

PRESS RELEASE

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ESTONIA TO BECOME 135th MEMBER OF WTO

WTO accession negotiations for Estonia concluded successfully today after the WTO's General Council adopted Estonia's Working Party Report and Protocol of Accession.

The WTO's General Council concluded that the Working Party on Estonia's accession had completed its work on the package of accession documents (Working Party Report, Protocol of Accession, and Market Access Schedules of Concessions on Goods and Services) allowing Estonia to sign the accession protocol. Estonia will become the WTO's 135th Member 30 days after it notifies the WTO Secretariat that it has completed its national ratification proceedings.

The working party on Estonia's accession to the WTO was established in March 1994 and was transformed into a WTO Working Party in 1995. The Working Party met for the first time in November 1994. In April 1999 it adopted by consensus the draft report, protocol of accession and the schedules of concessions on goods and services. Estonia has agreed to bring its economic and trade regime into conformity with WTO rules and obligations in all areas. It will sign on to all multilateral and plurilateral agreements, i.e. the government procurement agreement and the agreement on trade in civil aircraft, without any transition periods.

The following 30 governments have requested to join the WTO and their applications are currently being considered by accession working parties: Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Cambodia, People's Republic of China, Croatia, Georgia, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lithuania, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Moldova, Nepal, Oman, Sultanate of, Russian Federation, Samoa, Saudi Arabia, Seychelles, Sudan, Chinese Taipei, Tonga, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu and Vietnam.

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