation Analysis could be performed and measures and activities could be undertaken to eventually enable economic operators to communicate electronically with the Budget Revenue Collection Department of the Customs Administration in connection with the collection of claims for due customs duties, default interest on arrears, refund of overpaid customs duties, reverse booking of erroneous payments, customs debt collection notices and communication with guarantor banks, as set out in the Action Plan of the National Coordination Body on Trade Facilitation for 2020 and 2021.

IV – EXPERT WORKING GROUP ON COORDINATION OF TRADE FACILITATION ACTIVITIES UNDER INTERNATIONAL AND REGIONAL TRADE AGREEMENTS

Chairperson: Tatjana Dinkić, NTFB Secretary, head of Group, Ministry of Trade, Tourism and Telecommunications

1. Coordination and monitoring of implementation of commitments in the field of trade facilitation arising from the free trade agreements and cooperation with international organizations

Representatives of the NTFB have taken part in regional initiatives aimed at facilitating the movement of goods across borders and reducing the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on international trade flow. These initiatives also largely implement CEFTA Additional Protocol 5 on Trade Facilitation. In compliance with the assumed international commitments, both international organisations and foreign trade partners were notified of all trade-restricting measures imposed by our government during the state of emergency.

As part of monitoring of implementation of the Stabilisation and Association Agreement between the Republic of Serbia and the European Union, in 2020 we provided on several occasions relevant information on the World Trade Organisation (WTO) accession process and the trade facilitation process, in particular through contributions for the EC's 2020 Serbia Progress Report, as well as for the meetings of the competent Subcommittee on Trade, Taxation, Customs and Industry.

Activities have been initiated to implement Article 10.4 of the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement, related to the establishment of a National Single Window. The Republic of Serbia received a World Bank loan for the Western Balkans Trade and Transport Facilitation Project under the Multiphase Programmatic Approach. This project includes the subcomponent "National Single Window". Based on the envisaged timeframe for this project, Blueprint should be finalised by the end of March 2021, while the entire project should be completed by 2025.

2. Acceleration of the flow of goods at border crossings through integrated border management, harmonization of working hours of border agencies and improvement of the infrastructure

In 2020, particular emphasis was on the use of an instrument agreed at the CEFTA level, which concerns the establishment of a so-called "green lane" system, i.e. a system of green lanes at certain border crossing points in the CEFTA region. The border crossing points and green lanes in this system are open to all types of goods, while products of special humanitarian importance are subject to an additional regime of prior notice, which grants the special priority at border crossing points along the green lanes. This regime applies to certain products intended for human and animal nutrition, as well as medicinal products, medical and protective equipment, which are necessary for the containment of and protection of the population from the COVID-19 pandemic. The opening hours of border services and announcements of arrival of goods at the border through the SEED system have been harmonised.

As regards expedited flow of goods at border crossing points, the emphasis in recent months has been on implementing the bilateral agreement with North Macedonia. In this context, a separate lane has been established for the entry and exit of freight trucks in road transport under TIR and T1 (joint transit) procedures and for the transport of perishable goods. Taking into account the issues caused by the pandemic, both bilateral and regional activities in these fields are expected to accelerate.

Border crossing points with the EU still constitute a particular challenge. Efforts are currently underway to create preconditions for replicating the Green Lane system to a certain extent at the border crossing points between the Western Balkans and the EU.

3. Coordinating preparation of the Program of Mutual Recognition of documents submitted when importing and exporting goods stipulated by the Additional Protocol 5 of the CEFTA 2006 Agreement, as well as other trade facilitation initiatives under CEFTA

Decision No. 1/2020 on Facilitating Trade in Fruit and Vegetables between CEFTA Parties was adopted on 25 February 2020 at a special meeting of the CEFTA Joint Committee.

4. Establishing cooperation with Trade Facilitation Committees at bilateral and multilateral levels

Representatives of the NTFB Secretariat took part in the online Mission to promote the Global Trade Facilitation Programme (GTFP) held on 14 October 2020. It is a joint programme of the State Secretariat for Economic Affairs of Switzerland (SECO) and the World Customs Organisation, the aim of which is to contribute to fostering and facilitating international trade of selected beneficiary countries, in particular Customs Administrations.

From 16 to 18 March 2021, USAID held an online regional workshop entitled “Improving the implementation of the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement through mutual cooperation”. The event was attended by representatives of national trade facilitation committees of the Western Balkan, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Ukraine and Moldova. In a separate session dedicated to sharing experiences in the work of trade facilitation committees, the NTFB Secretary presented the achievements and challenges in the work of Serbia’s NTFB.

5. Coordination of the preparation of responses to trade facilitation research inquiries conducted by international organisations

In early June 2020, the UNECE Secretariat presented the first draft of its study on regulatory and procedural barriers to trade in Serbia. The NTFB Secretariat coordinated the preparation of comments, suggestions and additional contributions by institutions responsible for specific parts of the draft study and, after their compiling, on 25 June 2020 it forward the material to the UNECE Secretariat for further action. In this context, we took part in the UNECE Steering Committee held on 29 June 2020 via an electronic platform. Among other issues, the meeting addressed the presentation of findings which will be set out in the aforementioned UNECE study.

