



Export Promotion for Central Asian businesses



2021

About this Export Promotion guide

With the aim to foster regional integration and a sound business environment, and taking into account the high relevance of the agricultural and food sector for the regional development and wellbeing of Central Asia, since 2001, Hilfswerk International has been implementing projects to strengthen Central Asia's position in the global economy.

This guideline is elaborated in the frame of the regional project **“Regional Integration and Capacity Building to Boost Agribusiness MSMEs Competitiveness and Trade Promotion in Central Asia - CANDY V” in Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan – CANDY V**. The project is funded by the European Union (European Commission Programme Central Asia Invest V) and the Austrian Development Cooperation, and implemented by a consortium led by Hilfswerk International in partnership with the Austrian Agricultural Cluster, Quality Austria, REDD France, the Public Consulting Organization “Markazi Idorakunii Sifat” and the Union of Professional Consultants of Tajikistan in Tajikistan, the Association of Fruit & Vegetable Enterprises in Kyrgyzstan, and the Kazakhstan Association of Sugar, Processing and Food Industries in Kazakhstan.

CANDY V contributes to the growth of agribusiness Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, and Kazakhstan, thus fostering the integration of CA countries in the global trade. This regional initiative empowers Central Asian Business Intermediary Organisations (BIOs) to promote and sustainably support an enabling environment to improve the services to MSMEs and to enhance the overall business climate in the region, considering the common interest and demand of the private and public sectors in enhancing commercial quality and volume, food safety and traceability, product promotion and market access of regional agro-products and clustering - the 4 project pillars.

Diversifying exports, entering new markets, and developing new product/market combinations are considered as high priority for the Central Asian Governments. Participation in global value chains through implementing effective market access strategies will boost MSMEs growth. The project implements a series of activities to enhance market access and promotion of Central Asian MSMEs and food products. We believe that support to export promotion is necessary not only in the Central Asian countries but also in countries of potential markets.

One of the main pillars of Hilfswerk International's programme in Central Asia is product and export promotion. The successful support to Central Asian MSMEs and business intermediary organisations and consulting with tailor-made capacity building in market strategy and development, incl. purposeful manuals, participative workshops, and study tours to acquire innovative approaches is now complemented with the initiative to support representatives of export promotion departments at the relevant state agencies and the Central Asian embassies in the European Union. This initiative is launched within the CANDY V with the elaboration of this manual.

This manual is aimed to support representatives of export promotion departments at the relevant state agencies and the Central Asian embassies in the European Union. Therefore, the current concept was discussed and agreed with them, e. g. their valuable feedback has been taken into consideration.

As it includes tools how to organize product promotion events in Europe, it will serve as guideline for the organisation of an export promotion showcase in Vienna in June 2022 on a pilot basis.

The manual was elaborated by an international marketing and export expert with a proven experience in the Central Asian business development environment.

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The European Union is made up of 27 Member States who have decided to gradually link together their know-how, resources, and destinies. Together, during a period of enlargement of 60 years, they have built a zone of stability, democracy and sustainable development whilst maintaining cultural diversity, tolerance, and individual freedoms. The European Union is committed to sharing its achievements and its values with countries and peoples beyond its borders. To this end the EU is active in Tajikistan since 1992 and provides approximately EUR 35 million annually in development assistance.

With funding from



Austrian Development Cooperation supports countries in Africa, Asia, South Eastern and Eastern Europe in their sustainable development. The Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs plans the strategies. The Austrian Development Agency (ADA), the operational unit of Austrian Development Cooperation,

implements programmes and projects together with public institutions, civil society organisations as well as enterprises.



Hilfswerk International (HWI) is one of Austria's leading non-profit, non-party, and cross-denominational organizations with its headquarters in Vienna, Austria. It has been implementing emergency relief projects, humanitarian aid and sustainable development projects in Africa, Central Asia, Eastern Europe, Latin America, the Middle East, South and Southeast Asia and South-Eastern Europe since 1978. In close cooperation with local HWI mission offices, as well as local partners HWI's mission is to combat poverty and hardship in developing countries through the promotion of economic and social development intended to lead to a process of sustained economic management and growth, linked to structural and social change.

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1. Introduction

The Central Asian region, with its vast potential of producing fresh and dried fruit and vegetables, given the current trends for globalization and increased demand for food, must address some challenging issues related to the diversification of traditional markets and finding new venues to sell its agricultural produce. Fruit and vegetable production in the region are mainly export-oriented, helping the countries to solve their internal social and economic issues. Participation in global value chains through implementing effective market access strategies and product promotion will boost MSMEs growth. This can be enhanced through advisory services in foreign markets as well as through practical knowledge and export promotion tools.

This export promotion guide consists of practical step-by-step suggestions and checklists how to promote export activities in the countries of destination and how to support Central Asian businesses in their export efforts.

It furthermore presents a practical concept how to organise a showcase for Central Asian businesses to meet Austrian buyers at a matchmaking event in Vienna. Based on this concept, Hilfswerk International and the CANDY V project will organise an Export Promotion-Showcase event in Vienna in 2022. During this event the Central Asian MSME's will be able to present their export products and meet potential Austrian buyers during a matchmaking event with individual B2B meetings.

The Austrian Chamber of Commerce, Austrian Trade commission, Austrian companies, EcoPlus Business Agency Lower Austria, Austrian Agricultural Cluster and their members, representatives of all four Central Asian embassies, representatives of the Central Asian departments in the Austrian Foreign Office and of the European Union representation in Austria and many more will be invited and partly involved as cooperation partners in the organisation.

Therefore, the organization of the food showcase in Austria will be at the core part of this manual (Chapter 4), along with a detailed checklist in Chapter 5.

It also introduces other useful export promotion services for Central Asian exporters (chapter 3). Since the Austrian export promotion organisation has been very well established for many years, its services are briefly described for inspiration (chapter 6).

This guide is focussed on food products, but it can be also used for any other sector, e.g., textile industry.

2. Export promotion

Export promotion is an important support for exporting companies when entering new markets. In particular, many Central Asian food exporters do not have much experience with exporting their products to Europe. Currently they are concentrating either on their home market or on exporting to neighbouring markets und Russia. A key role of a trade promotion representative is bringing buyers and sellers together.

There are basically 3 general strategies for a country to successfully support its exporting companies:

- as **Trade attaché** in a diplomatic position at the country's embassy in the foreign market
- as **National Investment and Development Agency** of the export-supporting country in the foreign market: run by non-diplomatic staff of the country in cooperation with its embassy and/or its ministry of economy and trade
- as **Export Promotion Center for Central Asia** as a joint office: run by non-diplomatic employees with an economic background from all 4 countries

The present situation at the 4 Central Asian embassies Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan in Austria can be described by a shortage of resources for export promotion.

Due to the small number of employees at the embassy, the time to support businesses of their home country with their export activities to Austria or Europe is limited. Most of the employees in the embassies do not have a specific economic background or training and usually do not have a lot of business experience and export know-how either. In addition, financial resources are limited.

These constraints make it quite difficult for the embassy teams to really support their exporting companies. This situation is unlikely to change in the near future.

Since the four Central Asian embassies have already established a good working relationship with each other, a closer cooperation in the area of export promotion might be useful for all.

Central Asian Export Promotion Center

A solution that is feasible in the short term could be the establishment of a joint Export Promotion Center for Central Asia.

By combining the resources and know-how and sharing the costs, business contacts and market information on the European market it could develop a win-win situation for all partners involved.

A joint Export Promotion Center could be advantageous for both the exporting companies from Central Asia and the Austrian business partners, since Central Asian exporters can offer the Austrian partners a larger purchase volume, which opens up a larger and more interesting market for both.

