

Uruguay

Overview

Uruguay uses the metric system of weights and measures. The Laboratorio Tecnológico del Uruguay (LATU – <http://www.latu.org.uy>) is the officially approved agency that controls standards and quality control of imports and exports.

A national quality committee reviews and recommends issuance of ISO 9000/9001 certificates, if warranted.

The Uruguayan Institute of Technical Norms (UNIT – <http://www.unit.org.uy>) carries out certification and elaborates technical norms. It is the exclusive representative of ISO, IEC, and the World Quality Council (WQC) in Uruguay.

Standards Organizations

Laboratorio Tecnológico del Uruguay - LATU

Uruguay's Technical Laboratory <http://www.latu.org.uy>

Uruguayan Institute of Technical Norms (UNIT) <http://www.unit.org.uy>

NIST Notify U.S. Service

Member countries of the World Trade Organization (WTO) are required under the Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT Agreement) to report to the WTO all proposed technical regulations that could affect trade with other Member countries. **Notify U.S.** is a free, web-based e-mail subscription service that offers an opportunity to review and comment on proposed foreign technical regulations that can affect your access to international markets. Register online at Internet URL: <http://www.nist.gov/notifyus/>

Product Certification

UNIT and ASTM signed a Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) in November 2001.

UNIT (<http://www.unit.org.uy>) is the official Certification office for all industries with the exception of beef, which is the National Institute of Beef (INAC <http://www.inac.gub.uy>).

Publication of Technical Regulations

Uruguayan Institute of Technical Norms (UNIT) <http://www.unit.org.uy>

Trade Agreements

Uruguay is a member of the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the Latin American Integration Association (ALADI, a Montevideo-based trade association that includes ten South American countries plus Mexico and Cuba). Uruguay holds numerous bilateral trade agreements of different depth with ALADI partners. It grants tariff preferences for imports from Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Cuba, Ecuador, Mexico, Peru, and Venezuela under ALADI Economic Complementation Agreements. ALADI's general regional tariff preference mechanism (PAR by its Spanish acronym) applies for goods not covered by these agreements,

Uruguay is a founding member of MERCOSUR, the Southern Cone Common Market composed of Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay to which Venezuela is in process of adhering. Montevideo is the headquarters of its Secretariat and its Parliament. MERCOSUR has free trade agreements with Chile, Bolivia, Ecuador, Peru, Colombia, Venezuela, Israel, Egypt, and the Palestinian Authority. Long-stalled negotiations between MERCOSUR and the European Union (EU) were relaunched in 2010 with great expectation, but the momentum as of early 2012 appears to have stalled.

In 2004, Uruguay and Mexico deepened a 1999 agreement, which resulted in Uruguay's first comprehensive trade agreement with a non-MERCOSUR country.

Uruguay's trade relations with neighboring Argentina and Brazil are particularly important, and in addition to MERCOSUR, there are separate bilateral arrangements for certain products, mainly vehicles. Trade with Brazil has flowed smoothly, but in 2011 as well as in the beginning of 2012 several Uruguayan exporters have faced severe restrictions in selling to Argentina. Argentina is restricting imports from all origins including from MERCOSUR countries.

Web Resources

Uruguayan Technological Lab (LATU) <http://www.latu.org.uy>

Uruguayan Institute of Technical Norms (UNIT) <http://www.unit.org.uy>

Diario Oficial (national gazette) <http://www.impo.com.uy>

Communication Regulatory Agency: <http://www.ursec.gub.uy>

Energy and Water Regulatory Agency: <http://www.ursea.gub.uy>

Ministry of Public Health <http://www.msp.gub.uy>