Interdepartmental harmonisation of the text of the UNECE Study on Regulatory and Procedural Barriers to Trade in Serbia was completed in January 2021. Final publishing of the study by the UNECE Secretariat has been postponed until June 2021, when it will be presented at the annual meeting of the UNECE Steering Committee on Trade Capacity and Standards.

In parallel with this, the NTFB submitted its comments on an additional document which will be incorporated in the final study, namely the report “Impact of COVID-19 on Trade and Structural Transformation in Micro, Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises”. The report was compiled as a result of the UNECE questionnaire, which was conducted in cooperation with the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Serbia.

As part of the commitments stemming from this project, on 10 February 2021 the NTFB Secretary submitted answers via an electronic platform to the UNECE Secretariat to questions concerning project evaluation from the NTFB's point of view as the beneficiary.

Within the framework of the USAID project dealing with economic development, governance and entrepreneurship growth, an online meeting was held on 15 June 2020 with the representatives of this project tasked with evaluating the implementation of the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement. The NTFB Secretary provided information on the operation of this body and proceeded to fill out the relevant questionnaire concerning the implementation of key provisions of the Trade Facilitation Agreement, focusing on the institutional infrastructure Serbia has established in this field.

6. Informing the public and businesses on any unilateral trade facilitation measures taken and measures arising from the implementation of international agreements

In view of the global COVID-19 pandemic, the NTFB's activities from March to the end of May 2020 focused as a matter of priority on providing additional information to interested economic operators in connection with international trade, which was burdened by various measures imposed by nearly all parties in the region, as well as EU Member States.

To introduce the private sector to the concept of Green Lanes and the experiences with its implementation to date, on 23 June 2020 AmCham Serbia held the online conference "Green lanes – the path to faster foreign trade?". The conference was attended by members of the NTFB, who presented the mechanism and its implementation in the panel discussion and answered the questions of interested private sector representatives.

The Chairperson and Secretariat of the NTFB took part in an online meeting held on 12 November 2020 between representatives of the Ministry of Trade, Tourism and Telecommunications and AmCham Serbia. The agenda of the meeting included an overview of key activities within the Ministry's competence. The Chairperson of the NTFB presented the key results of NTFB's activities and underscored that certain progress had been made, notwithstanding the difficulties faced, especially in the circumstances of the COVID-19.

3. ASSESSMENTS BY INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS OF NTFB'S WORK AND TRADE FACILITATION IN SERBIA

The progress achieved in Serbia as a result of activities carried out within the framework of the NTFB has also been noted by international organisations. Thus, the Third UN Global Survey on Digital and Sustainable Trade Facilitation for 2019 states that Serbia's score on compliance with trade facilitation measures was 61.29%, which was a major improvement compared with previous reports, when the country scored significantly lower (in 2015 the score was 36.56%, while in 2017 it was 38.71%). The Global Survey is published every two years and provides an overview of 128 economies worldwide, based on an analysis of application of 53 measures to implement the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement. In this context, on 23 February 2021, the NTFB submitted to the relevant UNECE secretariat the completed comprehensive Questionnaire for the Fourth UN Global Survey on Digital and Sustainable Trade Facilitation. Completion of the Questionnaire was coordinated by the NTFB Secretariat, based on the material provided by the competent NTFB members. Preliminary results should be available in June 2021.

Progress was also noted in World Bank's **Tracking Tool**, which monitors the implementation of the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement. According to the Tracking

Tool, Serbia's level of compliance with its commitments increased to 78% in 2018, as opposed to 65% in 2014.

4. SESSIONS OF THE NATIONAL COORDINATION BODY

4.1. Sessions of the National Coordination Body and meetings of Expert Working Groups

Since measures to contain the spread of COVID-19 were in force throughout the reporting period, the NTFB did not hold classic sessions during this period. The members had extensive electronic and telephone communication during the state of emergency, in particular with representatives of business organisations. In the remainder of the reporting period, the NTFB Secretariat maintained bilateral contacts with the chairpersons of different Expert Working Groups, on the basis of which it took stock of the situation regarding the implementation of specific Action Plans, and exchanged opinions on the most significant obstacles to specific trade facilitation activities. Regular contacts and exchanges of information were also held with representatives of the private sector, in particular the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Serbia and AmCham Serbia.

Individual working groups operated in the same mode during this reporting period. The chairperson of each group maintained contact with the members and monitored the implementation of actions plans. In this period, NTFB members answered questions from the private sector, which mainly concerned foreign trade activities in the conditions of the pandemic.

5 . PUBLIC PRESENTATION

Activities of the National Coordination Body are public. Publicity is ensured by presenting the work of the National Coordination Body on its website, by issuing statements and public announcements and by taking part in conferences and other public events.

