



WORLD TRADE
ORGANIZATION



WTO SCHEDULES OF CONCESSIONS ON GOODS

Did you know?

- ▶ Schedules are an integral part of WTO legal texts and each Member must have one for goods and another one for services.
- ▶ While most Schedules were established during the Uruguay Round in 1994, others have resulted from accessions to the WTO.
- ▶ There are 138 active Schedules for the 166 WTO Members. The European Union has a single Schedule for all its Member States.
- ▶ Schedules are identified by a unique Roman numeral which has been assigned according to the moment in which they joined the GATT or the WTO. The first one is “Schedule I – Australia” and the most recent is “Schedule CLXXVIII (178) – Timor-Leste”.
- ▶ 93 of the Schedules are written in English, 26 in French, and 19 in Spanish. The content is never translated.

What is a Goods Schedule?

WTO Goods Schedules are legal instruments that describe the treatment a Member commits to provide to the trade of other WTO Members. They are one of the main WTO tools to ensure transparency, security, and predictability for world trade.

Schedules result from negotiations among Members, both in the multilateral (among all WTO Members) and plurilateral (among some Members) context.

All Goods Schedules include “bound duties”, i.e. maximum tariffs that can be applied by a Member for a particular product, as well as other non-tariff concessions. They also reflect Members’ commitments limiting subsidies for agricultural products.

Although practitioners typically refer to “*the Schedule*” of a Member, these concessions and commitments can be spread out over several legal instruments that, together, set out that Member’s obligations.

Most Goods Schedules have changed considerably since the Uruguay Round of trade talks were concluded in 1994.

A Member’s Goods Schedule can be contained in several legal instruments



Why do Schedules change?

700+ changes
to Goods Schedules

Goods Schedules constantly change due to “rectifications” and “modifications”, which can result from several different procedures.

These include updates to reflect changes in the tariff classification used by Members, so that the tariffs applied by the customs administration of a Member can be easily compared with its WTO obligations.

New tariff concessions have also been added over time, for instance, because some Members joined the Information Technology Agreement (ITA). More recently, some Members have modified their Schedules pursuant to the Nairobi Decision on the elimination of export subsidies on agricultural products. Other changes to Schedules can result from modifications to concessions following renegotiations under GATT Article XXVIII, or simply corrections of errors.

To formally introduce changes in the legal text of the Schedules, Members shall follow specific procedures for the modifications and rectifications of Schedules which were adopted by the GATT Contracting Parties in 1980.

The 1980 Procedures for the modification and rectification of Schedules

The large majority of changes to Goods Schedules take place under the so-called 1980 Procedures for the modification and rectification of Schedules.

Under these procedures, all WTO Members have an opportunity to review the proposed changes and to approve them if there are no objections. In the absence of any objections, the proposed changes are “certified” by the WTO Director-General.

To date, 97% of such procedures have been successfully concluded.



The Member submits a draft with the proposed modification or rectification



The WTO Secretariat circulates the draft to all WTO Members



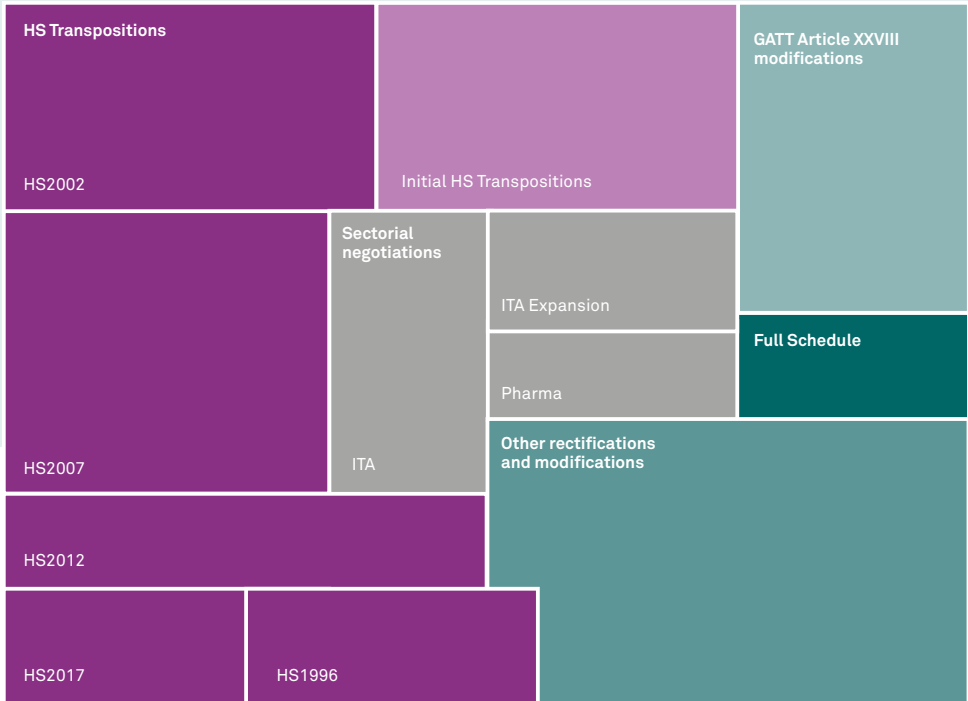
Members have 3 months from the date of circulation to review the proposed change



The Director-General certifies the change provided there are no objections

30 years of changes

Changes to Goods Schedules notified by WTO Members since 1995 mainly consist of: amendments to reflect newer versions of the Harmonized System (71% of changes); new concessions resulting from sectoral negotiations, such as the ITA or the Pharma Agreement (15%); modifications to bound concessions resulting from renegotiations under GATT Article XXVIII (3%); and other types of rectifications and modifications (12%).



More information

WTO Goods Schedules e-Library website – a gateway application to access legal instruments with ease:

<https://goods-schedules.wto.org/>

Members Schedules:

<https://goods-schedules.wto.org/members>

Members' Tariff Profiles:

https://www.wto.org/english/res_e/reser_e/tariff_profiles_e.htm

WTO Tariffs and Trade Data:

<https://ttd.wto.org/en>

Committee on Market Access:

https://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/markacc_e/markacc_com_e.htm