



USAID Future Growth Initiative - CAREC Program Webinar Series

TOWARD A CENTRAL ASIAN E-COMMERCE MARKET 12, 19, and 31 May 2022

Online registration for the webinar

https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_iQCrWBOftEWB00dlgTyG_w

Jointly organized by ADB, USAID FGI, CAREC Institute in collaboration with other development partners

Introduction and Objectives

To develop an integrated regional e-commerce market that facilitates trade and enables firms to grow their sales, all stakeholders – businesses, governments, and civil society are needed around the table to develop joint solutions. This event series co-hosted by USAID's Future Growth Initiative¹ and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) under the Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation (CAREC) Program² aims to catalyze exactly this discussion among regional and international public and private sector actors, who over three days will be invited to share their ideas on steps toward a Central Asian regional e-commerce market.

The event is envisioned to result in a document with recommendations for a regional e-commerce agenda. The FGI team is also looking by way of this event to spark closer cooperation among donors and donor-supported organizations on e-commerce development in Central Asia (including Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan), for example, through an informal "E-Coordination Group," as well as promote continued dialogue among regional private and public sector stakeholders on the regional e-commerce agenda.

Target Participants

Government representatives from relevant agencies responsible for e-commerce development in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan; E-commerce associations and service providers in 5 Central Asian countries; International experts on e-commerce, including from other regions; Development partners involved in the region with e-commerce agenda

Format and Agenda

There will be three 3-4-hour webinars, held over 3 days on May 12, 19, and 31, 2022. Simultaneous translation from English into Russian and vice versa

¹ USAID's Future Growth Initiative in Central Asia (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan) is designed to spur productive economic activity and increase competitiveness among the companies in the economy leading sectors. The project addresses the transformation of market relations to ensure the growth of companies with high potential, business associations, strengthen their interaction, improve the skills of workers through training, including for women and youth. The project also aims to help improve laws and regulations to facilitate the growth of companies and eliminate barriers to business development. <https://www.facebook.com/FGICentralAsia/>

² The CAREC Program is a partnership of 11 member countries and development partners working together to promote development through cooperation, leading to accelerated economic growth and poverty reduction. CAREC members are Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Mongolia, Pakistan, the People's Republic of China, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan. In mid-August 2021, ADB placed on hold its assistance in Afghanistan effective 15 August 2021. <https://www.carecprogram.org/> ; https://www.carecprogram.org/?page_id=13249

- Day 1 will focus on ongoing initiatives and research of development partners in the Central Asian region, giving background and best practices on e-commerce use and development, including enabling the environment to develop and promote e-commerce.
- Day 2 will feature experiences from other regions such as Southeast Asia and Central and South America on methods to build and deepen a regional e-commerce agenda for Central Asian countries.
- Day 3 will promote the private sector to share its views on priority challenges to cross-border e-commerce in the region and how the regional agenda can resolve them, promote dialogue between public and private sectors, and identify concrete actions toward a sustainable and inclusive regional e-commerce market.

**DAY 1: DEVELOPMENT PARTNER INITIATIVES AND RESEARCH TO
PROMOTE E-COMMERCE DEVELOPMENT**

12 May 2022

Simultaneous translation from English into Russian and vice versa

Time	Program
2:00 – 2:05 PM	Opening Remarks by USAID and ADB representatives
2:05 – 3:35 PM	<p>Session 1: Diagnostics on e-commerce use and recent development in Central Asia <i>The session will tackle emerging issues such as trends in responding to COVID-19, the international developments affecting the global supply chain, and other innovation and accompanying challenges, including those related to use, affordability, and quality of information and communications technology in Central Asia that impacts on cross-border e-commerce.</i></p> <p>Panelists</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. Michael Minges, ADB consultant • Mr. Chiyu Niu, Economist, Poverty and Equity Global Practice, Europe and Central Asia region, World Bank • UNESCAP (TBC) • Ms. Kristina Moreva, Consulting Services Manager, PricewaterhouseCoopers (Kazakhstan) • Mr. Bekzhan Mutanov, Deputy CEO, Astana International Financial Centre (AIFC) <p>Moderator: Dorothea Lazaro, Regional Cooperation Specialist, Public Management, Financial Sector and Regional Cooperation Division, East Asia Department, ADB</p>
3:35 – 4:50 PM	<p>Session 2: Enabling environment, gaps, and ongoing work on policy reforms for promoting e-commerce and cross-border e-commerce <i>The session may cover regulatory issues such as de minimis or proposals, including regional payment cards or digital currencies, to reduce transaction costs for cross-border e-commerce transactions.</i></p> <p>Panelists</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms. Cecile Barayre El-Shami, Chief, Digital Economy Capacity Building Section, E-Commerce and Digital Economy Branch, Division on Technology and Logistics, UNCTAD • Dr. Qaisar Abbas, Chief, Research Division, CAREC Institute • Mr. Anton Zinovyev, Senior Policy Advisor, USAID Future Growth Initiative

