Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) for Developing Countries

1. Legal foundations

- Ordinance of 30 March 2011 on Rules of Origin for Preferential Tariffs for Developing Countries (Rules of Origin Ordinance, VUZPE, SR 946.39)
- Ordinance on Preferential Tariff Rates for Developing Countries (Ordinance on Tariff Preferences, SR 632.911)

2. Countries and tariff preferences

Tariff preferences are customs facilities (duty-free or reduced tariff rate). The tariff preferences for developing countries are granted by Switzerland unilaterally.

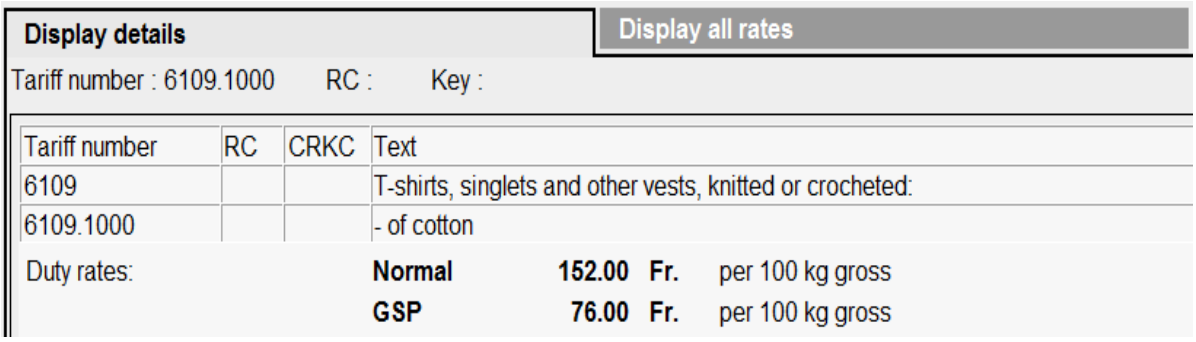
For some tariff numbers, exemption from tariffs is granted to all developing countries (generally industrial goods, with the exception of most textiles). While for certain tariff numbers only tariff reductions are granted to developing countries in principle, an exemption from tariffs is granted for these tariff numbers to the group of least developed countries (LDCs). Countries are deemed equivalent to LDCs which have joined an international debt relief initiative supported by Switzerland and have not yet eliminated their debt.

List of developing countries (LDC see columns C and D).

3. Granting of tariff preferences upon import to Switzerland

Tariff preferences are customs facilities (duty-free or reduced tariff rate).

The preferential rates upon import to Switzerland are displayed in Tares in the "GSP" and "LDC" rows.



If no separate GSP or LDC rate is displayed for a tariff number, this means that no tariff preferences are provided for goods imported under this tariff number from developing countries to Switzerland.

If, when all rates are displayed:

- only a GSP rate is displayed, this means it applies to LDCs as well;
- both a GSP rate and an LDC rate are displayed, this means that the GSP rate applies to non-LDCs and the LDC rate applies to LDCs; and if
- only an LDC rate is displayed, this means that the tariff preference is granted only to LDCs.

If, for specific tariff numbers, certain GSP countries are not covered by the tariff preferences, then Tares indicates this when all rates are displayed (this applies especially to coffee and sugar from Brazil and textiles from China and North Korea).

The preferential rates are applicable only to goods meeting the rules set out in the VUZPE, i.e., they must in particular demonstrate origin as required by the VUZPE. These rates are granted if the person subject to the declaration requirement requests the rate in the import declaration and presents a valid proof of origin. Proofs of origin may be:

- A certificate of origin Form A in English or French signed in the developing country
- A replacement certificate of origin Form A in English or French signed in an EU country or Norway
- Declaration of origin on the invoice in English or French for shipments with originating products with a total value of CHF 10,300 (wording > note: while the possibility of an approved exporter is mentioned, this does not refer to imports from developing countries)

It should also be noted that direct transport is required. This means in principle that the tariff preference is granted only if the goods reach Switzerland without being transported through another country. Transport through other countries is tolerated only if the goods remain under customs control in that country and are not subject to more than one treatment intended to preserve their condition (see direct transport).

On the formal validity of proofs of origin, see also the "Notice concerning determination of the formal validity of proofs of origin".

If no valid proof of origin is included with the shipment of originating products, a provisional assessment may be requested and the proof of origin may be submitted subsequently by the imposed deadline (see Customs Act of 18 March 2005 [LD, RS 631.0], art. 39).

Certain originating products classified in Chapter 17 may be admitted duty-free within the framework of special tariff quotas and subject to specific conditions (see "Remarks", "Tariff quotas").

4. Additional information

Additional information can be found on the website of the Federal Customs Administration under Preferential origin - Free trade agreements and the ordinances referred to in point 1.

The Customs Offices or the Customs Directorates will respond to enquiries.

Questions on obtaining origin in developing countries and proofs of origin for those countries should be addressed to the local authorities.