



## Online course on trade in services

13 November – 17 December 2023

### BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVE

Under the EU-UNCTAD Joint Programme for Angola: Train for Trade II, Commercial Diplomacy Component, UNCTAD assists the Ministry of Industry and Commerce of Angola in building capacity in trade policy formulation and trade negotiations in multilateral, inter-regional and regional contexts.

Angola is currently negotiating with the EU its accession to the SADC-EU Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) to liberalize trade in goods (and potentially services) on a reciprocal but asymmetric basis, thereby replacing unilateral trade preferences that have characterized Angola-EU trade relationship over the past 50 years. The negotiation presents a particular challenge for Angola, an LDC, as the country is expected to accept existing EPA provisions while undertaking its own market opening towards imports from the EU.

Article 72 of the SADC-EU EPA is titled “Trade in Services” and refers to the parties’ “...commitment regarding services in Articles 41 to 43 of the Cotonou Agreement and their respective rights and obligations under the General Agreement on Trade in Services (“GATS”).” Paragraph 1 of Article 73 states that, “The Parties may negotiate trade in services to extend the scope of this Agreement”. In addition, within the AfCFTA there is also a Trade in Services Protocol that State Parties agree to “progressively liberalize trade in services across the African continent on the basis of equity, balance and mutual benefit, by eliminating barriers to trade in services [Art 3(2)(e)]. Against this backdrop, it is important for Angola to be prepared for future negotiations, whether at the WTO or at the continental level, Trade in Services, in such a way as to maximize potential benefits and minimize costs from any future outcomes in this area.

The main objective of the online course is to promote a better understanding of basic concepts relating to trade in services and their implications for Angola in terms of how Angola can make the best use of Article 72 of the SADC-EU EPA and AfCFTA Protocol on Trade in Services. The online course targets trade officials and negotiators from Angola and will remain a permanent source for the Ministry of Industry and Commerce to consult when needed. The course aims to support Angola in negotiating Trade in Services provisions in future Regional Trade Agreements (RTAs) and undertaking Trade in Services reforms arising from their obligations under RTAs/WTO negotiations or implementation of other commitments under regional or multilateral arrangements.

CONCEPT NOTE





The online course is designed to be self-paced and will be hosted on the Angola knowledge hub of the UNCTAD eLearning platform. The training manual and modules are in Portuguese. A live session in Portuguese will be delivered on 23 November 2023 for the course participants, and particularly for officials from the Ministry of Industry and Commerce of Angola.

CONCEPT NOTE

## METHODOLOGY, SCOPE AND CONTENT

The online course introduces the basic concepts relating to trade in services for achieving economic transformation and diversification in developing countries. It provides an overview of the GATS agreement and other relevant concepts with real-world examples (e.g. market access, national treatment, liberalization etc.). Participants will have an opportunity to discuss trade in services related issues with the principal instructor on the forum that will be provided on the online course platform. The online course materials will be a permanent online source on the UNCTAD-Angola knowledge hub accessible to negotiators when needed and will support Angola in negotiating and undertaking trade in services reforms, if necessary, arising from their obligations under RTAs/WTO negotiations or implementation of other commitments under regional or multilateral arrangements.

The online course will have five modules:

Module 1. Trade in services for economic transformation and diversification: This module will address questions such as:

- (i) What is a “service”?
- (ii) What is “trade in services”?
- (iii) How can trade in services benefit the economy?
- (iv) What is structural transformation?
- (v) Why is economic diversification important?
- (vi) How can services contribute to transformation and diversification?

Module 2. The international legal framework for trade in services: This module will elaborate on the WTO rules and the GATS Agreement (e.g. market access, national treatment, liberalization, etc.) and preferential trade agreements such as SADC- EU EPA.

Module 3. Policies to enhance national supply capacity in services: This module will explain the role of regulation and policy considerations in enhancing national services supply capacity, including, for example sound regulatory and institutional frameworks, regional cooperation, skills development, strengthening data ecosystem, etc.

Module 4. Trade in services negotiations life cycle.

Module 5. Trade in services negotiations involving Angola.

There will be five quizzes after each module and the participants need to pass the quiz to be able to move on to the following module.





There will be a webinar to be delivered by the instructor of the course in Portuguese on 23 November 2023, during which all the course participants will have an opportunity to ask questions and discuss with the instructor and other speakers.

## MONITORING AND DISSEMINATION

The Government of Angola is invited to disseminate the online course information and nominate key Government officials from the Technical Group working on the EU-SADC EPA and the National Trade Negotiations Commission, as applicable, and officials from the Ministry of Industry and Commerce, as well as other Ministries covering various services sectors, such as transport, health, education, culture etc. In line with the Train for Trade II Programme's gender equality objectives, we invite the Government to duly take into account the objective of gender balance in all nominated committees and delegations.

## EXPECTED OUTCOME

- Better understanding of basic trade in services related concepts, including the WTO GATS Agreement, Trade in Services Protocol under the AfCFTA and trade in services provisions within RTAs and their implications for Angola.
- Greater preparedness to engage with domestic stakeholders in developing Angola's national trade in services policy.
- Greater preparedness to engage in preparatory discussions and negotiations with the EU; as well as negotiations within the AfCFTA Agreement.

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# CONCEPT NOTE