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mr. Darius Kurek, Senior Officer, Trade Strategy and Competitiveness, ITC, EU Ready for Trade, <p>Moderator: Cristen Bauer, Central Asia Regional Expert Level Working Group on Digital Trade, U.S. Commerce Department, Commercial Law Development Program (CLDP)</p>
4:50-5:45 PM	<p>Session 3: Building Central Asian firms' capacity and enhancing awareness and consumers' trust for inclusive cross-border e-commerce in the region</p> <p>Panelists</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dr. Pavel Shust, expert in digital financial services development, International Finance Corporation (IFC) Mr. Gennadijs Maskovs, Customs and Border Management Team Lead, USAID Trade Central Asia (USAID TCA) Ms. Jyldyz Akmatova, Marketing and Communication, PEAK Enterprise and Innovation Program Kyrgyzstan <p>Moderator: ADB</p>
5:45 – 6:00 PM	Open dialogue
6:00 – 6:05 PM	<p>Concluding Remarks</p> <p><i>Government representative (TBC)</i></p>

**DAY 2: GOOD PRACTICES IN REGIONAL E-COMMERCE INTEGRATION –
ROUNDTABLE OF EXAMPLES AND CONSIDERATIONS**

19 May 2022

Simultaneous translation from English into Russian and vice versa

Time	Program
2:00 – 2:10 PM	Introduction
2:10 – 3:10 PM	<p>Session 1: Models and experiences from regional integration groupings with e-commerce agenda</p> <p>Panelists</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experiences from building and operationalizing a comprehensive e-commerce agenda and agreement – Association of Southeast Asian Nations Secretariat Promoting Secure and Seamless Regulatory Documents Exchange Network – Francis O. Lopez, President and CEO of InterCommerce Network Services, Inc. and member, Pan-Asian E-Commerce Alliance Building a regional e-commerce agenda “bottom-up” with regional institutions and stakeholders – Mr. David Cabrera of Cenpromype of the Central American Integration System APEC experience with a Cross Border Privacy Rules (CBPR) data privacy regime and pathfinder process and/or Pacific Alliance (Mexico, Chile, Colombia, and Peru) on public-private cooperating on common e-commerce agenda <p>Moderator: Dr. Kati Suominen, Senior E-commerce Advisor, USAID FGI project</p>

3:10-3:30 PM	<p>Session 2: Regional digital integration via trade agreements: what is covered in next-generation agreements and why?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) • Digital Economy Partnership Agreement (DEPA) • U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA) <p>Moderator: Ms. Pramila Crivelli, Economist, Regional Cooperation and Integration Division, Economic Research and Regional Cooperation Department, ADB</p>
3:30 – 3:45 PM	Open dialogue
3:45 – 3:50 PM	<p>Concluding Remarks</p> <p><i>Government Representative (TBC)</i></p>

