

DISCLAIMER

The Handbook on Notification Requirements does not constitute a legal interpretation of the notification obligations under the respective Agreement(s) or relevant legal provision(s). It has been prepared by the Secretariat to assist Members in complying with their notification obligations.

TECHNICAL COOPERATION HANDBOOK ON NOTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

AGREEMENT ON TECHNICAL
BARRIERS TO TRADE

This section of the Handbook on Notification Requirements covers the notification obligations under the **AGREEMENT ON TECHNICAL BARRIERS TO TRADE**. It consists of the following five parts:

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TEXT OF THE
AGREEMENT

For Members which acceded pursuant to Article XII of the Marrakesh Agreement, their respective Protocols of Accession may contain notification obligations in addition to those set out in the WTO Agreements and may govern the deadlines for the submission of their initial notifications.

PART 1

OVERVIEW OF NOTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

WHAT MUST BE NOTIFIED?

The WTO Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT Agreement) seeks to ensure that technical regulations, standards and conformity assessment procedures do not create unnecessary obstacles to trade. The transparency provisions of TBT Agreement aim to promote regulatory dialogue, enhance predictability and reduce unnecessary trade barriers. Notification requirements constitute a core element of the Agreement's transparency framework.

The notification requirements under the TBT Agreement are listed below. It is important to underline that since 1995, the TBT Committee has adopted a series of decisions and recommendations to facilitate the implementation of the Agreement's transparency provisions, including its notification requirements.¹ The compilation of notification formats and corresponding guidelines in [G/TBT/GEN/388](#) provides further information on what must be notified and how.

Statement of Implementation (Article 15.2)

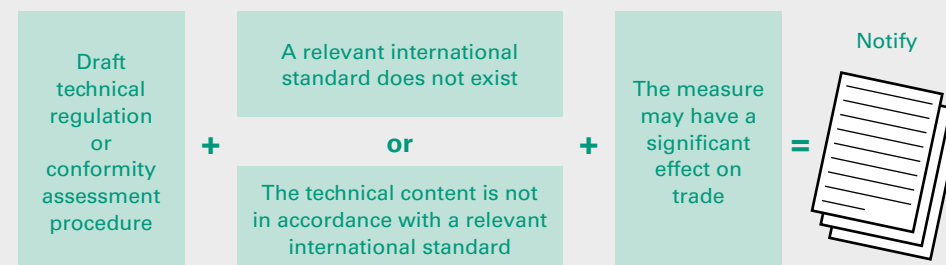
This one-time notification, to be updated as necessary, should include information on the overarching legal, regulatory, and administrative framework as well as institutional arrangements put in place to implement the TBT Agreement. For example, it should indicate the entities designated as the TBT Notification Authority and the Enquiry Point.

The TBT Committee has adopted guidelines and a corresponding online format for submitting this statement of implementation as per Article 15.2.²

Technical Regulations and Conformity Assessment Procedures (Articles 2.9, 2.10, 5.6, 5.7)

This notification process ordinarily begins by identifying those measures that should be notified to the WTO. Figure 1 illustrates whether to notify technical regulations and conformity assessment procedures in line with Articles [2.9](#), [2.10](#), [5.6](#) or [5.7](#) of the TBT Agreement.

Figure 1



The notification should include information on products to be covered as well as on objective and rationale of the measure. In addition, it should provide a comment period (normally 60 days), except in urgent circumstances (Articles [2.10.1](#) and [5.7.1](#)).

The TBT Committee has adopted specific formats and guidelines for the notification of new measures as well as follow up information related to these measures.³ In addition, the Committee has finalized a good practice guide on how to prepare as well as respond to comments on a TBT notification.⁴

Agreements with other Members (Article 10.7)

Members may reach agreements with other countries on issues related to technical regulations, standards or conformity assessment procedures. These can include mutual recognition agreements, equivalence agreements and other types of regulatory co-operation mechanisms. Whenever these agreements may have a significant effect on trade, they should be notified by one of the Members party to the agreement, indicating the products to be covered and a brief description of the agreement.