In relation to the above, the official web site of the NTFB has been made publicly available since December 2018 at the following internet address: <http://nktot.mtt.gov.rs/>.

The website provides all information concerning the activities of the NTFB and its Expert Working Groups and is regularly updated with latest information about the activities of this body. The launching of this web site at the beginning was supported by the USAID.

The structure of the NTFB web site which is available in two languages (in Serbian and in English) includes: the basic information on the NTFB, the legal framework, documents, meetings, Expert Working Groups, proposals and initiatives, regional cooperation, events and news, useful links and the contact page.

6. PLANNED ACTIVITIES

In the coming period, activities will be aimed at implementing the obligations set out in the 2020 and 2021 Action Plans, separately for each Expert Working Group. Specific activities will focus on the obligations arising from the implementation of CEFTA Additional Protocol 5, and further activities in cooperation with donors and international organisations have been planned with a view to implementing the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement and complying with other commitments assumed under regional and bilateral agreements.

The COVID-19 pandemic remains a major challenge and factor of uncertainty for successful implementation of the Action Plans in the coming period, especially as the measures put in place to contain the spread of the virus restrict movement of people and additionally impede movement of goods, which was already burdened with additional checks and delays since the migrant crisis began, in particular at the border crossing points with the EU. The NTFB will continue working towards facilitating foreign trade procedures through its planned activities and intensive contacts with key trade partners, as well as business organisations and companies.

It is necessary to strengthen the capacity within the NTFB, bearing in mind in particular that this is an additional activity and engagement for all the members, chairpersons of the working groups, as well as the for the representatives of the Ministry of Trade, Tourism and Telecommunications who are carrying out the work of the NTFB Secretariat, in addition to their regular obligations and tasks.

Annex 1 - ACTION PLAN OF THE NATIONAL TRADE FACILITATION BODY FOR 2020 and 2021

I –EXPERT WORKING GROUP FOR AGRICULTURE, SANITARY AND PHYTOSANITARY MEASURES

Chair: Milanka Davidovic, Head of Division, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management

The Expert Working Group on Agriculture, Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures deals with issues and proposes initiatives that contribute to the promotion and facilitation of foreign trade in agricultural and food products. Within the matters considered and proposed, the expert working group aims at ensuring that veterinary, sanitary and phytosanitary measures related to foreign trade in agricultural and food products are adopted and applied only to the extent necessary to protect human, animal or plant life or health and in a manner that does not constitute barriers in trade.

| Number | Planned activity | Measures for implementation of activities | Competent institutions | Result indicator |
|--------|---|--|--|--|
| 1. | Reducing the duration of import procedures for agricultural and food products | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enable electronic filing of requests for goods control and supporting documentation in order to improve import risk analysis • When sampling goods during the import, allow a random selection of authorized laboratories that can perform analyzes for all required parameters and are geographically closer, in order to shorten the time needed to obtain the results of analysis • Ensure effective electronic | Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management - Veterinary Directorate and Plant Protection Directorate, Ministry of Health, authorized accredited laboratories | <p>Assessment of the progress of Serbia on the basis of the Report of the European Commission and other relevant international organizations</p> <p><i>Online</i> modules for electronic submission of</p> |

| Number | Planned activity | Measures for implementation of activities | Competent institutions | Result indicator |
|--------|--|---|---|--|
| | | <p>communication between laboratories and competent inspectorates regarding sampling of goods and submitting the results of analysis.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publish on the website of the ministry responsible for agriculture or health updated lists of authorized laboratories according to the types of accredited analysis carried out • Establish an effective mechanism for supervision and control of authorized laboratories with the possibility to revoke authorization due to malpractice • Acceptance of test results from EU accredited laboratories and/or from countries with which agreements have been signed which, <i>inter alia</i>, regulate the acceptance of laboratory test results; publicize the list of these laboratories along with accredited methods on the Internet page of the ministry responsible for agriculture or health | | <p>requests for control and exchange of results of analysis with laboratories</p> <p>Number of signed and implemented agreements on recognition of laboratory test results</p> <p><i>Online</i> publication of the list of laboratories and accredited methods</p> |
| 2. | Establishing an effective risk analysis system for control of goods by all | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design and implementation of risk analysis models during import of goods based on European practice (taking into account the risk of the entity in terms of | Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water | Assessment of the progress of Serbia on the basis of the Report |