This **Export Promotion Center** can also act as a **gateway** for Central Asian businesses to Austria's neighbouring countries and other European Union countries.

Geographical Indications (GI)

Geographical Indications (GI) are strong differentiation and marketing tools and can contribute to local value added, job creation, development of agro-tourism, as they tend to generate a premium brand price. Positive environmental effects are side effects, even if they do not appear in the code of practices. Collective organisation management and territorial networking are key success factors. Because GI products development depends on reputation, they increase stability and open new perspectives in regions which cannot compete on commodities markets.

Therefore, GI be a success factor for Central Asian agricultural products.

Geographical indications identify a natural and agricultural product as originating and produced in a particular area or region. The product's given quality, reputation or other characteristics must be attributable to this area.

The GI protect this product against misuse or imitation of the registered name and guarantee the true origin of the product to the customers. The products that achieve the GI tag are known for their excellence and hold a sense of authenticity and trust.

The benefit of a GI registration in the European Union provides legal protection which in turn boost exports. It promotes economic prosperity of producers of goods produced in a geographical territory.

European GI products that have proven so:

Kalamata olives and olive oil (Greece), Honey Mei dos Açores (Portugal), Wachauer Marillenlikör (apricot liqueur, Austria), Parma ham (Prosciutto di Parma, Italy), Feta cheese (Greece), Styrian pumpkin seed oil (Austria), Champagne (France), Gouda cheese (Netherlands) and many more.

Within the HWI CANDY V project (in the frame of which this manual was elaborated) Geographical Indications are identified and piloted to use their potential for the GI registration. After feasibility studies had been carried out, four products (one per country) have been selected for piloting by mutual agreement of the participants.

The four products are **Khashtak Dried Apricot from Asht** (Tajikistan), **Almaty Aport Apple** (Kazakhstan), **At-Bashi White Honey** (Kyrgyzstan), and **Khoresm Melon** (Uzbekistan).

These products were selected to be piloted as showcases and demonstration products.

Cross border regional Geographical Indications

One of the GI regions could be the Fergana Valley, which belongs to the three Central Asian countries of Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.

This would suggest a common approach to marketing and export activities.

An export promotion center for Central Asia would make the marketing and export of the products of such a cross-border GI region much easier and more efficient than it would be done by each of the countries on their own.

Additional know-how support for providers of Export promotion

The Central Asian export promotion center or any other form of providers of export promotion could be supported by services offered by external partners like chambers, trade associations, consulting firms but also the HWI Hilfswerk International with its local offices in the Central Asian region.

Local and international experts could also provide advice to export promotion providers.

With its extensive know-how and local partner network in the Central Asian countries and market know-how about the Austrian market, Hilfswerk International could be a valuable partner for these services.

3. Services for exporters

From experience and talks with exporting companies from Central Asia a list of services (see below) would be useful for Central Asian food exporters to Austria and the European Union.

The suggested services listed here are the most useful and proven services and tools in practice. These services are mostly offered to businesses by commercial attachés, commercial departments of embassies or their National Investment and Development Agencies (NIDA) in the European countries.

The services are briefly described as they are only to be understood as a suggestion for the development of the specific services by the export promotion provider (commercial attaché, commercial department in the embassies, NIDA) according to their specific country needs and possibilities. Some embassies offer already some of these services to their exporters.

3.1. Market reports about the country and its business environment

Information about the most interesting and most promising export destinations for Central Asian (food) products in Europe.

A lot of information is available online. But Central Asian exporters are not so familiar with foreign languages, not even English, and, in addition, they value the local European knowledge and insights that their country representatives can provide.

In addition to Austria, according to market research (see also “Synopsis of existing market analyses for Central Asian food exporters”

https://www.hilfswerk.tj/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/CANDY5_EN_synopsis-of-existing-market-analyses.pdf) the following European countries have been attractive for exporting Central Asian products: Baltic countries, Bulgaria, France, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Poland, Romania, United Kingdom, Serbia, Switzerland.

Information that should be included in the market report for a country and / or region:

- Country profiles
- Regional information
- Business environment in the country / region
- local ways of doing business, like being on time (for deliveries and meetings), stay away from bribery and corruption,
- useful local contacts to specialists: lawyers, translation, accounting advice, banks, specialized agencies to check on creditworthiness, ...
- trends and commercial opportunities
- other useful information

In addition to market information, these reports should also contain (general) information on import regulations into the European Union and Austria, such as:

- import requirements for EU and Austria

- standards and certification
- tariffs and customs information
- packaging requirements
- labelling laws
- organic food as an important success factor for food in Europe

This information should be available free of charge and for online download.

3.2. Product and sector reports

Market overviews, Sector analyses and Market reports on product groups like dried fruits, honey, meat, etc. for different countries but also the European market as a whole.

Following content might be useful for the Central Asian exporters:

- summary of market potential for Central Asian exporters
- product market combinations, i. e. survey of export to the EU, elaborated by HWI: https://www.hilfswerk.tj/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/CANDY4_RU_report_export-to-the-EU-dried-fruit.pdf, introduction and brief background on the industry
- basic statistics on production, consumption and growth
- breakdowns by subsector
- consumer trends and local tastes, trends in consumption - and description of the differences to the Central Asian consumer and market
- import and export statistics and trends
- composition of the industry, such as products and amount of their production generated by the largest companies
- the regulatory environment, including laws, labelling requirements and tariffs for this product group / sector
- analysis of the competitors (local, but also international) in this sector / market
- logistics, including examples such as shipping issues
- distribution networks, including information on importers, wholesalers and retailers (especially supermarket chains)
- marketing, product promotion and advertising for these products / sector
- suggested reference material and market research, with links to websites.

The generic nature of these reports means they are typically distributed at little or no charge to users. In some cases, trade promotion organizations publish them online for public access.

Information on specific topics may not be included in these reports, but is of value. For this, a fee is usually charged depending on the effort. (see also 3.5)

3.3. Trade fairs, exhibitions and showcases and B2B meetings

Trade fairs, exhibitions and in-house exhibitions (such as showcases) are a great way for exporters to visit and develop a new market. By choosing the right event, exporters may find all the people they need to meet in the market in one place. This includes potential customers, agents, distributors or other partners. For more information please refer to the HWI manual “Participation in Business Exhibitions and Trade Fairs”, available in Russian at this link - https://www.hilfswerk.tj/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/CANDY3_RU_guidelines_exhibition-participation.pdf

Reception for Central Asian companies at the embassy during fairs and exhibitions are great for networking and exchange of experience between Central Asian companies (exhibitors) and the economic department of the embassy.

Trade fair organizers publicize their events and often seek support from commercial diplomats, making it easy for trade representatives to keep track of these events. This kind of intelligence is valuable for relevant home country organizations in Central Asia, which may wish to organize a national stand.

A calendar with all relevant trade fairs, exhibitions and showcases should be published and updated regularly by the export promotion team.

3.4. Market visit programs

In addition to trade shows and exhibitions (see above), well-organized business meetings and market visit programs are of great value to potential exporters.

- Business delegations, trade delegations of Central Asian (potential) exporters in Austria / Europe
- high level visits: politicians and trade representatives (Ministers, representatives of state agencies) in Europe and Central Asia
- European buyer visits in Central Asian countries
- organized business-to-business meetings at these events

Because of the potentially high value of these programs, a fee may be charged to Central Asian companies and exporters.

3.5. Customized reports and consulting

For tailor-made product reports, market analyses and individual consulting and services for Central Asian companies, a consulting fee should be charged according to the time and effort spent.

These services could be also offered to Austrian and European businesses to support their export and import activities on the Central Asia markets.

