

# UZBEKISTAN

## GSP+ COUNTRY FACT SHEET

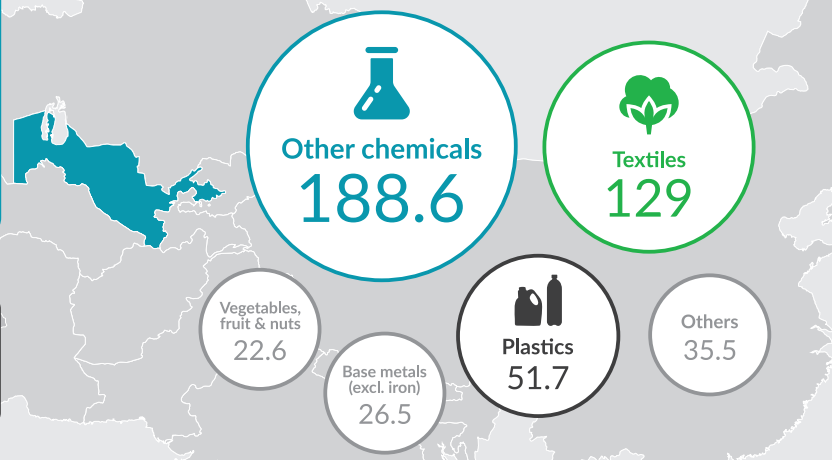
Report to the European Parliament and the Council on the Generalised Scheme of Preferences covering the period 2020-2022

Uzbekistan is the newest GSP+ beneficiary, having joined in 2021. The significant opening and reform efforts since 2016 have had overall a positive effect on compliance with international standards and on the economic development of the country.

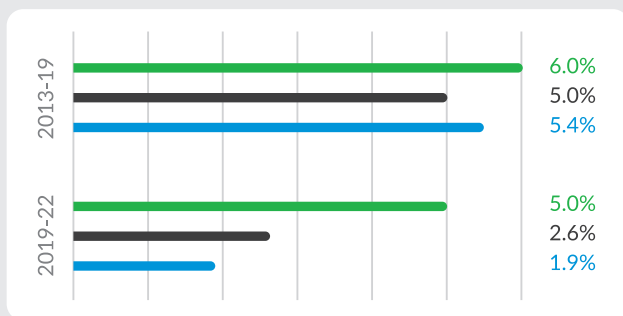
November 2023



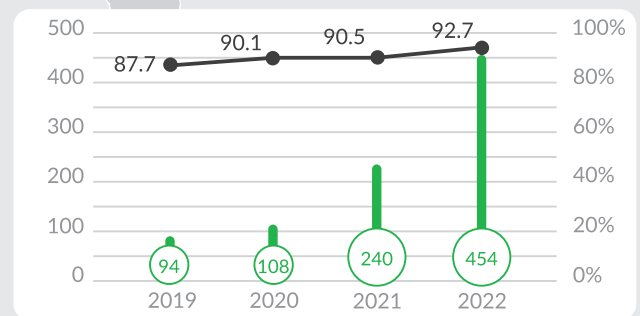
Main sectors of preferential exports to EU (2022, € million):



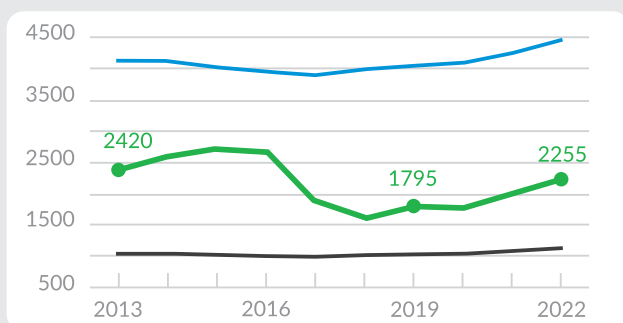
**GDP growth (average annual growth rates):**  
 ● Uzbekistan vs. ● Lower-middle income countries (LMIC) and ● GSP+ countries



