

Turkey Ratifies World Trade Organization Trade Facilitation Agreement

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Turkey has ratified a World Trade Organization ("**WTO**") agreement establishing an international framework to reduce trade costs. Two thirds of WTO members must complete domestic ratification before the framework will enter into effect.

Turkey ratified the Protocol Amending the Marrakesh Agreement Establishing the World Trade Organization ("**Protocol**") and the Agreement on Trade Facilitation ("**Agreement**") via Council of Ministers Decision number 2016/8570, published in Official Gazette number 29644 on 5 March 2016.

The Agreement aims to minimize formalities, as well as facilitate and harmonize transactions and procedures which goods are subject to, from productions through to consumers. It particularly focuses on customs duties. The Agreement aims to develop foreign trade infrastructure and strengthen logistics infrastructure via information technologies and automatization.

The Agreement includes the following scope:

- Section I outlines provisions to expedite movement, release and clearance of goods, including goods in transit. It also sets out provisions for customs cooperation.
- Section II outlines provisions which allow developing and least-developed countries to determine when they will implement individual Agreement provisions, as well as identify provisions which these countries will only be able to implement with technical assistance and support for capacity building.
- Section III establishes a permanent WTO committee on trade facilitation and requires members to have a national committee to facilitate the Agreement's domestic coordination and implementation.

Please see this [link](#) for the full text of the ratification decision (only available in Turkish), as well as full texts of the Protocol and Agreement (both in Turkish and English).

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