With its know-how and partner network in the Central Asian countries and market know-how about the Austrian market, Hilfswerk International could be a valuable partner for these services.

3.6. Business contacts

Finding reliable and good business partners and distributors in Austria and Europe is one of the most important inquiries from potential exporters from Central Asian countries.

Groceries are mainly sold by large supermarket chains. In Austria, 3 supermarket chains cover 88% of all grocery sales in 2020: Spar 35%, Billa-REWE 33% and Hofer 20%, which means that they need large quantities of the offered product.

The same situation applies to other European countries.

Since most Central Asian manufacturers cannot offer large quantities of their products, a smaller distributor may be a better option - provided the distributor can demonstrate connections to key customers and meet sales and distribution expectations. One disadvantage of choosing a smaller distributor is that they may have more limited geographic coverage.

Trade representatives should also advise exporters to visit any potential distributor's or partner's place of business before deciding whether to engage the distributor or partner. A walk around the office, factory or warehouse may be all the exporter needs to get a picture.

Selecting an agent, distributor or other partner is very much the decision of the exporter. Trade representatives should ensure that exporters have an opportunity to consider several potential market partners, avoid appearing to promote one over another, and advise exporters to negotiate formal agreements that include provisions to terminate the arrangement if the agent, distributor or partner fails to deliver.

In addition to supporting Central Asian companies in their search for potential business partners in the European Union, it is also important to introduce potential European business partners who want to export to Central Asia to Central Asian business partners.

A business contact platform on the website (including & in coordination with the other Central Asian embassies in Austria and the European Union) can provide information about cooperation offers, products and services.

Networking events

Regular networking events such as a Central Asian Jour Fix are a very good tool to promote export business. These could take place once a month or once every 2 or 3 months on a fixed day (e.g., 1st

Monday of the month), or they could be in connection with an event like a fair or an exhibition (like the Anuga) when many Central Asian businesses are anyway in Europe.

For these events special guests could be invited to offer some insights and know-how. These guests could be

- companies like Agrana, Sonnentor and others as potential partners
- organisations, like the Austrian Food cluster or different departments of the Austrian chamber of commerce (food section, legal department, ...)
- the representative for Central Asia at the Austrian Trade Promotion Organisation AWO
- representatives of trade organisations, wholesalers and retailers
- experts, like food safety officers, legal experts, packaging experts, certification bodies, ...

3.7. Seminars, workshops for exporters, export coaching

Seminars, academic forums, webinars can be good tools for promoting exporting services.

Since most Central Asian (potential) exporters do not have a lot of experience and know-how in the European market, they could be supported by workshops and seminars on important topics.

Topics could be:

- How to prepare for the export to the European Union
- How to export to the European Union: rules, advantages, obstacles, ...
- How to find and evaluate a European business partner
- Legal framework for Central Asian exporters to Europe
- Export and cooperation contracts

For easier and cheaper access to information and know-how, online workshops or recorded webinars available on the website could be a good option.

3.8. Business support

Export promotion services can support businesses especially at the beginning a lot.

The most appreciated services are:

- useful reliable business support partners: lawyers, interpreters, tax advice, etc. - for more see below
- support for the incorporation of a company
- support in case of problems or in case of emergency
- disputes and arbitration
- contract templates, such as a template for an import agency agreement
- office infrastructure
- website with actual business information (offers, potential partners, expos, events, new regulations, contacts like lawyers, etc.)

Office infrastructure

For most Central Asian businesses, it is expensive and difficult to do business in Europe.

In order to limit their risk, especially at the beginning of their European business activities, the provision of an office infrastructure in the embassy or the export promotion center can be very helpful.

This office infrastructure does not have to be large: a desk with wireless internet access, a printer and copier and a meeting room are sufficient.

An hourly or daily rate can be charged for the use of the office infrastructure.

Supporting useful business contacts

There are numerous companies in the host market that facilitate the processes of importing or investing. Knowing these companies and having some personal contacts within them can make a trade representative's role much easier.

Contacts with the following host market service providers could prove useful:

- Trade fair organizers
- Stand construction contractors
- Advertising agencies, agencies for promotion material, printing shops
- Venue operators
- Hotel management: in order to arrange special discounts and packages for Central Asian exporters
- Travel agents
- Airline offices: for flight tickets but also for freight services
- Law firms
- Accounting firms
- Banks
- Freight clearing and forwarding companies
- Customs clearing agents and inspection agencies
- Laboratories for tests to meet the specific requirements for food products such as health control, veterinary drugs, pesticides, etc. but also the requirements for organic food
- Business and investment consultants
- Interpreters and translators

These contacts can be included on handout materials for clients needing practical assistance.

4. A Showcase for Central Asian food products

An organized in-house exhibition such as a showcase brings producers and sellers together with buyers and traders.

A showcase in an export market is a very efficient way of introducing new products and brands to potential international buyers.

The participation in a trade fair or exhibition is quite costly – not only because of the costs of the stand but also because of the costs connected with it, such as travel costs, accommodation and marketing costs.

Most of the Central Asian food producers do not have the budget and resources for the advertising and marketing of their products on international markets. Therefore, the presentation of their products on a food showcase in an international market is a very good chance to attract new customers and buyers.

At a showcase they can achieve successes that they would not be able to achieve individually.

To make it even more successful for everyone involved, a showcase can be combined with a **trade mission** and / or a **reception** that presents the cultural side of the country through music, traditional costumes and national food and drinks. This is more emotional and could bring sellers and buyers closer together.

Building good personal connections between the Central Asian suppliers and the buyers from the export market country is crucial and creates trust. Activities should focus on facilitating these relationships.

As part of the **CANDY V** project of the Hilfswerk international (HWI), a showcase for Central Asian products will be organized in Vienna to present Central Asian food products to Austrian buyers from the grocery trade, supermarkets and food processors.

The event is planned to take place in June 2022 in Vienna.

4.1. Development of the program

A successful showcase event requires extensive planning and preparation as well as good organization.

The first step is to develop an interesting and promising event program.

In order to develop an attractive Showcase program, the following points should be considered:

- **Aim of the showcase**
 - it is mainly about the introduction of certain products or product groups into a new market, or
 - it is a follow-up event with new suppliers/buyers and newly available products, or

- the showcase is an image event for products and services of a country or region – like introducing a new market to the target group of buyers
- **Target group importers / buyers**
 - in most cases, the target audience for food products consists of buyers from grocery stores, supermarket chains and distributors / wholesalers
 - another target group could be procurement and production managers of food processors, such as bakeries, confectionery and chocolate manufacturers, dairy products manufacturers, jam manufacturers, ...
 - as well as buyers for the hospitality industry, such as restaurants and hotels
- **Target group exporters / sellers**

Exporters will be mainly food processors and trade companies.
Their interest and goals in a showcase exhibition are

 - presentation of the company and/or brand in a new market
 - presentation and introduction of new products and innovations
 - use of the showcase as sales point for directly selling their products
 - meeting of the most important trading partners in one place
- **Product selection**

The products exhibited during the showcase should be geared towards the target groups
- **Duration**

A showcase should only be a few days, in most cases it takes place on one day only
- **Location**

The venue should be easily accessible (e.g. in the city center or on a trade fair site) and parking spaces should be available
- **Timeframe**

The time frame depends largely on the target group and the aim of the showcase: if the event is primarily aimed at purchasing managers, it should take place in the mornings and afternoons during office hours.
if it is more of an image event with a supporting program, (early) evenings are preferred
- **Timing**

A food showcase should take into account the availability of fresh produce in order to be able to conduct tastings at the showcase. Especially since buyers may also be interested in the taste and aroma of the fresh (unprocessed) fruits and vegetables.
Central Asian food exporters should be able to prepare samples with rich flavour and full taste, depending on the harvest time, in order to better convince buyers.