| Number | Planned activity | Measures for implementation of activities | Competent institutions | Result indicator |
|--------|---|--|--|--|
| | inspection authorities in order to reduce barriers and facilitate import and export | <p>conformity of goods with the prescribed requirements, good business practices and developed internal procedures for quality control)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perform analysis of the existing regulations and, if possible, identify measures and activities that would allow the application of risk analysis during control of agricultural and food products to GMO presence and radioactivity. • Develop and implement plans for official controls based on risk analysis • Develop internal rulebook for the conduct of inspectors • Assess the options available for introduction of IT tools for risk analysis and management when conducting border controls of goods and development of those tools • Training of inspectors on the use of risk analysis tools and implementation of official control plans based on risk analysis | <p>Management - Veterinary Directorate and Plant Protection Directorate, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self- Government (e- Inspector), Office for Information Technology and Electronic Governance</p> | <p>of the European Commission and other relevant international organizations</p> <p>Approved official plans of control based on risk assessment</p> <p>Number of organized training courses on the topic of risk analysis and number of participants</p> <p>Report on application of e-inspector</p> |
| 3. | Reducing the volume of required documentation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand the list of products for which mandatory decision on the fulfillment of | Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry | Amendments to the relevant regulations |

| Number | Planned activity | Measures for implementation of activities | Competent institutions | Result indicator |
|--------|--|--|---|--|
| | and formalities in import, export and transit | <p>the veterinary and sanitary requirements for import and transit is not required, or completely abolish these decisions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct the analysis of the existing regulations and, if possible, harmonize current practices with applicable regulations in such a way that a mandatory decision on the fulfillment of veterinary and sanitary conditions for import and transit is not applied to samples of product • Improve the implementation of international agreements affecting the marketing of agricultural and food products | <p>and Water Management - Veterinary Directorate and Plant Protection Directorate</p> | <p>and/or internal operational instructions (Veterinary Law and/or Rulebook on Conditions for Shipments for which Decision on Import or Transit is Not Required)</p> |
| 4. | Implementation of programs of harmonization and mutual recognition of documents and other trade facilitation initiatives for agricultural and food products, stipulated by Additional Protocol 5 to the CEFTA 2006 Agreement | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation in the work of the competent bodies of CEFTA in order to reach an agreement on harmonization and mutual recognition of documents in trade of agricultural and food products • Carrying out activities in relation to facilitation of trade in fruits and vegetables under the CEFTA 2006 Agreement | <p>Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management - Veterinary Directorate and Plant Protection Directorate, Ministry of Health</p> | <p>Positive assessment of the CEFTA Sub-Committee on Trade Facilitation</p> <p>Trade growth in the region</p> |

II EXPERT WORKING GROUP FOR TECHNICAL BARRIERS AND MEASURES WITH EQUAL EFFECTS IN TRADE

Chair: Zoran Bakic, Head of Group, Ministry of Economy, Sector for Product Quality and Safety

The Expert Working Group on Technical Barriers and Measures with Equal Effects in Trade deals with issues and proposes initiatives that contribute to the promotion and facilitation of foreign trade in industrial (non-food) products (including, among others, cosmetic products and other items for general use, medicines, medical devices, chemicals, mechanical and technical products of various kinds, toys, etc.). Within the matters and the initiatives considered, the expert working group shall ensure that technical regulations, standards and conformity assessment procedures are enacted and implemented without constituting unnecessary obstacles to trade.

| | Planned activity | Measures for implementation of activities | Competent institutions | Result indicator |
|----|--|---|--|--|
| 1. | Develop the analysis of the practice in the region regarding compulsory submission of conformity certificates at the time of import customs clearance with the aim to completely eliminate this type of control | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preparation of lists, product groups and required documents of conformity by competent authorities with the indication in which partners in the region or the EU such practice exists, and the reasons for obtaining such documents during import customs clearance With the involvement of the competent institutions and the private sector, the WG will conduct the analysis and develop the set of recommendations in order to reduce the number of products for which conformity documents are required at the time of import customs clearance | Ministry of Trade, Tourism and Telecommunications, Ministry of Construction, Transport and Infrastructure, Ministry of Mining and Energy, Ministry of Health, Customs Administration | Reduced volume of certain Annexes to the Decision on determining the goods which require certain documents for import, export or transit |

| | Planned activity | Measures for implementation of activities | Competent institutions | Result indicator |
|----|---|---|--|---|
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updating of the Decision on determining the goods which require certain documents for import, export or transit - Implementation of recommendations | | |
| 2. | Establishing an efficient system of risk analysis by the Sanitary Inspection in order to reduce barriers and facilitate import for companies with: good business practices, goods that comply with regulatory requirements, and developed internal procedures for safety and quality controls; | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analysis of the applicability of the available import risk analysis models (<i>e.g. model developed under WG1 for the import of products with short shelf life etc.</i>) to the Sanitary Inspection portfolio in the field of industrial non-food products Identification of the criteria for risk analysis and needs assessment Development of the plan for implementation of risk analysis in the process of import control of goods with necessary resources (financial, personnel, IT, etc.). Adoption and application of measures necessary for implementation of risk analysis | Ministry of Health Sanitary Inspection | Functional risk assessment at the arrival of each consignment at the border, and decision on sampling on the basis of risk assessment |
| 3. | Furtherharmonization of technical regulations with the | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publication of the complete list of Serbian standards (EU list) in the area of construction products, that is, the list of standards that will | Ministry of Construction, Transport and Infrastructure | List of standards as prescribed by the Law on Construction Products |

