

DECISION OF THE JOINT COMMITTEE OF THE CENTRAL EUROPEAN FREE TRADE AGREEMENT

No. 4/2025

**amending Decision No. 1/2015 on the Establishment of CEFTA Bodies and
Decision No. 5/2014 on the Establishment of the Sub-Committee on Trade in Services**

Adopted on 6 March 2025

The Joint Committee,

Having regard to Article 40.2 and 40.4 of Annex 1 to the Agreement on Amendment of and Accession to the Central European Free Trade Agreement (hereinafter "CEFTA 2006"), done in Bucharest on 19 December 2006;

Having regard to Article 41(5) of the CEFTA 2006, which empowers the Joint Committee to establish appropriate organs such as working groups, task forces, subcommittees and other bodies it considers necessary to assist it in accomplishing its tasks;

Having regard to Decision No. 1/2015 on the Establishment of CEFTA Bodies and to Decision No. 5/2014 on the Establishment of the Sub-Committee on Trade in Services and Amendment of the Decision No. 4/2010;

With the objective to ensure the continuous and efficient functioning of the CEFTA Bodies, as well as the full implementation of the Agreement and the Additional Protocols to the Agreement;

With the objective to adjust the relevant CEFTA structures to respond to new priorities related to the implementation of the CEFTA 2006;

Having regard to the recent activities relating to statistics;

Has decided as follows:

Article 1

Amendment of Decision No. 1/2015

- (1) In Article 1, paragraph 2, of Decision No. 1/2015 on the Establishment of CEFTA Bodies under "Sub-committee on Trade in Services and its working groups as below", the reference to the "Working Group on Trade in Services Statistics, FATS and FDI Statistics" shall be deleted.
- (2) In Article 1, paragraph 2, under "Sub-committee on Trade in Services and its working groups as below", a reference to "Working Group on Statistics" shall be added.
- (3) In Article 4, the following text shall be added:

“This Decision was amended by Decision No. 4/2025, adopted on 6 March 2025, in the presence of representatives of all CEFTA Parties”.

- (4) The Annex to this Decision providing the Terms of Reference for the Working Group on Statistics shall be added as a new Annex 12 to Decision No. 1/2015.
- (5) The CEFTA Secretariat shall make available a consolidated version of Decision No. 1/2015 of the CEFTA Joint Committee.

Article 2

Amendment of Decision No. 5/2014

- (1) In Article 1(2) of Decision No 5/2014 on the Establishment of the Sub-Committee on Trade in Services and Amendment of the Decision No. 4/2010, adopted on 21 November 2014, as amended, sub-paragraph (ii) shall be deleted.
- (2) Annex 2 to Decision No. 5/2014 shall be deleted.
- (3) The CEFTA Secretariat shall make available a consolidated version of Decision No. 5/2014 of the CEFTA Joint Committee.

Article 3

Entry into force

This decision shall enter into force on the day of its adoption.

This decision was adopted in Pristina, on 6 March 2025, in the presence of representatives of all CEFTA Parties.

Annex

Terms of Reference for the Working Group on Statistics

1. TITLE

The title of the Working Group is “Working Group on Statistics”.

2. TASK

The task of the Working Group on Statistics (hereinafter referred to as Working Group) is to improve statistical cooperation between CEFTA Parties, to ensure a higher quality of data and metadata sharing between CEFTA Parties, and to foster the methodological harmonization of statistics with that of the European Union.