Another factor which needs to be taken into consideration are public and religious holidays, like Ramadan.

4.2. Pre-organisation and booking of the venue

To make the participation as successful and efficient as possible an extensive preparation is needed. This preparation is quite time consuming and should be done some time ahead of the exhibition date.

The lead time typically is 6-9 months, depending on the size and the aim of the event.

Central Asian participants in particular need some time to prepare their product offerings (also depending on the harvest time) and their business strategy for the export market as well as for travel arrangements (visas).

After the date of the event has been set, a “Save the Date” invitation should be sent to the Central Asian and potential Austrian partners. This should be done at least 3-4 months before the event.

Selection of the venue

The showroom venue should be large enough to accommodate a larger main room for the product presentations and for individual B2B meetings, either additional smaller conference rooms or at least space for some conference tables in the main room.

If space permits, the food showcase could take place at the embassy. That would save costs and make organization easier.

4.3. Invitation and preparation of the Central Asian business partners

The information and invitations to the Central Asian producers and food processors should be sent some time in advance of the event, at least 8 weeks but may be even 3-4 months in advance. Most of them do not have a lot of experience in the European market and need to prepare.

For the (potential) Central Asian exporters a showcase is a great opportunity to show their professional competence and know-how with their food products on display and on offer.

Some governments offer subsidies to cover or at least support the costs of participating export-seeking companies.

Although export promotion organizations have a contact list of Central Asian exporters, potential exporters to Europe can also be found and reached indirectly via private and / or state organizations such as chambers, trade promotion organizations, industry associations, food associations, business intermediaries (BIOS), consulting firms, etc.

The preparation includes not only samples of their marketable products, but also packaging. In addition, brochures and other marketing material as well as business cards must be developed in German or at least in English. Most Austrian and European business partners cannot read Cyrillic.

For exporters, it is advisable to obtain appropriate certifications (food safety, organic food, fairtrade, etc.) from Austrian or European recognized institutions and certification bodies before the showcase. Purchasing managers in larger companies will only continue to talk about business if recognized certificates are available.

The Central Asian exporter should also prepare various business strategies and options on how to enter the Austrian / European market.

They should be clear about their aims for the showcase. Do they want to find a local representative in Europe, identify new buyers, support an existing agent or renew contacts in the market.

This preparation requires the support and help of the export promotion experts in the export markets. Therefore, the export promotion team in Austria should provide the (potential) exporters and participants in the showcase with information about the Austrian economic environment, the Austrian food market and its distribution system. With its Austrian and EU partners, as well as a pool of experts, Hilfswerk International could be a valuable partner for this.

Proper preparation is the first step in a successful export business.

Material for distribution at the showcase

A flyer or a small brochure (with the seller's business card attached) in German or at least English is recommended.

This material should briefly contain key information about the company and the products and services it offers. It should be rather short and comprehensive and look appealing with pictures of the products on offer.

Product samples in packaging but also for direct tasting at the showcase should be available.

4.4. Invitation of European business partners

The invitation can be made directly by contacting purchasing managers at supermarkets, distributors, wholesalers and food processors, or by sending invitations.

In most cases, direct contact is much more promising. This may include meeting some or most of them prior to the invitation and the event.

Especially when it comes to the first showcase and first contact with purchasing managers, it can be very time consuming and difficult to find a sufficient number of attendees for the event.

Therefore, it takes a long time to prepare.

Selection of partners

The selection depends on the kind of products the Central Asian exporters want to sell. For example:

- **packaged food products for end consumers**
fresh fruits, dried fruits and nuts, processed food, honey, ... in a nice branded packaging
 - purchasing managers of supermarkets (if the quantity is large enough)
 - purchasing managers of smaller supermarkets chains, such as Lidl
 - smaller grocery stores
 - speciality stores, such as organic food stores (Denns Biomarkt, etc.)

- **food products in bulk for supermarkets**
fresh fruits, dried fruits and nuts, processed food, honey, ... in very good quality, which are usually packaged by the distributor under his own brand
 - purchasing managers of supermarkets (if the quantity is large enough)
 - purchasing managers of smaller supermarkets chains, such as Lidl
 - smaller grocery stores
 - speciality stores, such as organic food stores (Denns Biomarkt, etc.)
 - wholesalers

- **food products in bulk for food processors and catering business**
fresh fruits, dried fruits and nuts, processed food, honey, meat, ... in good quality, which are usually processed by the buyer
 - food processors such as jam producers
 - milk products producers – as raw material for yoghurt and other milk products
 - bakeries and bakery chains
 - confectionary and chocolate producers
 - hospitality business (gastronomy and hotels) – is huge in Austria due to strong tourism
 - factory and office canteens
 - hospital kitchens
 - catering for kindergartens, schools, ...
 - catering industry

A few weeks before the event, B2B meetings between Central Asian companies and buyers are to be scheduled for the event day.

A reminder about 1-2 weeks before the event should be sent out.

4.5. Invitation of journalists and media

Good press work and relations with journalists of professional magazines can help buyers to gain confidence in Central Asian suppliers with regard to quality, delivery capability and production standards.

Reports, articles or even advertisements in professional journals such as trade magazines (such as REGAL www.regal.at or CASH www.cash.at) and special magazines for food processors and

gastronomy, catering, bakeries, ... could make the search for buyers and B2B meeting partners easier. Note that some of the magazines appear bimonthly or even quarterly, so expect a lead time of 3-4 months.

Austrian / European business journalists and television teams invited to Central Asia some (3-6) months before the event can produce favourable, influential reports about the countries and their foods for their domestic audiences.

4.6. Organisation of the event

4.6.1. The event announcement

The announcement of the showcase to **Central Asian businesses** should briefly describe the event.

For example: “The showcase at the embassy X is aimed at Central Asian food producers and exporters who will have the unique opportunity to meet Austrian buyers from supermarkets, wholesalers and food processors in the food industry.”

The event should be announced on the websites of the Central Asian embassies in Austria, the surrounding countries, Germany, and Switzerland as well as on the websites of their export promotion agencies in Central Asia.

In addition, it should be widely communicated in the Central Asian governments (Ministry of Economy and Trade, Ministry of Agriculture), Chambers of Commerce, business intermediary offices (BIOs), Hilfswerk International (HWI) and Hilfswerk International in Central Asia webpages, networks' webpages, in which HWI is a member and coordinator, industry associations, but also via Central Asian media (newspapers, social media, business channels on TV and Radio, etc.)

Austrian businesses

Direct marketing activities and direct personal invitations to potential buyers may be required. If there is a cooperation with Austrian organizations (Chamber of Commerce, Ecoplus Business Agency Lower Austria, Austrian Agricultural Cluster, etc.), the event should also be published there.

The announcement of the event with public relations and a press release will gain wider attention.

By making contact with trade journals and professional journals (see chapter 4.5), articles about the showcase are published that receive more attention from the target group.

4.6.2. Program of the showcase

The showcase program should focus on the presentation of food product from Central Asia, networking, B2B contacts and pre-arranged B2B meetings.

There shall be a welcoming speech by ambassadors with a brief introduction to the Central Asian market. The commercial attaché introduces the products offered and invites to tastings.

The participating companies shall be presented with a handout in the form of a showcase catalogue and online.

Snacks and drinks shall be served.

The duration of the showcase depends on the number of participants and the scheduled meetings.

Example of a program for the showcase:

09.30 – 10.00 Registration

10.00 – 10.05 Words of Welcome by the Ambassador of....