| | Planned activity | Measures for implementation of activities | Competent institutions | Result indicator |
|---|------------------|--|---|------------------|
| | EU legislation | accompany the legal act on construction products | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the domain of products of general use - adoption and regular updating of regulations in line with changes to the EU legislation, in particular: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Drafting of the by-laws for materials and objects in contact with food, in accordance with the EU legislation - Drafting of the by-laws regulating the regime for tobacco products and accessories, in accordance with the EU legislation - Drafting of by-laws regulating the import regime of detergents, biocides, etc. in accordance with the EU legislation - WG to participate in the public debate, or provide opinion on drafts of these acts (taking into account the EU legislation and the examples of good practice) | | Sanitary Inspection, Ministry of Health | Regulations adopted pursuant to the Law on Items of General Use | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revoking the obligation to obtain a certificate of conformity issued by the designated conformity assessment body in the field of low voltage electrical equipment, | | Ministry of Economy | Amended Regulations (Rulebook on Electrical Equipment Intended for Use within Certain Voltage Limits, | |

| | Planned activity | Measures for implementation of activities | Competent institutions | Result indicator |
|--|------------------|--|--|--|
| | | <p>electromagnetic compatibility and machinery (LVD, EMC and MD)</p> | | <p>Rulebook on Electromagnetic Compatibility, Rulebook on Machine Safety)</p> |
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transposition of the new EU Directive on Radio Devices (RED), prompt publication of the list of Serbian standards in the field of radio equipment (and telecommunication terminal equipment), revision of the validity period of the certificate of conformity, with the aim of abolishing it. • Development of the Instructions / Guide / Interpretation for the Customs Administration, Market Inspectorate and designated conformity assessment bodies regarding the validity of certificates of conformity and training of competent officials and the private sector | <p>Ministry of Trade, Tourism and Telecommunications, Designated Conformity Assessment Body RATEL, Market Inspection, Designated Conformity Assessment Bodies, Ministry of Economy</p> | <p>Amended regulations and publication of the Rulebook on Radio Equipment (withdrawal of the Rulebook on Radio and Telecommunications Terminal Equipment)</p> <p>Published updated list of Serbian standards in the field of radio equipment (and telecommunication terminal equipment)</p> <p>Instructions/Guide/Interpretation for the Customs Administration, Market Inspectorate and designated conformity assessment bodies and commercial entities regarding</p> |

| | Planned activity | Measures for implementation of activities | Competent institutions | Result indicator |
|----|--|--|--|--|
| | | | | the validity of certificates of conformity |
| 4. | Eliminate delays in the registration of new medicines, renewal of registration and approval of promotional material, in accordance with the legal deadline | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modification of regulations in the field of permanent licenses – enable issuing of licenses for medicines that are registered on the market under the old rulebooks, in accordance with the EU regulations • Significant simplification of the procedure for medicines authorized for trade in the entire territory of the EU • Modification of the regulations related to promotional material - following the example of good practice from the EU, prescribe the obligation of prior approval only for the promotional material intended for lay audiences, while promotional material for professional audiences would be issued on the basis of the rulebook without prior approval, but with the possibility of subsequent control by inspections • Preparation of the annual reports of the Medicines and Medical Devices | Medicines and Medical Devices Agency of Serbia Ministry of Health | <p>Issuing of registration for new medicines, and renewal of registration within legal deadline</p> <p>Simplified procedure for promotional materials</p> <p>Annual report with a positive assessment regarding the elimination or reduction of delays</p> <p>Analysis of the amount of tariffs in terms of the cost of the service provided</p> |

| | Planned activity | Measures for implementation of activities | Competent institutions | Result indicator |
|----|---|--|---|--|
| | | <p>Agency of Serbia on the time necessary for resolving individual requests for registration, renewal and issuance of promotional materials indicating whether there were breaches of legal deadlines</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis of the amount of administrative tariffs of the Medicines and Medical Devices Agency of Serbia (with the help of donor projects and suggestions of member business associations) | | |
| 5. | Acceptance of foreign certificates of conformity | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further promotion of the procedure for the recognition of foreign documents of conformity, in particular issued by notified conformity assessment bodies (notified conformity assessment bodies from the NANDO EU database), as well as accepting documents issued by accredited designated conformity assessment bodies from countries signatories of EA MLA (Multilateral Agreement on European Accreditation on Mutual Recognition, signed by the national accreditation bodies of an EA Member), when such a document confirms conformity with an EU | Member Institutions of the National Trade Facilitation Body, Market Inspection, Designated Conformity Assessment Bodies, Accredited Laboratories, Commercial Entities | <p>Number of concluded agreements/memoranda on acceptance of foreign documents of conformity</p> <p>Brochures published</p> <p>Number of trainings held and number of participants attending the trainings</p> |

| | Planned activity | Measures for implementation of activities | Competent institutions | Result indicator |
|--|------------------|---|------------------------|------------------|
| | | <p>technical regulation transposed in the Republic of Serbia for the purpose of placing goods on the market in the Republic of Serbia through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Signing of international agreements / memoranda on cooperation and acceptance of documents issued by accredited laboratories -Development of brochures and organization of trainings for all interested parties on the topic of acceptance of foreign certificates of conformity or test results, as well as regarding the legal possibility of drafting and issuing appropriate national documents of conformity for the product concerned without re-conducting the conformity assessment, with possible support from the civil sector (projects, organizations, associations, etc.) | | |