3. MEMBERSHIP

- (1) The Working Group shall consist of two representatives of each CEFTA Party. The representatives are selected by CEFTA Parties from relevant statistical bodies so as to fully cover the statistical area considered, namely trade in goods statistics, trade in services statistics, Foreign Affiliates statistics (hereinafter referred to as FATS), and Foreign Direct Investments statistics (hereinafter referred to as FDI).
- (2) The representatives from each CEFTA Party shall actively participate in performing the tasks and functions of this Working Group.
- (3) Experts from CEFTA Parties or from outside of CEFTA Parties, as well as representatives of small and medium-sized enterprises, may be invited to attend the meetings at the request of the Chair of the Working Group to provide advice or introduce best practices where needed. Invited experts have no rights in decision making and may be asked to leave the meeting at any time by the Chair.
- (4) The Working Group may decide to benefit from technical consultancy contracted by the CEFTA Secretariat. Consultants hired by the CEFTA Secretariat may attend the meetings upon the instructions of the Chair to provide their advice where needed.
- (5) The Working Group shall make recommendations by consensus of all members. If a member is absent from the meeting, he/she should communicate its position in writing within a period of no longer than 20 working days from the date of a receipt of a request. If no position is communicated within the set period, it shall be deemed that the member concerned has no objection and agrees to proceed further.
- (6) A member of the Working Group shall cease to be a member if:
 - (a) He/she resigns from employment in the body covering the statistical area as referenced in paragraph 1 of this Section; or
 - (b) He/she fails to attend 3 consecutive meetings without informing the Chair and securing an appropriate replacement; or

(c) On his/her own request.

4. CHAIRPERSON

- (1) The Party chairing the Sub-committee on Trade in Services shall chair the Working Group.
- (2) The Chair shall:
 - (a) Schedule meetings and notify the members;
 - (b) Invite guest experts to attend the meetings when required by members;
 - (c) Guide the meetings and other activities during chairing; and
 - (d) Ensure all discussion items end with a decision, action, or definite outcome.

5. MINUTES TAKING

The CEFTA Secretariat shall take notes and draft minutes of the meetings within 10 working days from the day of the meeting. Recipients of the meeting minutes/conclusions shall have 10 working days to submit comments. If no comments are submitted, the minutes shall be considered final. Recipients shall provide constructive comments aimed at exercising the functions of this Working Group.

6. MEETINGS

The Working Group shall meet as necessary but at least once per year.

7. FUNCTIONS

The specific functions of the Working Group are:

- (a) Coordination and cooperation between CEFTA Parties in relation to trade related statistics;
- (b) Ensuring the conditions for a continuous methodological convergence of trade-related statistics produced by the CEFTA Parties aligning them to the methodological standards of the EU and fostering the comparability of these statistics;
- (c) Ensuring a smooth and regular data and metadata transmission from CEFTA Parties to the CEFTA Secretariat with the goal of promoting the CEFTA statistical portal as an information tool for the wide public, policy makers and businesses in the CEFTA Parties;
- (d) Defining the characteristics and parameters of the trade-related statistics to be transmitted by the CEFTA Parties to the CEFTA Secretariat on a monthly, quarterly and annual basis;
- (e) Reviewing the quality and coverage of available trade in goods statistics, trade in services statistics, FATS and FDI statistics, proposing appropriate solutions for improvements and identifying priorities for further developing trade related statistics;
- (f) Agreeing on a Pluriannual Action Plan for Cooperation on Trade-related Statistics to foster the comparability of the statistics produced by the CEFTA Parties in relation to trade in goods on one hand and trade in services, FDI and FATS on the other;

- (g) Fostering the exchange of experiences and needs between compilers of data and users of statistics;
- (h) Identifying needs in terms of further targeted technical assistance, defining and proposing the topics of regional trainings and exchange of best practices in order to improve the quality and uniformity of trade-related statistics within CEFTA;
- (i) Defining the programmes of mirror and reconciliation exercises among CEFTA Parties on an annual basis;
- (j) Formation of various ad-hoc expert groups within the Working Group, focused on the different data development and exchange issues or any methodological topic of interest to the compilation of harmonized trade in goods statistics and trade in services, FDI and FATS. The Working Group decides on the composition, organization, mandate and duration of each expert group at the time of formation.

8. ACCOUNTABILITY AND REPORTING

The Working Group shall report to the Sub-committee on Trade in Services on the progress achieved.