10.05 – 10.15 Central Asian Food by the head of the Export promotion organisation

10.15 – 10.45 Food tastings guided tastings to get the flavour of Central Asia and immediate feedback from the buyers

10.45 – 13.00 B2B Meetings and Food presentation

13.00 – 13.30 Buffet with Central Asian Food specialities

13.30 – 16.30 B2B Meetings and Food presentation

4.6.3. Registration for participation

Registration for Central Asian exporters and potential exporters should be done by email or online on a specific site of the homepage. A deadline for the registration should be set.

For the first events, potential Austrian business partners (buyers from supermarkets and food processors) must be contacted in advance by the commercial attaché or the employees of the Central Asian Export Promotion Center. This means that the deadline has to be much earlier than usual.

When registering, the participants must state their business interest in Austria and at the showcase as specifically as possible and which business partners they would like to meet individually during the event.

In order to make it more convenient for the company and the organizer, lists with examples should be offered as bullet points or drop-down menus in order to select the appropriate answers: their own profile (company size, industry, export experience, ...) with the products offered (product types, brands, packaged goods, bulk goods, quality level, quantities, ...), their interests in the export market (industry, region / countries) and in potential business partners (retail, wholesale, food processing industry, ...) and other useful information.

Registration fee

Central Asian exporters should have to pay a fee to participate in the showcase. This is to cover part of the costs of the showcase, but also to give it some value. If it is free, it won't be appreciated that much.

The Austrian chamber asks for 400 to 500 euros per event.

Terms and conditions for participation

The embassy should determine conditions for participation in the showcase and set rules.

These should cover:

- confirmation of the registration by the organiser of the showcase
- cancellation of the event if not enough exporters / participants are registered
- cancellation by the exporter ahead of showcase – cancellation period to be set
- payment of the registration fee
- services included and services that are not included (see below)
- subsidies for participating companies from their government
- rules about the participation of accompanying spouses (should be avoided)

Booking of material and services needed during the showcase

At the time of registration, Central Asian exporters should be able to book some of the materials they will need during the event. For example: plates, glasses, cutlery, electricity, ...

Services that are not included in the registration but can be booked for a fee should be offered. These can be interpreting services, accommodation packages, local transport costs, travel costs, tourist services and cultural events, ...

For logistical reasons, it is recommended that all Central Asian participants stay in the same hotel and that organized buses take them to the venue as a group. For this, a hotel package with transport to the venue and back should be offered.

4.6.4. Event support and services

Interpreters and Translators

Since most Central Asian business representatives do not speak German, interpreting services are required for the event.

Interpreters will be important for the conversation at the product presentation, at the B2B meetings and most likely also for the translation of the speeches.

Catering

A professional catering service should provide all snacks. In most cases it is not necessary for a presentation to offer warm snacks or a seated lunch or dinner.

However, it might be a nice touch to offer traditional Central Asian snacks.

Showcase personnel

Personnel for the registration, reception and for catering during the event is needed.

During the showcase and the matchmaking event the Export Promotion Center staff should take care of the needs of the Central Asian participants and the international buyers, for example offering coffee and drinks for the B2B meetings.

Staff for the stand / table

The selection of company personnel should be made carefully. These employees represent the company and are part of their marketing of the product.

Language skills should be part of the selection criteria, as they should be able to communicate well with international buyers.

Before the start of the showcase, the staff should be trained what to do and what to say to the buyers. Ideally, the training should take place at least one day before the event.

The training should include

- Information about the Central Asian business being represented to be shared with buyers
- Products and detailed information about the products and its production process
- Basic sales information
- How to approach potential buyers
- Conduct during the event such as: full attention to the buyers, no gossiping with other employees during the time at the stand and no cell phone use (checking social media, e-mails, text messages, ...)
- General rules and specifics of the company
- No alcohol rules
- Working time
- Dress code and expectations

4.6.5. Showcase setup

The showcase venue should be large enough to accommodate a larger main room for the presentation of the products and also some smaller meeting rooms or numbered meeting tables in the room for individual B2B meetings.

In the presentation room, tables (rather long than wide) should be set up with chairs behind them.

It is not necessary to have a lot of decoration. This rather distracts from the actual product range. Sometimes less is more effective. The decoration should create an image for the products and support and highlight their quality. The decoration should communicate appetite appeal, convey the naturalness and freshness of the food.

When using posters: not much text is required. The picture(s) should be very appealing, attention-getting and convey the information and emotions of the product such as appetite appeal and freshness.

4.6.6. Cost estimate for the event

A rough cost calculation should be made before the preparation and organization of the event.

Costs to consider:

- Venue costs including meeting rooms for B2B meetings
- Showcase furniture and equipment: tables for presenting the products, chairs, lamps
- Decoration: advertising material, flowers
- Catering: food and drinks, plates and cutlery
- Material for tastings: plates, knives, napkins, deco
- Supporting staff
- Interpreters
- Catalogue with the participants to be distributed at the event
- Media package for journalists of trade magazines
- Marketing costs: for informing existing and potential buyers about the event; printing of brochures and business cards
- Invitation costs: meeting and travel costs
- Accommodation and travel costs for staff and for officials from Central Asia
- Transport costs for transporting equipment, products and samples
- "Thank you for coming" - gift

Registration fees reduce the cost of the event as well as chargeable services.

4.7. The event

The venue should be decorated with some national elements from Central Asian countries such as symbols, landscapes, flowers, ..., but the decoration should be subtle and not "cover up" the products offered by the Central Asian companies.

The waiters and other supporting staff (e.g., reception staff) could wear national costumes.

The showcase could even have a motto like "The Taste of Central Asia" or "Flavours from the Fergana Valley".

The schedule of the announced program must be adhered to. German and Austrian business people in particular try to be on time and expect this from their business partners.

Registration

A registration desk should be set up at the entrance no later than 30 minutes before the start of the event. The guests should be welcomed and asked for their name and business card.

All guests should receive a handout or a brochure that briefly presents all Central Asian exhibitors with their company profile and their products.

In addition, a meeting plan should be provided with the name of the interlocutor and the time and table number for each meeting.

Presentation of the products on the tables

The aim of the showcase is mostly to present new products to a new market and to potential buyers. Therefore, these products should be presented as attractive as possible.

The food products should represent a very good quality by taste but also by visual appearance. Especially European consumers are very visual oriented and therefore, the look of food products is influencing the purchasers of supermarket and wholesalers. The appearance is not as important for buyers of food processing companies.

In addition to the food product itself, the packaging is very important and should be presented in an attractive way too.

Furthermore, this will include also the way how the food products are presented, like in which form, on which plate and with which light effects.



Food tastings

As Central Asian food products are little known in Europe, food tastings can be a valuable tool to introduce the rich and full flavors of regional foods.

Tastings provide immediate valuable feedback from the buyers.

Tastings can be done in several ways:

- at the presentation table of each exporter
- in a tasting through the simultaneous presentation of foods from different suppliers, in which the buyers can compare the taste
- in a blind tasting by offering unlabeled samples of Central Asian and Austrian products for which buyers can compare the taste. This can lead to surprises about the origin of the tasted product

Snacks + drinks

Only non-alcoholic drinks should be served during the daytime event. Alcoholic beverages can be offered for lunch or at evening events.

It is recommended that the Showcase event not be held during religious holidays such as Ramadan, but if so, some rules must apply to Central Asian attendees.

Communication with (potential) business partners

It should be clear to all employees at the showcase that they must pay full attention to the buyers. They should approach them actively and professionally.

Short-term business appointments should be offered and folders with business cards distributed - see also Chapter 4.3

Documentation of contacts and talks by the company representatives

During the event, all conversations with visitors at the presentation table and all B2B meetings should be documented by the employees of the company. After the event, it is almost impossible to remember all the contacts and what was agreed with them.