III – EXPERT WORKING GROUP FOR CUSTOMS PROCEDURES

Chair: Snezana Karanovic, Acting Assistant Minister, Ministry of Finance

The Expert Working Group for Customs Procedures deals with issues and proposes initiatives designed to enhance and facilitate customs procedures, broader application of simplified customs procedures for import, export and transit of goods, harmonization and increase of predictability in actions of customs authorities.

| | Planned activity | Measures for implementation of activities | Competent institutions | Result indicator |
|----|--|---|---|---|
| 1. | Mutual recognition and promotion of Authorized Economic Operator (AEO) Program | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of the Agreement on Mutual Recognition of Authorized Economic Operators for Safety and Security (AEOS) with North Macedonia <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Development of protocols for validation of mutual recognition of AEOS - Implementation of the validation procedure in order to confirm equivalence of the legislation and implementation of the AEO programs of the signatory states - Establishing mandatory exchange of information regarding the AEOS through the SEED system • Preparatory activities for the purpose of conclusion of agreements on mutual recognition of AEO programs with the PR China and/or other | Customs Administration, Ministry of Finance | <p>Signed protocol for validation of mutual recognition of AEOS with North Macedonia</p> <p>Expedited flow of goods and reduced retention time of cargo vehicles at border crossings with North Macedonia for AEOS status holders</p> <p>Number of concluded agreements on mutual</p> |

| | Planned activity | Measures for implementation of activities | Competent institutions | Result indicator |
|----|---|---|--|--|
| | | <p>countries where there is an economic interest</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design and protection of the logo for the national program of the authorized economic operators • Further promotion and training of the private sector with regard to the procedure for obtaining the status of authorized economic operator, benefits for status holders, as well as concluded mutual recognition agreements | | <p>recognition of AEO programs</p> <p>Number of trainings and events held on the topic of authorized economic operators and number of participants attending the trainings</p> |
| 2. | Acceleration of flow of goods at the Preševno-Tabanovce border crossing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishment of a separate entry and exit lane for cargo vehicles in TIR and T1 (common transit) procedures, companies with AEO status, and for the transport of perishable goods | Customs Administration, Ministry of Finance, Member Institutions of the National Trade Facilitation Body, Coordination Body for Border Crossings | <p>Accelerated flow of goods at the border and reduced retention time of trucks at border crossings</p> <p>(progress verification mechanism based on the Time Release Study and the World Bank's <i>Doing Business</i> List, <i>Trading Across Border Indicator</i>)</p> |

| | Planned activity | Measures for implementation of activities | Competent institutions | Result indicator |
|----|---|---|---|--|
| 3. | Improve the auction process for the sale of customs goods | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishment of an electronic auction system for sale of goods confiscated by a final decision in a customs misdemeanor procedure or goods waived by a party for the benefit of the State - Development of IT tools for conducting electronic auctions - Development of instructions and/or guidelines for conducting electronic auctions - Informing the public about the electronic auction system | Customs Administration, Ministry of Finance | The number of successfully completed electronic auctions for the sale of goods and the revenue generated from electronic auctions |
| 4. | Information technology connection between the Plant Protection Directorate of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management and the Customs Administration | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishment of an <i>on-line</i> electronic filing system for inspection by the Border Phytosanitary Inspection; • Defining a set of data to be shared between the Customs Administration and the Plant Protection Directorate; • Establishment of an <i>on-line</i> information exchange system between the Plant Protection Directorate and the Customs Administration; • Training of the officials from the Customs Administration, Plant Protection Directorate, as well as the private sector on new electronic tools | Customs Administration, Ministry of Finance Plant Protection Directorate, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management | <i>On-line</i> electronic filing system available Defined data set to be exchanged <i>On-line</i> data exchange system available Reduction of the average time required to issue the documents by the Plant Protection Directorate , as well as the time required to complete customs |

| | Planned activity | Measures for implementation of activities | Competent institutions | Result indicator |
|----|--|---|---|--|
| | | | | procedure for those goods |
| 5. | Information technology connection between the Directorate for Radiation and Nuclear Safety and Security and the Customs Administration | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Defining the data set to be submitted to the Customs Administration by the Directorate for Radiation and Nuclear Safety and Security; Establishment of the system for <i>on-line</i> connection between the Directorate for Radiation and Nuclear Safety and Security and the Customs Administration; Training of the officials of the Customs Administration and the Directorate for Radiation and Nuclear Safety and Security on new electronic tools | <p>Customs Administration, Ministry of Finance</p> <p>Directorate for Radiation and Nuclear Safety and Security</p> | <p>Defined data set to be exchanged</p> <p><i>On-line</i> system for the electronic data exchange available</p> <p>Reduction of the average time required for the document from the Directorate for Radiation and Nuclear Safety and Security to be available to participants in foreign</p> |