The TBT Committee has adopted a specific format for the notification of agreements as per Article 10.7.⁵

¹ [G/TBT/1](#) (latest Revision), Section 6 on Transparency.

² [G/TBT/GEN/388](#), Section 1.

³ [G/TBT/GEN/388](#), Section 2.

⁴ [G/TBT/GEN/386](#).

⁵ [G/TBT/GEN/388](#), Section 3.

PART 1

OVERVIEW OF NOTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

Acceptance of the Code of Good Practice on the Preparation, Adoption and Application of Standards (Annex 3, paras. C and J)

Article 4 of the TBT Agreement requires Members to ensure that their central government standardizing bodies accept and comply with the Code of Good Practice on the Preparation, Adoption and Application of Standards ([Annex 3](#)). It also requires Members to take such reasonable measures as may be available to them to ensure that local government and non-governmental standardizing bodies within their territories, as well as regional standardizing bodies, of which they or one or more bodies within their territories are Members, accept and comply with this Code of Good Practice.

Standardizing bodies that have accepted (or withdrawn) from the Code of Good Practice must notify this fact to the International Organization for Standardization (ISO). In addition, those bodies that have accepted the Code are required to publish a work programme every six months, and its existence must also be notified to ISO.

The WTO and ISO Secretariats have adopted specific procedures⁶ and formats⁷ for these standards-related notifications, which are also accessible through the [WTO ISO Standards Information Gateway](#).

WHICH MEMBERS MUST NOTIFY?

All WTO Members.

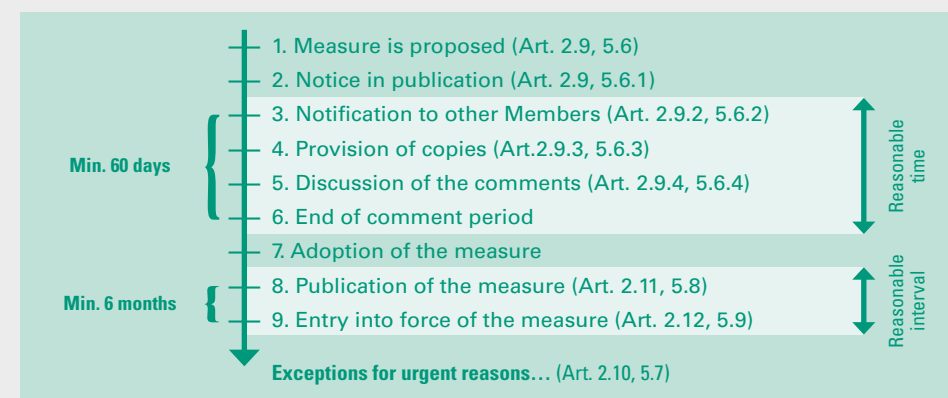
WHEN TO NOTIFY?**Statement of Implementation (Article 15.2)**

Upon accession to the WTO. Revisions should be submitted as necessary, for example when there are relevant changes in the overarching regulatory framework or institutional arrangements.

Technical Regulations and Conformity Assessment Procedures (Articles 2.9, 2.10, 5.6, 5.7)

At an early appropriate stage when amendments can still be introduced, and comments taken into account. Figure 2 below indicates the lifecycle of a measure.

Figure 2: The lifecycle of a measure

**Agreements with other Members (Article 10.7)**

Whenever a Member has reached agreement with one or more countries on issues related to technical regulations, standards or conformity assessment procedures.

⁶ [G/TBT/W/4/Rev.1](#).

⁷ [G/TBT/GEN/388](#), Section 4.

PART 1

OVERVIEW OF NOTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

Acceptance of the Code of Good Practice on the Preparation, Adoption and Application of Standards (Annex 3, paras. C and J)

Upon acceptance of the Code of Good Practice.

In addition, information on work programmes should be notified every six months. Alternatively, the website address where work programmes are regularly made available should be provided.

HOW TO NOTIFY?**1. Technical Regulations and Conformity Assessment Procedures; Statements of Implementation; Agreements with other Members**

Members can submit their notifications online through the [ePing SPS&TBT Platform](#), using the corresponding notification formats adopted by the Committee.⁸ ePing facilitates coordination among government agencies in the preparation of notifications and helps keep track of notifications submitted by all Members.

