



**UNITED NATIONS SPECIAL PROGRAMME FOR THE ECONOMIES OF CENTRAL ASIA
(SPECA)**

DRAFT SPECA WORK PLAN FOR 2023-2024

**(Ongoing, planned and possible UNECE and ESCAP activities in support of
the UN Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia (SPECA))**

TRADE DEVELOPMENT

In line with the overall objectives of SPECA to support its participating countries in developing subregional economic cooperation, integrating their economies into the world economy, and attaining the Goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the WG on Trade shall foster subregional cooperation to promote national and regional development of sustainable trade in the SPECA participating countries. To achieve this through subregional cooperation, the Working Group shall: (i) Provide a platform for supporting progress towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals through subregional cooperation in trade and trade facilitation with a focus on SDGs directly related to trade development, notably SDG 17 on partnerships, taking into account interlinkages between the SDGs; (ii) Assist in improving the awareness of SPECA countries on the trade-related SDGs; help provide information and share best practice experiences, taking into account interlinkages between the SDGs; (iii) Promote policy dialogue to support: trade policy cooperation among the SPECA countries and their trade negotiators; trade facilitation; aligning positions on sustainable trade, dealing with non-tariff measures, and investment policies; and (iv) Provide analysis and capacity-building in the areas of trade facilitation, sustainable trade development, regulatory harmonization, agricultural quality standards, elimination of non-tariff barriers to trade, investment, and other areas, including identification of funding modalities for SPECA activities.

The thematic orientation of the activities of the Working Group on Trade includes: (i) sustainable trade development among the countries in the region and with the main trading partners; (ii) trade facilitation and promotion of trade facilitation norms, standards and best practice recommendations; (iii) public-private cooperation for trade facilitation; (iv) regulatory harmonization, market surveillance and risk management; (v) agricultural commercial quality standards; (vi) investment and trade development; and (vii) other areas of competence of UNECE and ESCAP related to the development of trade, regional markets and harmonization of standards in these areas. The deliverables of the WG on Trade focus on five areas: (i) trade policy cooperation, including on the WTO negotiations; (ii) implementation of the SPECA Trade Facilitation Strategy; (iii) implementation of the SPECA Principles for Sustainable Trade; (iv) non-tariff measures and barriers to trade; and (v) digitalization of multimodal transport information exchange. The latter is an area, on which the WG is just starting to work.

TRADE DEVELOPMENT

Name of Project/Activity	Timeframe	Budget
--------------------------	-----------	--------

Ongoing and planned projects/activities with funding secured or expected. These activities will be implemented in mutually reinforcing way. Additional support from interested partners could expand the scope and the number of beneficiaries of these projects/activities		
Enhancing Regional and Global Value Chain Participation of Central Asian Countries to Support Sustainable Development in the Digital Era (ESCAP member states in North and Central Asia) <i>This project will support policymakers in selected NCA countries in preparing for and anticipating new trends and opportunities in GVCs and RVCs, post COVID-19, with potential for digitally enabled trade in goods and services.</i>	2023-2026	\$300,000
Enhancing the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development through strategic cooperation among the SPECA countries (implemented by UNECE ECT Division) <i>This project supports from UNECE's side the implementation of the work programme of SPECA (Thematic Working Group and annual meetings)</i>	2020-2024	\$250,000 (appr. \$125,000 remaining)
Building Cross-border Cooperation for Sustainable Trade in the SPECA subregion (implemented by UNECE ECT Division). <i>This project supports the implementation of the SPECA Principles of Sustainable Trade</i>	2021-2024	\$249,370
Strengthening the capacity of Central Asian countries to implement trade facilitation measures and better integrate into the international rules-based trading system (implemented by UNECE ECT Division). <i>This project supports the implementation of the SPECA Trade Facilitation Strategy</i>	2018-2022	\$191,000 Appr. \$50,000 remaining
UNDA project "Enhanced capacities of selected countries in the ECE region for pandemic-resilient, sustainable cross-border trade and transport" (implemented by UNECE ECT Division). <i>The project deals with the implementation of the package of standards for the digitalization of multimodal trade and transport data and document exchange. Part of it will support implementation pilot projects in the SPECA subregion.</i>	2022-2025	\$430,000