



E-LEARNING COURSE AND WEBINARS ON INTERNATIONAL MERCHANDISE TRADE STATISTICS

Organized by UNSD, UNCTAD, in cooperation with WTO
24 April – 2 June with follow-up webinars on 6 – 7 June 2023

I. BACKGROUND:

The development of a sound statistical system is key to the implementation of evidence-based policies and to the emergence of an open and unbiased dialogue between stakeholders and policy makers. Consequently, it is an essential tool of both economic performance and social cohesion.

This is all the truer when trade negotiations are under way and when countries have to understand and precisely assess their offensive and defensive interests in this context. In such a situation, public authorities have to define a global strategy and to translate this approach into specific negotiating positions. Statistics are a key tool in this process. They allow the sharing of a diagnostic of the current situation between all national stakeholders and a clear understanding of the national interests.

This course comes as a response to several demands for technical assistance in the compilation of International Merchandise Trade Statistics and addresses directly the aims of Goal 17 of Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development. This course has been developed and produced jointly by UN Statistics Division, UNCTAD, and the World Trade Organization. It has also benefited from the close collaboration of the Inter-Agency Task Force on 'Statistics of International Trade and Services'.

II. OVERALL OBJECTIVES:

The global objective of the e-learning course is to provide more easily accessible and rather complete training material for those involved in the collection, compilation, analysis and dissemination of International Merchandise Trade Statistics

The main goals are to enhance statisticians' ability to apply the most recent internationally agreed recommendations on IMTS, define best possible data sources, set up adequate (or enforce existing) collection systems, and enhance statistics compilation processes. Furthermore, the course would communicate the importance of quality, metadata, timely dissemination, and links to economic analysis and national policy objectives. The project would guide trainees on how to better use the internationally available guidance, especially the IMTS Concepts and Definitions 2010 and the related Compilers Manual.

III. PROGRAMME OUTLINE:

Each module includes interactive assessments and links to communication tools for online interaction. Every module will consist of participant's manual with a video summarizing it, a forum, tests. Participants are expected to spend between 4 to 6 hours per week to study the material and participate in the forums.

The 6 distance learning modules are:

- Module 1 – Conceptual Framework
- Module 2 – Institutional Arrangements
- Module 3 – Production and Compilation
- Module 4 – Metadata and Quality
- Module 5 – Dissemination and Analysis
- Module 6 – New Areas of Work

The course will be conducted through TrainForTrade's distance training platform. In this platform participants will have access to manuals, to multimedia presentations, to module exams, opinion surveys and forums created for each module for discussions with the instructor and other participants.

Follow-up webinars will be organized in the last, seventh week following the e-learning course for a duration of 90 minutes to cover topics related to the course. These topics will be determined during the e-learning course.

IV. TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS:

To be able to participate in the course participants need:

- A computer (tablet or smartphone) with headphones or loudspeakers, a browser (Chrome, Firefox or Safari) and Acrobat Reader.
- Internet access
- A valid email address

V. TARGET POPULATION:

Primary Target

Primary target are trade data compilers from (depends on countries):

- National Statistical Office (NSO)
- Central Bank
- Ministry of Trade
- Customs Administration

Secondary Target

- Trade negotiators
- Trade statisticians
- Trade analysts / Economist (reporting indicators)

From

- Ministries of Foreign affairs, Agriculture, Transport, Energy, etc.
- Chamber of Commerce, Industry
- NGOs
- Academics

VI. DATES AND LANGUAGE:

The e-learning course will be delivered from 24 April to 2 June 2023 in English and French. The webinars will be organized on 6 June in English and on 7 June in French.