A contact report should be filled out for proper follow-up.

“Thank you for coming”-gift

At the end of the event, the receptionists should give a small present to all guests as a "Thank you for coming". The gift could be nicely packaged product samples that represent the "Taste of Central Asia", such as small bags or boxes with dried apricots, honey, nuts, ...



4.8. After the event

The showcase exhibition is not over on its last day.

It is important to follow up the conversations and meetings during the showcase as soon as possible. This should be done by the export promotion representative or, in the case of high-level visitors, the ambassador.

This should be the export promotion officer or, in the case of high-level visitors, the ambassador.

Follow up with European businesses

Immediately after the event, all visitors of the showcase should be contacted to thank them for their visit, to check on their satisfaction with the event and to follow up on the measures agreed during the expo.

This ensures the success of the participation in the expo.

In addition, the export promotion officer should remind all Central Asian participants to get in touch with the European partners they met during the showcase within less than a week, even if it is just a matter of thanking them for the meeting and interest in their products.

Follow up with Central Asian businesses

All Central Asian participants should send in their feedback on their showcase participation and to the results / successes of the event for themselves.

In the questionnaire, they should be asked for suggestions and ideas in order to make the event even more successful next time.

Reflection and Learnings for the next event

There should be an internal reflection on the event from the organizer, but also the feedback from the Central Asian and European participants should be critically evaluated.

Keeping these findings and insights in writing can help to improve the performance at the next event.

Controlling

Especially because the organisation of a showcase is associated with a lot of work and costs, cost controlling should be carried out during and after the event.

It is not just a matter of compiling all the costs of the event. The costs should be set in comparison to the results and success of the showcase.

Useful key performance indicators for the showcase are:

- Costs per contact to a European business partner
- Costs per potential partner: not just a contact, but also interested in the products and open for further discussions and negotiations
- Costs per order: e.g., orders associated with the showcase and/or order received within 1 month after the event

It is important to keep costs under control. This is also valuable information for planning the next event.

4.9. Virtual showcase

Virtual events are a new development in the trade fair business, which is now being spurred on by COVID-19 in particular.

A **virtual tradeshow** is a type of virtual event run in an online environment that goes live and stays live online for a limited period. It can be considered the online equivalent of a traditional tradeshow or exhibition, but exhibitors and visitors connect with one another via the Internet, regardless of geographic location, to exchange valuable information and talk about business opportunities.

The structure of a typical virtual tradeshow often includes a virtual exhibition hall which users enter with specific permissions and capabilities. Exhibitors can build virtual stands or booths to exhibit information related to their products or services, just as they would at a trade fair in a convention center; visitors view these virtual trade show displays in the exhibition hall. Users - both exhibitors and visitors - within the environment often create avatars as a visual representation of themselves.

Like their physical counterparts, virtual tradeshows may have other components such as a web conference, a web seminar ('*webinar*'), or other educational presentations. The virtual trade fair thus provides live interaction between users on several levels (one-to-one, one-to-few, one-to-many and many-to-many) and simultaneously.

Virtual tradeshows can be used for international tradeshows, showcases, business match-makers, procurement fairs, or product launches.

Software tools such as <https://www.vfairs.com/solutions/virtual-food-show/>, <https://events.b2match.com/>, <https://www.virtualtradeshowhosting.com/> or <https://www.expopass.com/virtual-event-trade-show-platform-lp1/> are available to support the events.

Due to the current situation with Covid-19, more and more events are taking place either online or semi-virtual (hybrid).

Upcoming virtual and hybrid Food trade shows in Europe in 2021:

- **Riga Food 2021** (Sept. 8-10, 2021): <https://events.b2match.com/events/riga-food-2021-virtual-business>
- **Marketplace Austria Food 2021** (Oct. 6, 2021): <https://events.b2match.com/events/food2021>
- **Prepared consumer food from Ireland 2021** (Sept. 29.-30, 2021): <https://events.b2match.com/events/consumer-foods-from-ireland>

5. Checklist for a Food Showcase in a Central Asian embassy in Austria

This checklist / concept was developed for a showcase for Central Asian food products in a Central Asian embassy in Vienna.

Since preparing a showcase is a lot of work, it is advisable to develop an expo checklist. This list should contain all the activities to be performed, the schedule and the person responsible for the activity. Some of the steps should also include the associated costs.

The layout for a checklist created as a spreadsheet in .xls can be found in the Annex.

These steps should be included in the **checklist** for the organisation of a **showcase for food products**:

Before

- **Develop the program**
 - define the aim of the showcase
 - draft a program of the event and matchmaking meetings
- **Calculate the approximate costs for the event** in advance
- **Agree on a budget** and who **covers each cost**
- **Agree on a project plan, allocate roles and share work**
- **Set showcase date** at least 6 months in advance as it might take some time for Central Asian companies to prepare themselves (see also 4.3). Avoid national and religious holidays, consider harvest time and take advantage of useful events such as trade missions and fairs.
- **Secure a venue**
- **Contact Austrian partners** (chambers, industry associations, HWI, Food cluster, ...) and conduct personal meetings to discuss cooperation: approx. 6 months in advance
- **Send out “Save the date” and information about the showcase to Central Asian partners** (chambers, trade promotion organisations, industry associations, business intermediaries, consultants, ...) and potential food businesses: approx. 4-6 months in advance
- If possible: **invite selected journalists to Central Asia** to learn more about the countries and their foods: at least 4-6 months before the event
- **Conduct press interviews** to promote the event in professional magazines (trade magazines and special magazines for food processors and catering): 3-4 months before the event could aid the search for buyers and B2B meeting partners
- **Contact Austrian / European buyers** and conduct personal meetings with interested companies to establish first contact: 3-4 months before the event
- **Send out “Save the date” to Austrian / European companies**: 2-3 months in advance

Matchmaking preparation

- **Invite Central Asian businesses and food associations to register** for the event: approx. 3-4 months before the event
- **Pre-book hotel rooms** for Central Asian companies and organisations

- **Set a registration deadline:** 2 months before the event
- **Contact registered Central Asian companies** for their **meeting interests** and inform them of the showcase details. Provide them with information about the Austrian market and doing business in Austria.
- **Prepare brief company profiles** of the Central Asian participants
- **Contact Austrian / European buyers** to arrange meetings with Central Asian companies at the event: approx. 2 months before the event
- **Develop a B2B meeting schedule**

Preparation of the event

- **Prepare a showcase layout** of the room with the tables / stands and the B2B meeting possibilities
- **Decide on the table layout and decoration**
- **Book catering** (with waiters) for buffet and B2B meetings
- **Arrange for services** around the event: cleaning before and after the event, parking, valet, security, decoration, flowers, ...
- **Decide who will attend from the team** of the trade representative and embassy
- **Book supporting staff:** interpreters, reception team, waiters, photographer, etc.
- **Arrange the preparation of "Thank you for coming"-gifts**
- **Develop a detailed program with the B2B meeting schedule:** approx. 1 month before the event
- **Official invitation of the Austrian / European buyers** with detailed program, B2B meeting schedule, detailed information on all Central Asian participants: approx. 1 month before the event
- **Brief the Central Asian company representatives:** detailed program, B2B meeting schedule, local business practices, ...
- **Prepare speeches**
- **Develop and print an event brochure:** program, speeches, company profiles of all participants (Central Asian and Austrian / European)
- **Reminder of the event to the Austrian / European buyers** with updated B2B meeting schedule and venue details (e.g. parking, ...) : approx. 1-2 weeks before the event
- **Prepare updated participation list** with Central Asian and Austrian/European guests and special guests (journalists, partners, high-level visitors)
- **Brief the interpreters** and introduce them to the Central Asian participants by email: approx. 3 days before the event
- **Prepare name badges:** in different colours for Central Asian participants, European buyers, journalists, export promotion representatives, supporting staff
- **Set up the venue:** set up tables for the food presentation, for the B2B meetings (including numbering) and catering according to the layout and decorate the room - one day before the showcase
- **Prepare the presentation tables:** done by the Central Asian participants on the day before the event. All processed food (dried fruits, honey, ...), decoration, advertising material, plates, chairs, ... should already be put on the tables

