

# UNCTAD-ESCAP

## Global online course on negotiating regional trade agreements for trade in times of crisis and pandemic



22 November–14 December 2021

CONCEPT NOTE

### Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has revealed countries' reliance on ad-hoc unilateral measures in response to crisis. Overall, countries showed little coordination despite the existence of a large number of trade agreements. The hundreds of regional trade agreements (RTAs) signed by economies appear to provide little or no guidance on handling trade in times of pandemic or crisis. In order to fill this gap, UNCTAD joined ESCAP and other UN Regional Commissions, WTO and other partner organizations as well as experts from public and private sectors, in launching a global Initiative on Model Provisions for Trade in Times of Crisis and Pandemic in Regional and other Trade Agreements (IMP) in May 2020. Following a global Policy Hackathon to generate ideas on how to tackle this issue, a comprehensive Handbook on Provisions and Options for Trade in Times of Crisis and Pandemic has been developed.

The course is based on the Handbook and aims to enhance capacity of trade negotiators and related stakeholders to understand and design better legal provisions in trade agreements.. The course will endeavour to (1) enhance the understanding of the need for improving trade agreements to ensure better response to pandemics and other crises; (2) provide a range of options of provisions that could be used in future trade agreements; and (3) get feedback from trade negotiators and policy analysts, which can be integrated in future iterations of the course and the Handbook.

Upon studying the course materials, passing the quizzes, attending the live sessions, and completing the evaluation survey, participants will get an official course certificate. The estimated time for completing the course is 25-40 hours.

### Principal lecturer

**Ms. Katrin Kuhlmann**, Visiting Professor of Law, Georgetown University Law Centre and President and Founder, New Markets Lab, who is also the lead author of the Handbook, will conduct video lectures and overall course facilitation. Her areas of research and expertise include international economic law, law and development, regional trade agreements and comparative economic law. She is also a member of the Trade Advisory Committee on Africa at the Office of the United States Trade Representative (USTR).

### Course format

The course is organized as a facilitated online e-learning course, as follows:

#### Video lectures and readings

The course will consist of a pre-recorded introductory session and 9 subject-specific sessions of about 10-20 minutes each - corresponding to the Handbook content. The participants are expected to read chapters of the Handbook related to each subject first, then watch the recorded video lectures. The Handbook and video recordings will be made available on the UNCTAD e-learning platform from 22 November, well in advance of the live lectures scheduled on 7, 9 and 14 December.





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### Quizzes

After studying with the Handbook and videos, the participants are expected to take online quizzes associated with the course materials. Participants will have the opportunity to take the quizzes multiple times but are required to take them at least once before each relevant live lecture. To obtain a certificate, a course participant should achieve more than 75% correct answers on the quizzes.

### Live sessions

Three interactive live sessions will be held to provide clarification on questions and further discussion on each subject. Katrin Kuhlmann will facilitate the live sessions, with other guest experts invited to speak at the live sessions. After studying the course materials and completing the quizzes, the participants will be asked to send written questions (if any) before each live session. Before the live sessions, participants are encouraged to post their questions and join in discussions with other participants and the course tutors on the UNCTAD e-learning platform.



### Guest speakers

- **Mr. Paul Baker**, CEO, International Economics Consulting Ltd.
- **Ms. Mira Burri**, Professor of International Economic and Internet Law, Chair for International Economic and Internet Law, University of Lucerne (E-commerce)
- **Mr. Yann Duval**, Chief, Trade Policy and Facilitation, ESCAP
- **Mr. Matteo Fiorini**, Fellow, Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies, European University Institute
- **Ms. Trudi Hartzenberg**, Executive Director, TRALAC
- **Ms. Gabrielle Marceau**, Senior Counsellor, Research Division, WTO
- **Ms. Mia Mikic**, Advisor at Large at ARTNeT
- **Mr. Ralf Peters**, Officer-in-Charge, Trade Analysis Branch, UNCTAD



### Registration

Registration deadline: 18 November 2021