| | Planned activity | Measures for implementation of activities | Competent institutions | Result indicator |
|----|---|---|---|--|
| | | | | trade, as well as the time required to complete customs procedure for those goods |
| 6. | <p>Information technology connection of the Customs Administration with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Veterinary Directorate of the Ministry of Agriculture Forestry and Water Management; and • Border Sanitary Inspection, Ministry of Health (up to the level defined by the Customs Administration) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Defining the data set to be submitted to the Customs Administration by the Veterinary Directorate and Sanitary Inspection; • Establishing of the system for <i>on-line</i> connection • Training of the officers of the Customs Administration and the Veterinary Directorate and Sanitary Inspection | <p>Customs Administration, Ministry of Finance</p> <p>Veterinary Directorate, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management</p> <p>Sanitary Inspection, Ministry of Health</p> | <p><i>On-line</i> system for electronic filing of requests available</p> <p>Defined data set to be exchanged</p> <p><i>On-line</i> electronic filing system available</p> <p>Reduction of the average time required for issuing of documents by the Veterinary Directorate and Sanitary Inspection, as well as the time required to complete customs procedure for these goods</p> |
| 7. | Implementation of the Time Release Study | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of a mandatory procedure for measuring the time required for customs clearance and release of goods (<i>Time Release Study</i>) according to the methodology of the World | Customs Administration, Ministry of Finance; Ministry of Agriculture, | Publicized Time Release Study with results on average time required for |

| | Planned activity | Measures for implementation of activities | Competent institutions | Result indicator |
|----|--|--|--|--|
| | | <p>Customs Organization</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establishing of the Working Group and defining the scope of the Time Release Study - Development of Time Release Study questionnaires - Implementation of the Time Release Study at selected locations and for defined customs procedures - Entry, electronic processing and analysis of data and generation of the report with results and recommendations for improvement of procedures carried out by competent authorities - Informing the public of the results of the Time Release Study and publication of the report | <p>Forestry and Water Management - Veterinary Directorate, Plant Protection Directorate; Ministry of Health; Ministry of Internal Affairs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Border Police Directorate; Belgrade Airport; private sector representatives and terminal operators | <p>customs clearance and release of goods and recommendations for improvement</p> |
| 8. | Reducing the time required to issue binding tariff information decisions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishment of a system for <i>on-line</i> electronic submission of requests for issuing binding tariff information decision, and mandatory supporting documents • Establishment of an electronic (<i>backend</i>) system for storing and processing of submitted requests for issuing binding tariff information decision, generation of final binding tariff information decision, reports and the like, with automatic monitoring of the status of requests and validity of | <p>Customs Administration, Ministry of Finance</p> | <p><i>On-line</i> system for electronic filing of requests for issuing binding tariff information decisions available</p> <p>Reduction of the average time required to issue a binding tariff information upon receipt of a complete</p> |

| | Planned activity | Measures for implementation of activities | Competent institutions | Result indicator |
|----|--|--|---|--|
| | | <p>decisions and the possibility of advanced search, sorting and exporting of data in all segments of the system, by all the case properties being stored</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connecting the electronic backend system for processing requests and issuing binding tariff information decisions with the online electronic database of issued binding tariff information decisions, enabling automatic updating of the database of issued binding tariff information decisions • Training of the officials in the Customs Administration and the private sector on new electronic tools related to binding tariff information decisions | | request |
| 9. | Analysis of the current situation and undertaking of the measures and activities that will, enable electronic communication between commercial entities and the Payments Collection Department of the Customs Administration regarding collection of claims in relation to due customs duties, interest on late payments, repayment of | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction of an electronic registry office as needed <p>If necessary, drafting the necessary forms for electronic communication on the stated grounds with commercial entities, with identification of the necessary security levels of such documents</p> | Customs Administration, Ministry of Finance | Accelerated communication of commercial entities with the Payments Collection Department of the Customs Administration |

| | Planned activity | Measures for implementation of activities | Competent institutions | Result indicator |
|--|--|--|-------------------------------|-------------------------|
| | overpaid duties, re-entry of incorrect payments, warnings for settlement of customs debt and communication with the guarantor bank | | | |

IV – EXPERT WORKING GROUP FOR COORDINATION OF TRADE FACILITATION ACTIVITIES UNDER INTERNATIONAL AND REGIONAL TRADE AGREEMENTS

Chair: Tatjana Dinkic, Head of Group, Ministry of Trade, Tourism and Telecommunications

