



BIPM update to the regular meeting of the WTO TBT Committee, March 2026

February 2026

Introduction

The objective of this report is to provide key annual updates (relevant to the trade community) from the International Bureau of Weights and Measures/Bureau international des poids et mesures (BIPM) to the regular meeting of the WTO TBT Committee scheduled for 4-6 March 2026.

Liaison with the WTO

The BIPM plays a fundamental role in the global scientific and economic framework by ensuring consistent and accurate measurements across countries. Having recently celebrated its 150th anniversary, the BIPM continues to make a significant impact across diverse fields, including science, industry, trade, and everyday life.

The BIPM maintains and develops the International System of Units (SI), which underpins reliable measurements worldwide — essential for fair trade, regulatory compliance, and product quality. The metrological traceability is the backbone that ensures confidence in measurements results. It links measurements at the workplace to the SI or other international accepted references. There are various ways to demonstrate that internationally recognized paths have been followed and the [CIPM MRA](#) being one of the key mechanisms for ensuring traceability to the SI.

The CIPM MRA - *Mutual Recognition Arrangement* adopted by the [International Committee for Weights and Measures \(CIPM\)](#), the BIPM's executive organ, is a critical technical framework for ensuring the reliability, consistency, and acceptance of measurement standards worldwide. It plays an essential role in facilitating international trade by providing a universally recognized mechanism to ensure that measurement results (such as weight, length, volume, and other physical quantities) are consistent across borders. The CIPM MRA supports WTO TBT Agreement, Article 6 (Recognition of Conformity Assessment Procedures). The CIPM MRA has been signed by the national metrology institutes (NMIs) of Member States and Associates, and international organizations invited by the CIPM. As of today, the NMIs from more than 100 countries, representing approximately 98% of the world's GDP (and 85% of world population), participate.

The BIPM and the WTO have been cooperating since 2013 (the BIPM holds *ad hoc* observer status in the WTO TBT Committee) to ensure effective dissemination of information on the importance of quality infrastructure (QI) and in particular metrology as one of its key elements among trade regulators and international/intergovernmental organizations with *ad hoc* observer status in the WTO TBT Committee.

Activities by the BIPM contribute directly to the WTO TBT Agreement's objectives by promoting internationally recognized measurement standards, supporting regulatory alignment, enabling mutual recognition of conformity assessments, and facilitating inclusive participation in international trade, particularly for developing economies.

In the light of the 150th Anniversary of the signing of the Metre Convention and the creation of the BIPM, the [thematic session on Technical Assistance – Role of Metrology in facilitating Trade](#) was organized in November 2025 to explore the role of metrology in facilitating trade and supporting the effective implementation of the TBT Agreement. In this context, WTO Members discussed, among others, barriers that hinder participation of developing and least-developed country Members in the international metrology system, and explored practices to overcome such barriers, including showcasing current and upcoming initiatives.

Further information on the links between BIPM and the WTO is available at <https://www.bipm.org/en/liaison-partners/wto-tbt>.

Below are some BIPM activities of potential interest to the WTO TBT Committee.

150th Anniversary in 2025 and World Metrology Day 2026

The year 2025 marked a historic milestone: **150 years since the signing of the Metre Convention and the creation of the BIPM**. To commemorate this anniversary in May, the BIPM organized a World Metrology Day 2025 Symposium “150 Years of the Metre Convention: Science, Innovation & Global Impact” in partnership with the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and series of other events with the wider metrology community. A century and a half of global collaboration in metrology - measurement science has been celebrated highlighting the transformative impact of metrology over the past 150 years and opened dialogue on the next century of measurement science.

For more information and access to anniversary resources, see the joint the [150th Anniversary Pages](#) and [the BIPM150 Anniversary Playlist](#).

The metrology community has selected the topic “Metrology: Building Trust in Policy Making” for World Metrology Day, which will be celebrated together with UNESCO as a webinar on 20 May 2026.

