


Direct line: (+41 22) 739 64 40  
Email: logistics.unit@wto.org

**EMAIL**

To: Heads of Delegation WTO Members and Observers	Email: List attached
From: Ms Bridget Chilala  Director Institute for Training and Technical Cooperation	Date: 03 July 2024
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## **SINGAPORE - WTO WORKSHOP ON E-COMMERCE**

*Singapore*

*21 – 24 October 2024*

The Secretariat of the World Trade Organization is organizing with the Government of Singapore, through the Singapore Cooperation Programme (SCP) and the Ministry of Trade and Industry (MTI), a **Workshop on e-Commerce**.

..... This Workshop will be held in **Singapore, from 21 to 24 October 2024**. An indicative Draft Programme of the Workshop is attached.

### **THE WORKSHOP**

The main objective of this Workshop is to develop a broad understanding of e-Commerce related elements in trade and how the digital economy has presented benefits for businesses and consumers. The Workshop will provide a deep dive into relevant topics, including from the perspectives of businesses, as well as the relevant discussions at the WTO, including the Work Programme on e-Commerce and the Joint Statement Initiative on e-Commerce. The Workshop will also provide a forum for participants to exchange views and share national and regional experiences with respect to the opportunities and challenges in this field.

### **INVITATION TO PROPOSE CANDIDATES FOR PARTICIPATION**

You are invited to submit the names of **three capital-based officials**, for consideration in the selection process. Previously selected participants will not be considered for selection. The nominees should be middle to senior level officials who have proven professional experience and responsibilities in the area of Trade and e-Commerce, ideally relating to one or more of the subject areas covered by the programme. Preference will be given to nominees who also participate in discussions on the above issues in international and multilateral fora. However, if selected, only one participant per Member will be provided with financial support from Singapore.

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Participants are required to be fluent in **English** which will be the working language of this event.

If you have any queries regarding the programme of the Workshop on e-Commerce, please contact Usman Ali Khilji, Head for Asia and Pacific Economies Regional Desk, Institute for Training and Technical Cooperation (ITTC), WTO (e-mail: [usmanali.khilji@wto.org](mailto:usmanali.khilji@wto.org); Tel: +41 22 739 69 36)

## **CRITERIA FOR THE SELECTION OF PARTICIPANTS**

The WTO Secretariat will conduct a selection process to fill the **30 available spaces** for the Workshop. Applications will only be considered from candidates whose experience and current job description is directly relevant to Trade and e-Commerce in at least one of the subject areas of the Workshop. Prior participation in WTO training activities in these areas (or equivalent training provided by another competent international organization) would be considered an advantage. Alternatively, applicants may also show commensurate knowledge or professional experience.

For entry into Singapore, participants would be required to comply with prevailing public health as well as entry requirements as indicated at <https://www.ica.gov.sg/enter-transit-depart/entering-singapore>.

## **COST COVERED FOR PARTICIPANTS**

The workshop is sponsored by the Singapore Government under the Singapore – World Trade Organization Third Country Training Programme.

Selected participants will be provided with:

- An economy-class round-trip air-ticket to Singapore. Airport transfers are not included.
- Workshop fees including lecture fees, administrative fees, and course materials;
- Accommodation for the entire duration of the workshop, including one day before and one day after the workshop. Complimentary breakfast is provided in the hotel from the first day of the course to one day after the workshop;
- A daily allowance of One Hundred and Thirty Singapore Dollars (S\$130) from the first day to the last day of the workshop. A proportionate reduction in the daily allowance will be made if you are unable to attend the full duration of the workshop;
- Transportation between hotel, workshop venue and site visits (if required); and
- Basic insurance coverage (Group Hospitalisation and Surgical; Group Personal Accident) for participants during their stay in Singapore, in accordance with the policy of a local insurance company. [This does not cover any pre-existing conditions, illnesses and/or any outpatient medical/dental treatment, or COVID-19 related expenses and medical evacuation. As such, participants are strongly encouraged to purchase your own medical and travel insurance.]

Other administrative and logistical arrangements will be communicated directly to the selected participants in due course.

## **THE APPLICATION PROCESS**

..... Completed application forms, formally endorsed by the authorities, must be submitted by the Permanent Mission in Geneva or the contact point for WTO affairs in capital. Nominations received from other sources will not be taken into consideration.

Application forms, including participants' details, passport biodata page and airport for departure, should be transmitted to the WTO Institute for Training and Technical Cooperation, Logistics Unit (**email: [logistics.unit@wto.org](mailto:logistics.unit@wto.org)**) **NO LATER THAN 22 July 2024**.

In light of the complex arrangements involved in the organization of this Workshop, the Secretariat would not be in a position to process the names of further nominees identified beyond this deadline.

The WTO Secretariat reserves the right to postpone or cancel the activity in the event of overriding circumstances beyond its control.

