



Legal alert

Overview of key legislative changes in Uzbekistan in January 2021

Intellectual property changes

On 28 January 2021, the President signed a Resolution introducing Measures to Improve the System to Protect Intellectual Property.

Thus, from 1 April 2021:

- based on international treaties concerning intellectual property, trademarks and service marks no longer have to be registered exclusively in the name of legal entities and individuals engaged in entrepreneurial activity;

- an accelerated review period will be introduced to significantly reduce the time frame for the state registration of intellectual property. Preliminary searches for applications submitted to protect intellectual property will be carried out with the agreement of the parties.

The Ministry of Justice Intellectual Property Agency (the “Agency”) can now outsource the state review of intellectual property applications.

The Resolution also introduces a procedure whereby:

- the Agency covers the national exporter costs for appellations of origin (geographical indications) of goods abroad, registered before 1 January 2025;
- in 2021–2022, the national registration of trademarks of exporters, as well as those entities operating in agriculture and handicrafts, for whom exports account for over 60% of total turnover, is free of charge;

Changes in public procurements

Under the Public Procurement Law, the Ministry of Finance is obliged to:

- by 1 April 2021, create a separate website page dealing with electronic public procurements in the construction sector;
- by 1 May 2021, develop technical and design documentation to create a Central Information Portal and, in accordance with the established procedure, have it reviewed by the Ministry of Information Technology and Communication;
- by 1 September 2021, take measures to create and monitor the Central Public Procurement Information Portal, which brings together all public procurement data and provides electronic interaction with external information systems.

Financial support for exporters increased

Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers No. 826 dated 31 December 2020 stipulated increased support for exporters.

Business entities intending to get involved in the export business are also now classified as exporters.

The areas eligible for financial assistance have been expanded to include items such as compensation of costs for sending product samples to foreign trading houses and showrooms through the diplomatic missions of Uzbekistan and compensation for the costs of registering trademarks abroad. Also, participation in business forums, seminars, training, exhibitions and fairs now also includes online interaction between the parties.

Procedure for the accreditation of medical institutions has been approved

On 14 January 2021, Cabinet of Ministers adopted Resolution No. 16 to create mechanisms for the accreditation of medical institutions.

The Ministry of Health was appointed the authorised body for the accreditation of medical institutions. Administrative regulations for the voluntary accreditation of medical organisations establish procedures for:

- accrediting medical organisations;
- expanding and reducing the scope of the accreditation of medical organisations;
- inspecting the activities of accredited medical organisations;
- suspending (restoring) and terminating certificates of accreditation;
- renewing accreditation certificates;
- paying for accreditation services;
- considering appeals against accreditation rulings or inspections.

New procedure for obtaining groundwater use permits

The Cabinet of Ministers issued Resolution No. 9 on 8 January 2021 to adopt administrative regulations that outline the procedure for issuing:

- hydrogeological conclusions;
- permits for drilling groundwater wells;
- permits for special groundwater use or consumption.

The regulations issue a number of procedural changes. For example, separate permits are issued for each groundwater well drilled. Permits are now valid for two years, instead of the previous one year. The list of documents to be submitted to receive a permit has been simplified to include only:

- a copy of the contract between the applicant and the customer to drill water wells;
- details of the drilling equipment owned by the applicant, its technical passport or a copy of the relevant lease agreement.

The regulation also stipulates a procedure for registering or abandoning production wells that were drilled without a permit.

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