To access the notification submission dashboard of ePing, government officials responsible for the preparation and submission of notifications should register on the ePing platform and send a message to ePing@wto.org requesting notification admin rights. A notification admin can, in addition to submitting notifications, also grant notification drafting rights and/or submission rights to other domestic users and update Enquiry Point contact details.⁹ Users that already have a WTO account can use these credentials to register on the site and benefit from the single sign-in across WTO websites. Questions and queries on the ePing SPS&TBT Platform can be sent to the WTO Secretariat (ePing@wto.org).

⁸ When Members submit notifications online through the ePing platform, the Central Registry of Notifications (CRN) is the first point of contact as indicated in the latest version of the document series [WT/INF/25](#). While Members can also submit notifications by email to the Central Registry of Notifications (CRN) (crn@wto.org), there is a significantly longer circulation delay as these have to be processed manually by the WTO Secretariat. Notification templates can be downloaded from the [TBT Transparency toolkit](#).

⁹ [G/TBT/GEN/363](#) contains information on the different levels of access available to ePing users.

2. Acceptance of the Code of Good Practice on the Preparation, Adoption and Application of Standards (Annex 3, paras. C and J)

Standards-related notifications need to be submitted to the ISO via email (tbtcode@iso.org). The notification formats for acceptance (Form A), withdrawal (Form B) and work programmes (Form C) can be downloaded through the [WTO ISO Standards Information Gateway](#). The Gateway contains the full list of standardizing bodies that have accepted the Code as well as information on their work programmes.

Acceptance and withdrawal notifications are subsequently circulated by the WTO Secretariat. These notifications can be consulted under the Facts & figures **tab** on ePing in each [Members' profile page](#).

PART 2

LISTING OF THE NOTIFICATION OBLIGATIONS

	WHAT MUST BE NOTIFIED?		WHICH MEMBERS MUST NOTIFY?	WHEN TO NOTIFY?		HOW TO NOTIFY?			
	Notification requirements	Type of measure	Members notifying	Periodicity	Comments on Periodicity	Format ¹⁰	To whom ¹¹	Notification Symbol	
1.	Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade, Article 2.9 .	Technical regulations.	All WTO Members	<i>Ad hoc</i>		Yes (Available on ePing)	WTO Secretariat	G/TBT/N /ISO country code/*	
2.	Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade, Article 2.10 .	Technical regulations (urgent).	All WTO Members	<i>Ad hoc</i>		Yes (Available on ePing)	WTO Secretariat	G/TBT/N /ISO country code/*	
3.	Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade, Article 3.2 .	Technical regulations – local government (urgent or non-urgent).	All WTO Members	<i>Ad hoc</i>		Yes (Available on ePing)	WTO Secretariat	G/TBT/N /ISO country code/*	
4.	Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade, Article 5.6 .	Conformity assessment procedures.	All WTO Members	<i>Ad hoc</i>		Yes (Available on ePing)	WTO Secretariat	G/TBT/N /ISO country code/*	
5.	Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade, Article 5.7 .	Conformity assessment procedures (urgent).	All WTO Members	<i>Ad hoc</i>		Yes (Available on ePing)	WTO Secretariat	G/TBT/N /ISO country code/*	
6.	Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade, Article 7.2 .	Conformity assessment Procedures – local Government (urgent or non-urgent).	All WTO Members	<i>Ad hoc</i>		Yes (Available on ePing)	WTO Secretariat	G/TBT/N /ISO country code/*	

¹⁰ All formats are available in [G/TBT/GEN/388](#).

¹¹ Members submit notifications through ePing, where the Central Registry of Notifications (CRN) is the first point of contact as indicated in the latest version of the document series [WT/INF/25](#).