**\* Français/Español**

*L'Organisation mondiale du commerce organise en collaboration avec le gouvernement de Singapour, par le biais du programme de coopération de Singapour (SCP) et du ministère du commerce et de l'industrie (MTI) un atelier sur le commerce électronique, à Singapour, du 21 au 24 octobre 2024. Ce séminaire étant donné en anglais, l'invitation et les formulaires de candidature et de nomination sont distribués en anglais uniquement.*

*La Organización Mundial del Comercio está organizando junto con el Gobierno de Singapur, a través del Programa de Cooperación de Singapur (SCP) y el Ministerio de Comercio e Industria (MTI) un taller sobre Comercio Electrónico, en Singapur, del 21 al 24 de octubre de 2024. Este seminario será impartido en inglés, por consiguiente, la invitación y los formularios de candidatura y de nominación se distribuyen sólo en inglés.*

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**Tentative Programme for Singapore – WTO Workshop on E-Commerce,  
21 - 24 October 2024**

Date/time	Session
<b>Day 1</b>	
8:30 – 9:00	REGISTRATION
9:00 – 9:30	<b>Opening Ceremony</b>
<p><b>Module 1: E-Commerce in the Multilateral Trading System</b>  <i>This module will provide a background of E-Commerce discussions at the WTO, including the Work Programme on electronic commerce and moratorium on custom duties for electronic transmissions, as well as explore the role WTO plays as the digital economy continues to transform and evolve.</i></p>	
9:30 – 10:15	<p><b>Session 1: Overview of E-Commerce, Digital Economy and Digital Trade</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction and context-setting</li> <li>• Global and regional trends and developments in e-commerce</li> <li>• Contributing factors that influence the development and growth of e-commerce in goods and services.</li> <li>• Data Issues, presentation by the WTO on the recently published Handbook on measuring Digital Trade</li> </ul>
10:15 – 10:30	BREAK
10:30 – 13:00	<p><b>Session 2: E-Commerce at the WTO and Role of the Multilateral Trading System</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• E-Commerce and GATS</li> <li>• Other relevant agreements (including the TRIPS, TBT and TFA) and E-commerce</li> </ul>
13:00 – 14:30	OFFICIAL LUNCH
14:30 – 16:30	<p><b>Session 3: WTO work on E-commerce</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Background of E-Commerce discussions at the WTO, including the Work Programme on electronic commerce and moratorium on customs duties for electronic transmissions</li> <li>• Introduction to the JSI on E-Commerce including salient features and provisions specifically legal aspects (electronic payments, electronic signatures, data privacy and moratorium)</li> <li>• Update on the latest state of play including next steps for legal integration into the WTO architecture</li> <li>• Prospects for the Work Programme on E-Commerce, the Joint Statement on E-commerce Initiative (JSI), the customs duties moratorium on electronic transmissions post-MC13</li> </ul>
16:30 – 17:30	<p><b>Session 4: Negotiating Rules around Digital Trade and E-Commerce</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Negotiating E-Commerce rules in bilateral and regional configurations (including CPTPP, RCEP, and other ASEAN agreements)</li> <li>• Digital Economy Agreements (DEAs)</li> <li>• Synergies between E-Commerce rules in RTAs and DEAs and the JSI.</li> </ul>

<b>Day 2</b>	
<b>Module 2: Opportunities and Challenges for Public Policy and the Digital Economy</b> <i>This module will provide an overview of how governments can support and strengthen the development of e-commerce and the digital economy through trade agreements and developing relevant infrastructure, tools, and policies, based on Singapore's experience.</i>	
09:00 – 10:00	<b>Session 5: Empowering businesses and workers to power the digital economy</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Foundational digital infrastructure – digital identity, authorisation and consent, payments interoperability and data exchange</li> <li>• Developing and fostering adoption of digital utilities to business transactions, including TradeTrust and recent pilots with the UK and India</li> <li>• Developing digital trust through online consumer protection, online personal information protection and addressing unsolicited commercial electronic messages</li> </ul>
10:00- 11:00	<b>Session 6: Creating a digitally-enabled society and government</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overview of Smart Nation initiative</li> <li>• Digital government strategy and transformation, including Strategic National Projects such as SingPass and GoBusiness</li> <li>• National AI Strategy</li> </ul>
11:00 – 11:30	BREAK
11:30 – 12:30	<b>Session 7: SMEs and the Digital Economy</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Internationalisation and scaling up through digital transformation and cloud technologies</li> <li>• Critical value of international rules to SMEs, to uphold open digital markets.</li> </ul>
12:30 – 14:30	TRAVEL and LUNCH
14:30 – 18:00	<b>Site Visit 1</b>
<b>Day 3</b>	
09:00 – 09:30	ASSEMBLY AT HOTEL LOBBY/ TRAVEL
09:30 – 11:00	<b>Site Visit 2</b>
11:00 – 11:30	TRAVEL
11:30 – 13:00	<b>Site Visit 3</b>
13:00 -- 14:30	TRAVEL and LUNCH
14:30 – 16:00	<b>Site Visit 4</b>
16:00 – 16:30	TRAVEL
16:30 – 18:00	<b>Site Visit 5</b>
<b>Day 4</b>	
09:30– 11:00	<b>Session 8: Emerging Opportunities and Challenges for E-Commerce</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Technical assistance and E-commerce/digital Economy</li> <li>• Open discussion on above issues</li> </ul>
11:00 – 11:30	Break
11:30 – 12:30	<b>Session 9: Industry's Perspective on Digital Economy Policies</b>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Selected companies will share findings and their views on ongoing digital economy policies and the potential benefits and / or implications these bring.</li></ul>
12:30 – 14:00	<b>LUNCH</b>
14:00 – 16:00	<b>Interaction among participants and others regarding E-Commerce, Digital Economy, course and takeaways</b>
16:00 – 17:00	<b>Closing Ceremony</b>