

# WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION

RESTRICTED

**WT/REG/W/14**

6 May 1997

(97-1952)

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## **Committee on Regional Trade Agreements**

### STANDARD FORMAT FOR INFORMATION ON ECONOMIC INTEGRATION AGREEMENTS ON SERVICES<sup>1</sup>

#### Note by the Chairman

The objective of the Standard Format for Information on Economic Integration Agreements on Services is to facilitate and standardize the provision of initial information by parties to regional trade agreements. Parties may adhere to the requirements of the Standard Format on a voluntary basis; in this respect, it should be viewed as the Chairman's guidelines on basic information that could be provided by parties notifying regional trade agreements to the WTO.

In line with the terms of reference adopted for the examination of economic integration agreements on services, the Standard Format constitutes a guide that could be followed to provide relevant information for the examination process. The information requested in this Standard Format does not prejudice the scope and coverage of the consistency aspect of the examination process, nor does it replace the requirement for parties to economic integration agreements on services to provide Members with all relevant texts of laws and trade data. Further, it does not preclude Members from posing questions in writing and seeking additional information from parties (Article V:7(a) of the GATS).

As the information sought in the Standard Format relates primarily to trade disciplines applied in accordance with the economic integration agreements, it is unlikely that there would be a duplication of the information submitted to other WTO Bodies. Nevertheless, in the event that were the case, Members could avoid any unnecessary administrative burden by cross-referencing other WTO documentation where relevant information is already recorded. The Secretariat would ensure the information is provided for the examination process.

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<sup>1</sup>The Committee on Regional Trade Agreements, at its meeting on 2 May 1997, took note of the Standard Format for Information on Economic Integration Agreements on Services.

**STANDARD FORMAT FOR INFORMATION ON  
ECONOMIC INTEGRATION AGREEMENTS ON SERVICES**

Chairman's Guidelines

**I. Background Information on the Agreement**

1. Membership and dates of signature, ratification and entry into force.
2. Type of agreement including a description of the structure of the agreement and the mechanism for the economic integration.  
Integration agreement, agreement including developing countries, agreement involving only developing countries, interim agreement.  
Plan and schedule.  
Relationship of the Agreement to any wider process of economic integration or trade liberalization and a description of that process and its aims.
3. Scope  
Sectors or sub-sectors and modes of delivery within each particular sector covered by, and excluded from, the Agreement. Ways, if relevant, in which these exclusions are achieved.  
Sectors, sub-sectors and modes of delivery to be covered by the Agreement at a later stage.
4. Economic and Trade data  
To the extent possible:
  - Data on trade in services among the parties to the agreement for the most recent period for which statistics are available, according to major sectors or sub-sectors covered by, and excluded from the Agreement and to different modes of delivery.
  - Data on trade in services between the parties to the agreement and the rest of the world for different representative periods.
  - Data on national product of the parties to the agreement in services sectors.

**II. Provisions Affecting Trade in Services**

1. Provisions of the agreement relating to the elimination of Article XVII inconsistent measures. Discriminatory restrictions in the sense of Article XVII of the GATS including measures inconsistent with both Articles XVI and XVII currently in place among the parties, and the time-frame or schedule foreseen in the Agreement for their dismantling. Restrictions that will remain in effect after the Agreement is fully implemented.
  - 1.1 Treatment of Services and Services Providers from Third Countries.  
Methodology for establishing a common treatment in relation to third countries is relevant. Information on negotiations under Article V:5 of the GATS where applicable, and in particular proposed modifications to the schedules of specific commitments.

2. Rules of origin

Criteria used for the purpose of determining the origin of services or service suppliers:

- Conditions required to secure the legal recognition of a juridical person of a party to the agreement. Criteria which specify the notion of "substantive business operations".
- Criteria and procedures used under Article V:6.
- Where applicable, nature of the treatment granted by developing Members as provided for under Article V:3(b), as regards their national and the third country suppliers.
- Changes, if any, in the criteria used for the purpose of determining the origin of services or service suppliers (from the parties or from third countries) introduced as a result of the implementation of the Agreement.

3. Standards/Recognition

What provisions are there in the agreement relating to qualification requirements and procedures, technical standards and licensing requirements? How are the parties to the agreement going about the recognition of their standards or criteria for the authorization, licensing or certification of service suppliers (from the parties or from third countries)?

4. Safeguards

Description of any emergency measures and other safeguard mechanisms contained in the Agreement (e.g. balance-of-payments difficulties, developmental matters, special safeguards). Information on whether the parties intend to apply a common safeguard regime to services or service suppliers from third parties. Information on whether the Agreement provides for the exclusion of parties to the Agreement from safeguard measures applied to third parties.

5. Subsidies and State-aid

Description of any treatment provided for in the Agreement relating to subsidies and State-aid, and an indication of the remedies available under the Agreement to counter their effects on intra-trade.

6. Description of any treatment provided for in the Agreement relating to government procurement.

7. Sector-specific provisions

To the extent not covered elsewhere, specific provisions applicable to any trade in individual services sectors. Information on whether the parties intend to apply any common sector-specific regime to services or service providers from third countries.

### III. General Provisions of the Agreement

1. Exceptions and reservations

General and security exceptions provided for in the Agreement. Reservations entered into by any of the parties to the Agreement.

2. Accession

Information on any provision allowing other countries to accede to the Agreement.

3. Dispute settlement procedures

Description of the mechanisms provided for resolving disputes among parties to the Agreement, and its relationship with intergovernmental dispute settlement instruments entered into by the parties under other bilateral, plurilateral and/or multilateral agreements.

4. Relation with other trade agreements  
Information relating to whether or not the Agreement establishes any specific relation with other bilateral, plurilateral and/or multilateral trade agreements.
5. Institutional framework  
Structure and functions of intergovernmental and/or supranational institutions created to operate the Agreement. Responsibilities of national entities for formulating and implementing policies relating to the Agreement.

#### **IV. Other**

For transparency purposes, any other relevant information related to the provisions of the Agreement.