- **Brief the Central Asian company representatives:** detailed program, B2B meeting schedule, local business practices, ... on the day before the event, so that they can prepare themselves (mentally) better for the next day

On the day of the event

- **Place fresh food products onto the presentation tables:** done by the Central Asian participants approx. 2 hours before the opening of the showcase.
- **Set up of the catering tables and equipment** approx. 2 hours before the opening
- **Train the supporting staff:** approx. 2 hours before the opening
- **Brief the interpreters and introduce them to the Central Asian participants:** at least 1 hour before the opening
- **Prepare the reception desk:** decoration (flowers), name badges, updated participation list, welcome pack (event brochure, updated participation list and meeting schedule), "Thank you"-gift (prepared under the table), ... - approx. 1 hour before the opening
- **Open the reception desk:** approx. 30 minutes before the opening of the event
- **Registration:** ask for business cards, check participation list and hand over the welcome pack
- **Welcome guests** by the ambassador and the head of export promotion
- **Open the event**
- **Farewell of guests:** Hand over the "Thank you"-gift and image brochures of Central Asian countries
- **Debriefing session** with all Central Asian participants: discuss the feedback on the event and the B2B meetings

After the event

- **Thank all guests** (buyers, journalists, Central Asian participants) by email for their coming: immediately on the day after the showcase
- **Send a report with photos** about the event to **official organisations** (ministries, state organisations, associations, ...) and **press / media** shortly after the event
- **Prepare a feedback form** and send it to all Central Asian participants by email and ask them for more detailed feedback on the showcase, the achievement of their objectives and suggestions for improvement – approx. 1 week after the event
- **Follow up** the success of the showcase by contacting buyers and exporters approx. 1 month after the event

6. Services for exporters – the Austrian model

In Austria, the role of promoting international trade, industrial cooperation and investment relations has been entrusted to the Austrian Federal Economic Chamber (Wirtschaftskammer Österreich). The Austrian Chamber is based on the public law model and membership is mandatory. (WKO, 2021)

The Austrian Federal Economic Chamber operates with AUSSENWIRTSCHAFT AUSTRIA (AWO) / ADVANTAGE AUSTRIA (the Foreign Trade Promotion Organisation of the Austrian Economy) as the most important commercial service provider and trade promotion organisation in the area of foreign trade and international trend-scouting. (WKO, 2021)

AUSSENWIRTSCHAFT AUSTRIA / ADVANTAGE AUSTRIA, with its **about 100 offices in over 70 countries**, provides a **broad range of intelligence and business development services** for both **Austrian companies** and their **international business partners**. It organizes 1,200 events every year to bring business contacts together (WKO, 2021)

ADVANTAGE AUSTRIA Trade Commissioners around the world help Austrian companies find new contacts and strengthen existing business connections. They put sellers in contact with potential agents, importers and prospective partners. They also obtain e.g. credit ratings and assist with trade names and patent registration. (AWO, Advantage Austria, 2021)

ADVANTAGE AUSTRIA publishes foreign trade newsletters, brochures etc. to promote export opportunities for Austrian companies. It organizes trade missions and official participations in international trade fairs and provide advice and assistance for in-bound buying missions etc. (AWO, Advantage Austria, 2021)

www.advantageaustria.org is the official web portal of the Austrian economy abroad. It showcases Austrian companies specialised in export and import and generates business opportunities. (WKO, 2021)

This worldwide business support is built on 3 pillars: (*compare:* (AWO, Außenwirtschaft-Services Folder, 2021)

- **Knowledge:**
 - Know-how and expertise on markets, countries and sectors
 - competent teams and experts
 - information material about markets, countries, sectors: mostly for download
 - presentations and workshops: covering useful topics, markets and sectors (like food, machinery, ...)
- **Platforms:**
 - Marketplace: like “Marketplace Austria Food and Beverages 2021” on October 6, 2021 in Vienna (see: <https://food2021.b2match.io/>, Video of the marketplace 2013: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zhnJ2PKFJMw>)
 - Participation in exhibitions: partially sponsored, group stands, ...
 - Showcases and product presentations
 - Trade missions and business delegations
 - B2B events for specific sectors
 - Peer-networks like Austrian Business Circles

- Web portal www.advantageaustria.org
- **Partner**
 - Contacts to serious potential partners
 - Networks of reliable business partners
 - Consulting and support with potential partners
 - AWO as local partner on international markets
 - Export financing support go.international <https://www.go-international.at/>
summary in English: <https://www.go-international.at/english-summary.html>

Many of these services are free of charge, for some a contribution has to be paid. For customized services and specific studies and requests a consulting fee is charged.

These services have been offered by the Austrian Federal Economic Chamber for many years and are highly valued by exporting Austrian companies.

Conclusion and Outlook

This manual aims to support representatives of export promotion departments at the relevant state agencies and the Central Asian embassies in the European Union in their successful efforts to help Central Asian companies to promote their products to high value markets. It gives practical advice and suggestions to promote export activities in the countries of destination and how to support Central Asian businesses in their export efforts.

To foster these endeavours, HWI and the CANDY V project, in a co-operation with the Central Asian embassies will organise an Export Promotion-Showcase event in Vienna in 2022. During this event the Central Asian MSME's will be able to present their export products and meet potential Austrian buyers during a matchmaking event with individual B2B meetings.

The manual will be also provided to the export promotion departments of the relevant state agencies of the 4 countries and to the Central Asian Business Intermediary Organisations (BIOs).

To ensure long term development support to Central Asian embassies, export promotion departments and Central Asian MSMEs, HWI, with its extensive know-how and local partner network in the Central Asian countries and market know-how about the Austrian and European market, can be a valuable partner for the described services and support measures.

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Annex

A1. Checklist layout for a showcase

Checklist Food Showcase on 00.00.2022 in Vienna at the Embassy of xxx						
				Status as of: 00.00		
Phase	Activity	Steps	Budget	responsible	to be done until	done?
Preparation	Selection of venue	checking options		Peter	Oct 15	yes
		pre-selection of venue		Peter	Oct 20	yes
		pre-calculation of the event		Mary	Oct 30	yes
		confirmation of site reservation		Peter	Nov 04	
Preparation	Program	development of the program				
		discussion with key businesses				
		consent of the ambassador				
Preparation	invitation of CA businesses	selection of businesses who should be invited				
		invitation personally				
		invitation by mail / email				
		collection of responses to the invitations				
At the event	Decoration					
At the event	Catering					
After the event	Cleaning up	cleaning of the site				
		returning of leased furniture				
After the event	Feedback	internal feedback				
		send out questionnaires				
		feedback from CA businesses				
		feedback from Austrian buyers				
After the event	Controlling					

A2. Marketplace Austria Food 2021



6 October 2021 Vienna, Austria

Marketplace Austria Food 2021

[Register now](#)

Open until 30 September 2021

[Home](#) [How it works](#) [FAQ: Video Call Meetings](#) [Location](#) [Photos 2020](#) [Contact](#)

MARKETPLACE AUSTRIA FOOD & BEVERAGES 2021

Marketplace Austria is the exclusive opportunity for food and drink buyers to visit Austria, to meet suppliers and producers and to get a taste of Austria!

