

CEFTA MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEM

BACKGROUND

The availability of reliable, timely and comparable trade related information and data is an important factor for the implementation and monitoring of CEFTA. Economic operators benefit from having user-friendly information on issues such as sanitary and phytosanitary regulations and technical standards. Policymakers benefit from accurate trade data and statistics to assess the impact of CEFTA on economic development and to make policy decisions.

At present, while there are several publicly available trade related data for individual CEFTA Parties, very little is processed for the region and none of the data is analysed from the perspective of monitoring the implementation of CEFTA and its priorities.

Through various projects financed by different bilateral donors, the CEFTA Secretariat has developed some web-based information and transparency tools including a website and three different databases that enhance transparency - CEFTA Market Access Barriers Database, CEFTA SPS Database, CEFTA Trade Portal and CEFTA TBT Database (the last is under development). The Secretariat also prepares an annual statistics report based on national trade data, collected from the Statistical Offices of CEFTA Parties.

These activities have made valuable information available to many CEFTA stakeholders, but they have required considerable effort and resources - for example all the data calculations on regional trade are done manually and the Secretariat does not have the information tools to disseminate the source data used for its calculations and trade statistics report. As different service providers have prepared the various transparency databas-

es there are some issues regarding maintenance and upgrading.

As the CEFTA Parties move ahead with their ambitious agenda to deepen the scale and scope of CEFTA, the availability of accurate, timely, transparent and relevant information and data becomes more important.

OBJECTIVE

The objective of the CEFTA Management Information System (MIS) project is to provide an integrated set of tools and information systems such that the CEFTA MIS acts as a "one-stop-shop" for trade related data for all CEFTA stakeholders. Moreover, in addition to facilitating the monitoring of CEFTA implementation, the CEFTA MIS would support the monitoring of implementation of the different elements of the SEE 2020 Strategy's Integrated Growth pillar that focuses on trade and investment.

ACTIONS AND ACTIVITIES

The activities under the project will lead to an integrated system that can collect, process, report and disseminate relevant information in a user-friendly manner.

- **Upgrading of databases and integration of additional data**

The existing databases will be upgraded. Relevant data extracted from SEED (System for Electronic Exchange of Data) databases and from other international and regional databases, and from national statistical offices will all be integrated.

- **Provision of analysis and reports**

Tailored software is to be developed to (i) extract data electronically from various national, regional

and international sources, (ii) process them automatically according to pre-defined parameters, and (iii) produce reports online. A menu of report options will be available to allow each user to create their own report according to their specific needs.

- **Basis for future regional system for exchange of information required by new commitments or in additional policy areas**

The CEFTA MIS can be considered a first step in the creation of an integrated regional system for exchange of information and provision of databases required as the Parties assume new obligations. For example the exchange of on-line and real time data necessary for the implementation of the Framework Agreement to be signed shortly between CEFTA Parties on the simplification of border procedures for different policy areas. The integrated system could also be extended to other policy areas.

IMPACT ON CEFTA

This project will strengthen regional information exchange among CEFTA Parties. It will make notification mechanisms more effective and will also help in benchmarking, thus supporting CEFTA structures in taking further action to strengthen the implementation of the Agreement.

Specifically it is expected to:

- Improve the capacity to monitor the implementation of CEFTA
- Enhance transparency in the implementation of CEFTA
- Provide better support for negotiations and decision making of the CEFTA Structures
- Strengthen coordination and complementarity between regional and country-specific projects

SUMMARY PROJECT INFORMATION

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| Dates: | March 2016 - March 2017 |
| Budget: | € 300,000 |
| Partners: | CEFTA Statistics Offices |
| Financiers: | CEFTA Project Facility/EU |
| Beneficiaries: | Ministries responsible for trade and investment, economic operators, academia |

CONTACT PERSON/FURTHER INFORMATION

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