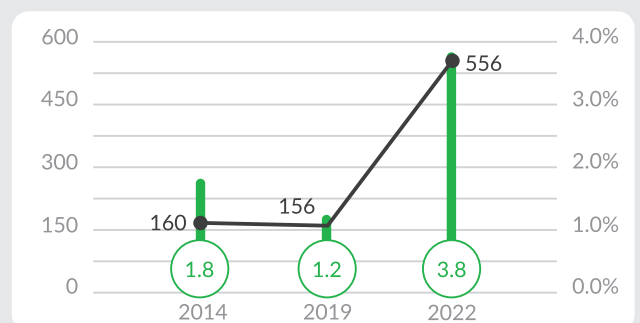
**GSP preferential exports and preference utilisation 2019-2022:**  
 ● GSP+ preferential imports (€ million) and ● Utilisation rate (%)



**GDP per capita (USD):**  
 ● Uzbekistan vs. ● Lower threshold for LMICs and ● Upper threshold for LMICs



**Total exports, exports to EU27:**  
 ● Share in total exports (%) and ● Exports to EU (€ million)



Sources: World Bank World Development Indicators for GDP, population and inflation rate. Eurostat for GSP exports, ITC TradeMap for total exports.

# KEY DEVELOPMENTS 2020-2022<sup>1</sup>

## Positive developments:



Uzbekistan has made progress in legislative work on the rights of women and gender-based violence. There were also improvements in economic, social, and cultural rights and in the institutional framework around the rights of children, as well as increased efforts to deinstitutionalise child care. The previously widespread practice of torture appears significantly reduced and the authorities prioritise further anti-torture measures. A new Constitution was adopted in April 2023. Uzbekistan has extended an open invitation to UN Special Procedures.



Uzbekistan has made remarkable progress in the eradication of child and forced labour as seen in the 2020 and 2021 ILO Third Party Monitoring of the cotton harvest where systematic forced and child labour did not occur. Moreover, there are major improvements being made in adapting national legislation to international standards through the 2022 amendment of the Labour Code.



Uzbekistan has also made good progress in protection of biodiversity and fighting with climate change. The implementation of the Montreal Protocol is well on track, and consumption of hydrochloro-fluorocarbons has been significantly reduced.



Anti-corruption efforts are on-going, and important steps such as the establishment of an independent anti-corruption body in 2020 have been taken.

## Remaining issues and priorities for future engagement



Appropriate amendments in the NGO Code which is due for revision should address key concerns linked to limitations of civil society space and freedom of expression and association. Similarly, the revision of the Criminal Code should take the opportunity to review articles on insult of the President and defamation which are not in line with international norms. Next to that, revisions of the Criminal Code should be considered to remove the provisions criminalising of same-sex relations, as well as outdated provisions on punishment with forced and compulsory labour. Implementing actions against domestic violence such as adequate shelter and support provision across the country are also needed.



The 2022 amendment of the Labour Code is a welcome development, however, gaps related to freedom of association, forced labour, and gender equality still remain. Monitoring and oversight activities should also be improved: a robust monitoring system with the full participation of civil society, will be important to avoid return of forced and child labour to the cotton harvest.



The implementation of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna (CITES) and the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal is lagging behind and needs further attention. Focus on implementation is important also for other commitments such as the updated Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) under the Paris Agreement.



Significant challenges with regard to high-level corruption remain. Efforts are needed in various areas: the legal framework needs improvement to create a solid anticorruption and integrity system while preventive anticorruption institutions at all levels need to be empowered. Investigation and prosecution capacities and anti-money laundering mechanisms of the law enforcement and criminal justice institutions need to be strengthened, while public awareness and the promotion of a zero-tolerance towards corruption should continue to be developed.

<sup>1</sup> This factsheet provides only a summary of selected issues; please refer to the full country report for details.



### Ratification of conventions:

Uzbekistan has ratified all 27 GSP+ relevant international conventions and has no incompatible reservations.



### Reporting under the conventions:

Uzbekistan is mostly compliant with its reporting obligations under the conventions, except for CITES and the Basel Convention, where several reports are overdue.