Due to COVID-19, we will be adjusting our event according to the current conditions. This year we will limit the number of participants (registration will be on a first come, first served basis). We will provide masks, disinfection, sneeze guards for every table and maximize the distance between tables.

Due to current travel restrictions international buyers have two options attending the event: On-Site or Virtual

The Austrian Federal Economic Chamber presents an international cooperation forum for Austrian food producers, retailers and wholesalers. You will travel to Vienna for face-to-face meetings with Austrian food and drink manufacturers, visit companies and tour their production sites and enjoy a series of entertaining and informative talks about the Austrian food industry.

The event is open to food and drink buyers and experts from retailers and wholesalers worldwide. This is a fantastic chance for you to source new products, meet suppliers and exchange ideas with decision-makers from around the world. Space is limited, so register now!

We are looking forward to meeting you in Vienna, the capital of fine food!

For Austrian participants: The general registration fee is EUR 550 for members of the Austrian Federal Economic Chamber (EUR 1100 for non-members). Only products produced in Austria can be presented at our Marketplace. Start-ups pay EUR 275 (companies not older than five years).

Info-Download: Interesting brochures for Austrian companies can be found - [here](#) - for each country.

Date 6 October 2021

Program / Agenda [Download](#)

LOCATION

Vienna, Austria

ORGANISED BY



RESOURCES

[Terms and conditions Austrian Federal Economic Chamber](#)
[Teilnahmebedingungen](#)
[Inlandsveranstaltungen](#)
[Lageplan](#)

MEETINGS

Participants	184
Meetings	415

PARTICIPANTS

	Australia	1
	Austria	95
	Belarus	1

Conference language	English
B2B talks:	You will be able to arrange face-to-face talks with the companies of your choice (on a first come, first served basis) between 1 June and 30 September 2021.
Dates for your diary	
Deadlines	Tasks
17 May - 30 Sep	Registration and submission of a cooperation profile
1 June - 30 Sep	International guests select B2B meetings
1 July - 30 Sept	Austrian companies select B2B meetings
5 October	You will receive your personalized meeting schedule
6 October	09:00 - 10:00 Lectures 10:00 - 13:20 Bilateral meetings Morning Session 13:20 - 14:00 Lunch Break 14:00 - 16:40 Bilateral meetings Afternoon Session

Video Marketplace Austria 2020:

Youtube: <http://youtu.be/zhnJ2PKFJMw>

For more information please contact Ms Michaela Günther

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E aussenwirtschaft.consumergoods@wko.at

Supported by



	Bulgaria	3
	Canada	5
	Croatia	3
	Czech Republic	2
	Egypt	3
	France	1
	Hungary	3
	India	7
	Ireland	1
	Italy	1
	Jordan	4
	South Korea	3
	Kosovo	1
	Lithuania	1
	Macau	1
	North Macedonia	1
	Malaysia	5
	Montenegro	1
	Poland	4
	Romania	10
	Serbia	3
	Slovenia	4
	Spain	2
	Sweden	1
	Thailand	1
	Turkey	1
	Ukraine	3
	United Kingdom	3
	United States	10
Total		185

PARTICIPANTS

Producer	93
Retailer	14
Wholesaler	60
Catering	1
Consultants	17
Total	185

A3. Marketplace Austria Food 2021 – how it works



6 October 2021 Vienna, Austria

Marketplace Austria Food 2021

[Register now](#)

Open until 30 September 2021

[Home](#) [How it works](#) [FAQ: Video Call Meetings](#) [Location](#) [Photos 2020](#) [Contact](#)

How It Works

A matchmaking event is a quick and easy way to meet potential cooperation partners. People meet and greet at high speed. 20 minutes are usually enough to build connections, then the bell rings and the next talk starts.

1. Online registration

Register online and submit your own cooperation profile.

In your profile you can state what kind of technology/product/expertise you are offering, what kind of cooperation you are looking for and which ideas you would like to discuss with potential collaboration partners.

All cooperation profiles will be published online and will be for everyone to see. You can change your profile any time.

2. Promotion of published profiles

All published profiles will be extensively promoted by the organisers of this event. Furthermore, all participants of the event will view your cooperation profile. A statistical analysis of 40 matchmaking events showed that high quality profiles are visited about 50 to 150 times BEFORE the event and will still be viewed AFTER the event.

3. Selection of bilateral meetings

Email notification

You will be informed by email when you can start booking bilateral meetings. Check which cooperation profiles are most promising. Intelligent search options allow a quick identification of the most suitable participants/cooperation profiles. Within a few minutes you should be able to identify future potential business partners.

Booking of bilateral meetings

Once you have found the most promising business partners you can select them for bilateral meetings. You can add further meetings any time but please be aware that the bookings are managed on the principle "first come - first served". You can book meetings BUT you can

LOCATION

Vienna, Austria

ORGANISED BY



RESOURCES

[Terms and conditions Austrian Federal Economic Chamber](#)
[Teilnahmebedingungen](#)
[Inlandsveranstaltungen](#)
[Lageplan](#)

MEETINGS

Participants	184
Meetings	415

PARTICIPANTS

	Australia	1
	Austria	25
	Belarus	1

also be booked for bilateral talks by other participants!

Your personal meeting schedule

A few days before the event you will receive your personal meeting schedule (furthermore you can constantly check your meeting schedule online). This meeting schedule gives information about the time, the number of the table and who you are going to meet.

4. Prepare | One day before the event

Technical preparation for Video Call Meetings

- **IMPORTANT: Please make sure you use Mozilla Firefox or Google Chrome as your browser, we have some display issues with Internet Explorer.**
- Check your audio quality, we highly recommend using a headset
- Use a good webcam to improve the image quality
- Avoid connecting via your phone and use a reliable high-speed WIFI connection
- Consider cutting your video, in case of broadband issues

Your schedule

- You will receive your meeting schedule a few days before the event.
- Download the [b2match app](#) in order to be able to join the event and have your meeting schedule always at hand.

4. On the day of the event

Online for Video Call Meetings:

Check the latest version of your meeting schedule through the b2match platform or app and prepare for your meetings. Join the welcome briefing and make sure that you are online before your first 1:1 meeting. Respect the other participants' time and show up to all your meetings or cancel them early enough in advance to allow other participants to use the now available time slot. Press the START BUTTON in your profile to start your scheduled meeting.

If due to unforeseen circumstances you cannot attend a meeting, please cancel or reschedule through the platform. This way, the other participant will be notified.

Note: Download the "b2match" mobile app (iOS/Android) to:


- get access to your meeting schedule via your mobile phone*
- be informed about last-minute changes (bookings, cancellations)*
- manage additional meetings on-site (send/receive/confirm requests)

On-Site in Vienna:

At the registration desk, you will receive an updated version of your meeting schedule including last minute bookings. Your personal meeting schedule lists in chronological order for each meeting the

- names of your conversation partners
- number of table for each meeting

Our staff will be at your disposal during the whole matchmaking event.

	Bulgaria	3
	Canada	5
	Croatia	3
	Czech Republic	2
	Egypt	3
	France	1
	Hungary	3
	India	7
	Ireland	1
	Italy	1
	Jordan	4
	South Korea	3
	Kosovo	1
	Lithuania	1
	Macao	1
	North Macedonia	1
	Malaysia	5
	Montenegro	1
	Poland	4
	Romania	10
	Serbia	3
	Slovenia	4
	Spain	2
	Sweden	1
	Thailand	1
	Turkey	1
	Ukraine	3
	United Kingdom	3
	United States	10
Total		185