DAY 3: PUBLIC-PRIVATE DIALOGUE ON E-COMMERCE
31 May 2022

Simultaneous translation from English into Russian and vice versa

Time	Program
2:00 – 2:05 PM	Introduction
2:05 – 3:15 PM	<p>Session 1a: Private sector challenges, opportunities, and needs for doing cross border e-commerce in Central Asia</p> <p>Roundtable discussion among:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Mr. Aman Tentiyeu, NAMBA TechFARM, KG -, ✓ Mr. Zokhid Ulmasbaev, Lean Trade Solutions (LeBazar), UZ ✓ M -Feerooz Zainidini, Babilon- M, TJ ✓ Mr. Rafal Trepka, General Manager of Mastercard in Central Asia
2:50 – 3:45	<p>Session 1b (associations): Private sector challenges, opportunities, and needs for doing cross border e-commerce in Central Asia</p> <p>Roundtable discussion among:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Mr. Aibek Kurenkeev, President of E-commerce Association of Kyrgyz Republic, ✓ Ms. Manzura Rustamova, Head of E-commerce Council of Tajikistan under CCI ✓ Mr. Muzaffar Azamov - Chairman of E-Commerce Association of Uzbekistan - CONFIRMED ✓ Ms. Saodat Tursunbaeva, President, International Women’s Public Foundation “Sharq Ayoli” ✓ The Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs of Turkmenistan <p>Moderator: Mr. Nikolay Yarmov, Senior Advisor AmCham, USAID FGI Project</p>
3:45 – 4:30 PM	<p>Session 2: Reflections among policymakers (Names and positions TBC)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Government representative of Kazakhstan - Government representative of Kyrgyz Republic - Government representative of Tajikistan - Government representative of Turkmenistan - Government representative of Uzbekistan

	Moderator: (CWRC) ADB
4:30 -4:45	Open dialogue and questions and answers
4:45 – 5:00	Concluding Remarks and Path Forward ADB representative USAID FGI representative

Background Information

Digital trade is a CAREC priority enunciated in *CAREC Integrated Trade Agenda 2030* (endorsed at the CAREC Ministerial Conference in 2018), as a means towards economic diversification and linking with global and regional value chains. It also complements the national digitalization strategies that CAREC countries have been pursuing. The pandemic has only underscored its importance and the urgency of ensuring a conducive environment through regional cooperation.

CAREC countries underscored the need for best practice on technological transformation to achieve the sustainable development goals (SDGs); a strategy for e-commerce and trade in services, to boost SMEs and cross-border trade, among others; harmonized laws and trade procedures such as through a single format for electronic documents; laws that protect personal information, consumer rights and IPR, and cybersecurity; banking services for e-commerce. Investments in digital trade infrastructure, and a mechanism such as a regional forum were also proposed.

In November 2021, the *CAREC Digital Strategy 2030* was approved, with the following objectives: (1) encourage investment in the region's digital infrastructure, (2) harmonize digital and data legislature, (3) develop new skills, (4) attract talent to the innovation ecosystem, (5) reduce regional trade barriers to expand e-commerce in particular, and (6) improve the digital foundations and create interoperable digital platforms between CAREC's operational clusters.

USAID, through its Future Growth Initiative (FGI), proposed working with the private sector in Central Asia to develop a regional e-commerce agenda, including through a forum, and identified 4 potential topics. ADB-CI has also assessed the state of e-commerce in CAREC countries – laws and regulations, infrastructure, and Customs and cross-border e-commerce (CBEC) – which suggest specific courses of action with respect to objectives 1, 2, 5, 6 of CAREC Digital Strategy 2030. These recommendations are classified under each of the 4 FGI areas below:

Policy solutions and ideas to regionalize the Central Asia e-commerce markets, such as pursuit of common data privacy, data transfer, consumer protection, and platform liability regulations, and payment licensing and interoperability regulations.

References

ADB. 2021. E-commerce in CAREC Countries: Laws and Policies.
<https://www.adb.org/publications/e-commerce-carec-laws-policies>

ADB. 2022. E-commerce in CAREC Countries: Infrastructure Development.
<https://www.adb.org/publications/e-commerce-carec-countries-infrastructure-development>

USAID's Future Growth Initiative (FGI). 2021:
English version:

https://www.dropbox.com/s/4a1nr8oe8nxm0hh/Ecommerce%20Code%20of%20Conduct%20for%20CA_eng.pdf?dl=0

Russian version:

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/dd4neu919eznvuz/%D0%9A%D0%BE%D0%B4%D0%B5%D0%BA%D1%81%D0%B4%D0%B5%D0%BB%D0%BE%D0%B2%D0%BE%D0%B9%D1%8D%D1%82%D0%B8%D0%BA%D0%B8%20%D0%B2%20eCommerce.pdf?dl=0>