The Expert Working Group for Coordination of Trade Facilitation Activities under International and Regional Trade Agreements provides support to the structures envisaged by these agreements for coordination and prioritization of trade facilitation activities at the national level , with the goal to comply with good international and regional practices and to reduce the costs incurred by the private sector due to inefficient procedures.

| | Planned activity | Measures for implementation of activities | Competent institutions | Result indicator |
|----|---|--|--|--|
| 1. | Coordination and monitoring of implementation of commitments in the field of trade facilitation arising from the free trade agreements and cooperation with international organizations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitoring implementation of free trade agreements in the context of trade facilitation, specifically in relation to the SAA, CEFTA, EFTA, EEA and Turkey Coordination of the preparation of notifications under the CEFTA Additional Protocol 5 Participation in the WTO negotiations related to the WTO Agreement on Trade Facilitation and drafting of notifications according to the dynamics of Serbia's accession to this organization | Secretariat of the National Coordination Body for Trade Facilitation - MTT Member Institutions of the National Coordination Body for Trade Facilitation | Assessment of Serbia's progress on the basis of the European Commission Report and reports of other relevant international organizations, including independent studies on compliance with the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement - UN Global Review on Digital and Sustainable Trade Facilitation and / or the World Bank's Tracking Tool |
| 2. | Acceleration of the flow of goods at border crossings | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cooperation with the Border Crossings Coordination Body | National Coordination Body for Trade | Accelerated flow of goods at the border and reduced retention time of trucks at |

| | Planned activity | Measures for implementation of activities | Competent institutions | Result indicator |
|----|--|---|--|---|
| | through integrated border management, harmonization of working hours of border agencies and improvement of the infrastructure | <p>in order to resolve the problem of long retention of trucks at border crossings with Hungary and Croatia</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cooperation with the competent European Commission Directorate in order to secure more active role of the EU in resolving this problem, • Cooperation with the competent institutions of the CEFTA parties | Facilitation, Border Crossings Coordination Body, Serbian - Hungarian Joint Border Control Commission; Working Group on Infrastructure Extension at the Horgos Border Crossing | border crossings (progress verification mechanism based on the Time Release Study and <i>Trading Across Border Indicator</i> of the World Bank's <i>Doing Business</i> List) |
| 3. | Coordinating preparation of the Program of Mutual Recognition of documents submitted when importing and exporting goods stipulated by the Additional Protocol 5 of the CEFTA 2006 Agreement, as well as other trade facilitation initiatives under CEFTA | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuation of work within the competent authorities of CEFTA on reaching the regional agreement on mutual recognition of documents • Monitoring implementation of agreed programs (mutual recognition of AEO program, joint risk management and development of risk profiles) • Monitoring implementation of the Decision on Facilitating Trade in Fruit and Vegetables | Member Institutions of the National Coordination Body for Trade Facilitation | Positive assessment of the CEFTA Subcommittee on Trade Facilitation Trade growth in the region |

| | Planned activity | Measures for implementation of activities | Competent institutions | Result indicator |
|----|--|---|---|--|
| | | <p>in the CEFTA region</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordination of activities with regard to the possible extension of the scope of the Decision on Facilitating Trade in Fruits and Vegetables to all agricultural products | | |
| 4. | Establishing cooperation with the Committees on Trade Facilitation at bilateral and multilateral levels | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organization of joint activities, conferences, seminars for the purpose of experience sharing | Secretariat of the National Coordination Body for Trade Facilitation - MTTT | Annual Report of the Secretariat of the National Coordination Body for Trade Facilitation Body with indicators on the number of joint activities implemented |
| 5. | Coordination of the preparation of responses to trade facilitation research inquiries conducted by international organizations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparation of responses to the questionnaires and surveys of international institutions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - UN Global Survey on Digital and Sustainable Trade Facilitation - Other questionnaires (UNCTAD, UNECE, World Bank) | Secretariat of the National Coordination Body for Trade Facilitation - MTTT/Member Institutions of the National Trade Facilitation Body | Assessment of Serbia's progress on the basis of the reports of relevant international organizations |
| 6. | Informing the public and business representatives about | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organization of seminars, roundtables and conferences for representatives of the | Secretariat of the National Coordination Body for | Number of activities held and number of participants at seminars and workshops |

| | Planned activity | Measures for implementation of activities | Competent institutions | Result indicator |
|--|---|--|--|---|
| | the implementation of unilateral trade facilitation measures as well as those arising from the international agreements | <p>business community and administration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation in workshops organized by international organizations • Regular updating of the website of the National Coordination Body for Trade Facilitation -in order to inform interested and professional public in a timely and accurate manner in accordance with the principles of transparency and availability of information • Ensuring donor support for implementation of these activities | <p>Trade Facilitation - MTTT/Member</p> <p>Institutions of the National Coordination Body for Trade Facilitation -</p> | <p>The number of new posts on the website of the National Coordination Body for Trade Facilitation and the increase in the number of visitors of the website of the National Coordination Body for Trade Facilitation</p> |