PART 2

LISTING OF THE NOTIFICATION OBLIGATIONS

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	Notification requirements	Type of measure	Members notifying	Periodicity	Comments on Periodicity	Format ¹⁰	To whom ¹¹	Notification Symbol	
7.	Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade, Article 10.7 .	Agreements between Members concerning technical regulations, conformity assessment procedures, standards.	All WTO Members	<i>Ad hoc</i>		Yes (Available on ePing)	WTO Secretariat	G/TBT/10.7/N/*	
8.	Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade, Article 15.2 .	Administrative arrangements; laws/regulations, measures in existence or taken to ensure the implementation and administration of the TBT Agreement.	All WTO Members	One time	Upon entry into force of the WTO Agreement. Subsequent revisions as necessary.	Yes (Available on ePing)	WTO Secretariat	G/TBT/15.2/N/ISO country code (previously G/TBT/2/Add.*)	

¹⁰ All formats are available in [G/TBT/GEN/388](#).

¹¹ Members submit notifications through ePing, where the Central Registry of Notifications (CRN) is the first point of contact as indicated in the latest version of the document series [WT/INF/25](#).

PART 2

LISTING OF THE NOTIFICATION OBLIGATIONS

	WHAT MUST BE NOTIFIED?		WHICH MEMBERS MUST NOTIFY?	WHEN TO NOTIFY?		HOW TO NOTIFY?			
	Notification requirements	Type of measure	Members notifying	Periodicity	Comments on Periodicity	Format ¹⁰	To whom ¹¹	Notification Symbol	
9.	Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade, Annex 3 paragraph C.	Acceptance of/ withdrawal from the Code of Good Practice for the Preparation, Adoption and Application of Standards.	Standardizing Bodies accepting the Code/ withdrawing from the Code.	One time		Yes (Available on WTO ISO Standards Information Gateway)	ISO (More information)	G/TBT/CS/N/*	
10.	Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade, Annex 3 paragraph J.	Work programmes on standardization activities.	Standardizing Bodies which have accepted the Code.	Regular – Semi-annual	Every 6 months. Alternatively, a direct link to a website address where work programmes are published regularly can be provided.	Yes (Available on WTO ISO Standards Information Gateway)	ISO (More information)		

¹⁰ All formats are available in [G/TBT/GEN/388](#).

¹¹ Members submit notifications through ePing, where the Central Registry of Notifications (CRN) is the first point of contact as indicated in the latest version of the document series [WT/INF/25](#).

PART 3

RELEVANT DOCUMENT(S) CONCERNING GUIDELINES AND FORMATS

The compilation of TBT Notification Formats and Guidelines ([G/TBT/GEN/388](#)).

Decisions and recommendations adopted by the TBT Committee since 1 January 1995 ([G/TBT/1/latest Revision](#), Section 6 on Transparency).

The Good Practice Guide on Commenting on a TBT Notification ([G/TBT/GEN/386](#)).

The TBT Committee established the Transparency Working Group in March 2022 to advance with its work on transparency. This working group is open to all Members. Since its establishment, the working group has been working, among others, on developing or updating various notification formats and guidelines. Further information on the work of this group can be accessed through the [dedicated webpage](#).

The TBT [Transparency Toolkit](#) on the WTO website contains information on the transparency obligations and procedures, related work in the Committee as well as other relevant resources.

[WTO Agreement Series – The TBT Agreement](#): This 2021 edition includes an overview of the TBT Agreement, work of the TBT Committee, disputes invoking provisions of the Agreement, frequently asked questions, the full legal text of the Agreement, as well as the decisions and recommendations adopted by the TBT Committee from January 1995 to November 2021.

USEFUL TOOLS AND RESOURCES



[ePing SPS&TBT Platform](#)

The platform facilitates tracking sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) and technical barriers to trade (TBT) measures. As a user, you can, amongst others:

- Browse **notifications** on new and updated product regulations.
- Find information on **trade concerns** discussed in the WTO SPS and TBT committees.
- Sign up to receive **email alerts** and to follow notifications on products and/or markets of interest.
- Locate information on **enquiry points and notification authorities**.
- **Reach out** to national and international counterparts.

PART 4

LIST OF NOTIFICATIONS SINCE 1995

All notifications circulated since 1995 can be found in the "search" tab on [ePing](#).

PART 5

TEXT OF THE AGREEMENT

Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade [LT/UR/A-1A/10](#).