



## Webinar

### “The road to GPA accession: assessing Observer’s compliance with the mandatory requirements of the Agreement”

Tuesday, 24 November 2020  
Zoom Webinar ID: 881 3047 5859

#### **Background note**

The World Trade Organization plurilateral Agreement on Government Procurement (GPA) not only increases reciprocal market access commitments among its Parties but it also sets out minimum standards for conducting public procurement, ensuring the creation of open, non-discriminatory, and transparent procurement markets. Its latest renegotiation and revision in 2012 resulted in a modern text, which embraces and incentivizes the use of best practices in government procurement, at an international level. Accession to the GPA can, arguably, catalyse and reinforce broader reforms that improve overall governance and, ultimately, strengthen not only the economy but also the legitimacy of governments. To some extent, experience have shown that indeed countries have sought or seek to join the GPA with the derivative aim of improving governance and strengthening supplier competition in their own procurement markets through better and more inclusive market access opportunities. This growing interest in GPA accession demanded a more structured and ongoing cooperation between the EBRD and the WTO Secretariat, resulting in the EBRD GPA Technical Cooperation Facility.

Under the work of the Facility, EBRD experts have been tasked to assess the primary public procurement law (PPL) or existing draft legislation (draft PPL) of nine different economies<sup>1</sup> (under the region of operation of the Bank) against the mandatory minimum requirements of the GPA. The report, which includes Observers in the process of accession as well as economies with accession commitments, was developed by benchmarking each national public procurement legislation against the “*WTO GPA Compliance Questionnaire*”, a check list with more than 150 questions, developed by EBRD experts. The assessment report seeks to identify possible regulatory gaps with the text of the GPA in order to facilitate further consultations relating to accession negotiations. Though this exercise constitutes a preliminary diagnostic and does not constitute under any circumstance a binding opinion, notwithstanding, it provides groundwork for the alignment of the Observer’s government procurement regime with the minimum standards of the GPA, before or at the beginning of the accession process.

Building from this exercise, the EBRD seeks to continue its already in-place outreach programme by delivering an online session focused on presenting the results of this preliminary diagnostic. Subsequently, invited speakers will discuss and exchange information on general GPA compliance issues identified across the analysed jurisdictions in order to share common challenges as well as outline ways in which particular countries are addressing or expect to address certain raised issues throughout the GPA accession process. The broad objectives of the online session are:

- To familiarize participants with the GPA, notably as it relates to international trade, market access, and modern best standards in public procurement.
- To elaborate on the benefits of GPA ‘observer status’ as well as potential benefits and challenges of accession to the GPA;
- To discuss potential regulatory gaps vis-à-vis the text of the GPA and how to approach them, considering, for instance, the availability of transitional measures for developing countries.

The present webinar is organized for the benefit of government officials and other stakeholders interested in issues concerning GPA accession and regulatory compliance. Participation of government officials and key stakeholders is per invitation only, to be supplied through EBRD’s event management tool.

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<sup>1</sup> Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, Albania, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, North Macedonia, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan.



## Agenda

**Date:** Tuesday, 24 November 2020 – 11.00 UK time.  
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**11:00 – 11:10**

**Moderator**

*Ms Eliza Niewiadomska, Senior Counsel, Legal Transition Programme, EBRD*

**Opening Remarks & Launch of the EBRD GPA TC Facility Webpage**

*Mr Michel Nussbaumer, Director, Legal Transition Programme, EBRD*

*Mr Reto Malacrida, Counsellor and Head of the Government Procurement and Competition Policy Group, World Trade Organization*

**Session 1**

**Developing the Observer's compliance assessment report**

**11:10– 11:20**

**EBRD Commentators:**

*Dr. Dorina Harcenco, PH.D, Consultant, EBRD GPA TC Facility*

*Mr Eriks Mezalis, Consultant, EBRD GPA TC Facility*

*Ms Antonella Salgueiro, EBRD GPA TC Facility*

**Session 2**

**Countries in the process of accession: challenges and experiences**

**11:20 – 11:50**

**Experiences and insights from North Macedonia, the Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan**

*Mr Aleksandar Argirovski, Public Procurement Bureau of North Macedonia*

*Mrs Nurida Baizakova, Director of the State Procurement Department of Kyrgyz Republic*

*Mr Ravshan Karimov, Deputy Director of PPA, Tajikistan*

**Session 3**

**Jump-starting the accession process: countries with paused negotiations**

**11.50 – 12.10**

**Georgia's growing interest in the GPA**

*Mr Dimitri Gulisashvili, Head, Foreign Relations Dept., State Procurement Agency of Georgia*

*Mr Kakha Demetrashvili, Deputy Chairperson, State Procurement Agency of Georgia*

**Session 4**

**A growing interest in the Agreement: Brazil's current accession**

**12.10 - 12.20**

*Mr Murilo Lubambo de Melo, Trade Negotiator for Brazil's GPA accession*

**12.20 -12.30**

**Q&A**

**12.30**

**Closing remarks**