

ALBANIA IN THE WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION: COMMITMENTS AND CHALLENGES

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Abstract

Albania joined the World Trade Organization (WTO) on September 8, 2000, aiming at a more active participation of the country in the multilateral trade system; the expansion of the internal market and creation of a more attractive environment to foreign investment; the commitment to good governance through the rule of law ensuring the adherence to the rules of the game that cannot change according to wishes; establishing the foundations for the achievement of economic and commercial standards with a view to joining the European Union as well as a fair and more favorable treatment of domestic and foreign commercial operators. This paper aims to primarily describe the Albanian commitments under the WTO which consist in three main areas: goods trade, service trade, intellectual property as well as two dimensions: the alignment of the Albanian legislation with that of the WTO and the Albanian concrete offer in each of the above mentioned areas. However, in order to create a more comprehensive view, the paper also describes the transparency commitments related to multilateral agreements. WTO represents a multilateral trading system based on principles and rules expressed in a full legal package, according to which each member state enjoys its rights and owes obligations. In fulfillment of the commitments stemming from the membership of the WTO, the Albanian government has reduced the customs duty rates which has led to increasing trade exchange with the WTO member countries. In this context, honoring the commitments is a matter of particular significance to Albania.

Key Words: World Trade Organisation, agreement, commitments, trade system, Albania