The design of the poster is currently developed by the regional metrology organization in Asia-Pacific (APMP) and will be available soon at the BIPM-OIML World Metrology Day Resource website <https://www.worldmetrologyday.org/>. This website is designed to provide the metrology community with communication resources to help them promote World Metrology Day around the globe.

Liaison with other international organizations

To promote the importance of metrology to regulatory community, the BIPM closely collaborates with the OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development). The BIPM has recently contributed to a new report of the OECD: [“Reinforcing Regulatory Frameworks through Standards, Measurement and Assurance”](#).

This report provides useful and practical insights into how components of QI, including *metrology*, can be better used in policymaking. The report reflects *measurements* as the foundation of QI — the invisible thread that makes standards reliable, certification systems trusted and regulatory frameworks effective across borders.

On 22 January 2026, the OECD, in partnership with the BIPM, Physikalisch-Technische Bundesanstalt (PTB) and the British Standards Institution (BSI), hosted a joint public webinar titled: *“Building Trust in Regulation: The Role of Standards, Measurement, and Assurance.”* The webinar was well attended by all members of the international quality infrastructure, regulatory and policy communities.

The BIPM formalized its liaison with UNESCO by signing a Memorandum of Understanding in December aimed at increasing cooperation to ensure effective dissemination of information on the importance of the quality infrastructure (QI) and metrology, a mission in harmony with UNESCO's goal of building a better world through science and education.

Digital transformation

The BIPM is reinforcing its role as the digital anchor of trust for the metrological community, leading the digital transformation of metrology in a symbiotic fashion: Metrology benefits from digitalizing established metrological workflows, while the worldwide digital transformation improves in trustworthiness and transparency by applying metrological principles to the data and processes.

The BIPM is one of the ten signatories of the [Joint Statement of Intent on the digital transformation in international scientific and quality infrastructure](#), reassuring its commitment to developing and promoting a fully digital ecosystem for measurement information at the service of humankind: The SI Digital Framework. The BIPM is currently surveying its stakeholders to assess their status of digital transformation in metrology and their level of interaction with the emerging BIPM digital services.

The Forum on Metrology and Digitalization is an organizational structure focused on the broader implications of global digital transformation for QI and metrology. The next forum plenary meeting will be held in March 2026, at the BIPM headquarters.

Capacity building and knowledge transfer activities

The BIPM Capacity Building and Knowledge Transfer ([CBKT](#)) Programme aims to increase the effectiveness with which Member States and Associates engage in the world-wide coordinated metrological system. The programme has a highly appreciated portfolio that continues to expand. The CBKT initiatives are delivered through various activities such as workshops, laboratory placements and remote-learning activities, including the [BIPM e-learning platform](#), which also hosts knowledge transfer material from RMOs.

The CBKT Programme and the Countries and Economies with Emerging Metrology Systems (CEEMS) initiative of the International Organization of Legal Metrology (OIML) organized a follow-up seminar for the Asia-Pacific region focused on the joint BIPM–OIML publication: *National Metrology Systems Developing the institutional and legislative framework* (OIML D 1:2020), which outlines the development of national metrology systems. The seminar facilitated the exchange of national experiences and challenges, promoted a shared regional understanding of effective implementation, especially in light of digitalization and the green transition, and explored the development of a best-practice guide to support countries in applying OIML D 1 recommendations.

The CBKT Programme supported the participation of young metrologists in various technical training activities organized at the BIPM headquarters and at partner NMIs, enabling them to gain in-depth knowledge and experience through research activities.

The BIPM Time Department, with support from the CBKT project of the Consultative Committee for Time and Frequency and secondees from NMIs, significantly expanded its CBKT training activities. Six courses are now available on the BIPM CBKT e-learning platform, and two international summer schools were organized in 2025: one in May at the NMI of Mexico and another in September at the BIPM.

As of January 2026, the BIPM has 64 Member States and 36 Associates. Necessary steps are underway to expand the categories for participation in BIPM activities, and the CBKT Programme will support the implementation of this initiative.