

11-13 March 2026

9 a.m. to 4.30 p.m.

Venue: Roseau, Commonwealth of Dominica

Trade in services policy advisory and training workshop for the Commonwealth of Dominica

Strengthening capacity for evidence-based policymaking and the economic resilience of CARICOM

Background

The services sector, including international trade in services is an increasingly important driver of economic diversification, employment and resilience for small island developing States, including the Commonwealth of Dominica. To fully harness this potential, policymakers and stakeholders require robust data, strong analytical skills and effective coordination across institutions and sectors.

This two-day national workshop is organized under the UN Trade and Development (UNCTAD) project *Strengthening capacity for evidence-based policymaking and economic resilience in CARICOM*. The project supports CARICOM member States in strengthening their capacity and data infrastructure to produce and use high-quality, disaggregated and bilateral trade in services statistics for policy design and implementation.

The project has two main outcomes:

1. Enhanced statistical capacity to produce harmonized, disaggregated and bilateral trade in services statistics on a regular basis; and
2. Improved knowledge, analytical capacity and use of services trade data to strengthen economic resilience and diversification strategies.

The proposed workshop contributes directly to the second outcome (the services trade policy component), implemented by UNCTAD's Division on International Trade and Commodities (DITC). It combines **targeted policy advisory, hands-on training and high-level stakeholder dialogue**, with a strong emphasis on **practical application and peer exchange**.

UNCTAD will deliver tailored training and advisory support with a specific focus on **creative services**, and their linkages with **ICT and business services**, reflecting Dominica's diversification priorities and emerging opportunities in digital and knowledge-based services. For coherence and alignment with the broader project, UNCTAD's Statistics Team will also provide a short online presentation on the statistical component and recent data developments.



Main objectives

The overall objective of the workshop is to strengthen participants' knowledge and analytical skills in using services trade data and evidence to support economic resilience, diversification and development strategies in Dominica.

More specifically, the workshop aims to:

- Support national authorities and key stakeholders in **integrating services trade data into policy analysis and decision-making**;
- Foster **cross-sectoral dialogue** among policymakers, statisticians, private sector actors, creatives, ICT professionals and academia;
- Translate improved data and analysis into **concrete policy priorities and actionable solutions** for services-led development.

To achieve these objectives, the DITC team will provide targeted advisory support with the following focus areas:

- **Services sector and trade analysis:** Examination of the role of services in the national economy, with particular attention to creative services and their linkages with ICT and business services, aligned with diversification priorities.
- **Assessment of data needs and constraints:** Identification of national data gaps, analytical constraints and institutional challenges that limit effective services trade policymaking.
- **Policy integration of statistical improvements:** Guidance on how newly available or improved services trade data (including data produced under the statistical component of the project) can be systematically integrated into trade, development and sectoral policies.
- **Identification of priority policy areas:** Use of evidence and stakeholder inputs to identify priority trade policy actions and services-led development strategies, including addressing barriers faced by creative and digital service providers.

Participants

The workshop is designed for approximately **30 participants** and places strong emphasis on **active participation throughout both days**. Attendance for the full duration is essential to ensure continuity between the policy dialogue, training sessions, and group work. The final list of participants will be determined in close coordination with the national focal points, OECS and relevant national institutions.

Participants are expected to include a balanced mix of **senior-level decision-makers and technical experts**, ensuring that discussions are both strategic and operational. In particular, the **active participation of high-level officials** is strongly encouraged, as their engagement is critical for translating workshop outcomes into policy action.

Participants will include representatives from:

- Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Business, Trade and Energy of the Commonwealth of Dominica
- Division of Culture of the Commonwealth of Dominica
- Central Statistical Office
- Relevant private sector and industry associations in creative, ICT and business services
- Civil society organizations and academia active in creative, ICT and business services

Proposed topics for training

The workshop combines **interactive policy dialogue, training sessions, and hands-on exercises**, designed to be directly relevant to national needs. Training topics will be finalized in consultation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Business, Trade and Energy to ensure relevance and impact.

UNCTAD proposes the following topics, with **two to three modules delivered on the first day**, moving from conceptual foundations to more applied and technical content:

1. **Digital trade: servicification, capturing ICT and “modern” services, and monetizing and measuring intellectual property in the digital age** (all participants): Introduction to servicification and digital trade, focusing on how ICT and business services support creative services and enable cross-border digital transactions. Practical guidance on capturing digital trade flows and understanding relevant modes of supply for creative professionals. Awareness-raising on value generation in digital content, including copyright protection and rights management in the creative economy.
2. **International technical standards in digital services** (all participants): Awareness-raising on the role of international standards in facilitating services trade, reducing trade costs and supporting regulatory cooperation, illustrated through concrete creative sector examples.
3. **Quantitative services trade policy analysis** (technical-level participants, with access to statistical softwares like Excel, Stata or R): Applied analysis using international datasets to do descriptive analysis, benchmark performance, identify constraints and inform policy choices. Alternative descriptive exercises will be offered where advanced econometric analysis is not feasible.

Group work topics

The second day of the workshop will focus on **structured group work and high-level policy dialogue**, bringing together participants from different institutions and sectors. These sessions are a core component of the workshop and are designed to translate knowledge into action.

Mixed stakeholder groups will:

- Discuss key challenges affecting services trade and services-led development in Dominica;
- Propose realistic and implementable policy and institutional solutions;
- Identify responsible stakeholders, timelines and enabling conditions;
- Where relevant, analyse real data and translate findings into policy recommendations.

These group activities will directly inform the **country-specific advisory report** to be prepared by UNCTAD and will ensure that workshop outcomes reflect national priorities and stakeholder perspectives.

» Partners

- Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Business, Trade and Energy of the Commonwealth of Dominica
- Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS)
- United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC)

Programme

Wednesday, 11 March	
9 a.m.–12.30 p.m.	
Opening remarks (9.00-9.30)	<p>- Dr. Gerard Jean-Jacques, Ambassador to CARICOM and Commissioner to OECS, Head, Regional Integration and Diaspora Unit (RIDU) of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Business, Trade and Energy</p> <p>- Mr. Ricardo James, Head, Trade Policy and Development Unit, Economic Affairs and Regional Integration Division, Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) Commission</p> <p>- Ms. Dong Wu, Chief of Section, Trade in Services and Development, UN Trade and Development (UNCTAD)</p> <p><i>Objective: Setting the policy context, national priorities and regional relevance of trade in services for diversification and resilience</i></p>
Session 1 (9.30-11.30)	<p>Presentation of the project framework, services trade policy component and recent data developments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ms. Katalin Bokor, Economic Affairs Officer, Trade in Services and Development, UNCTAD - Ms. Nour Barnat, Statistician, UNCTAD <p>Setting the scene: Stakeholder interventions on priority issues to be addressed during the workshop.</p> <p>Moderator: Mr. Matthan Walter, Director of Trade, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Business, Trade and Energy of the Commonwealth of Dominica</p> <p>Speakers from main stakeholder groups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Representative from Discover Dominica Authority - Representative from ICT Unit - Mr. McCarthy Marie, Eastern Caribbean Collective Organisation for Music Rights (ECCO) - Mr. Earl Matthew, Cultural Division of the Commonwealth of Dominica <p>Guiding questions for speakers:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sectoral diagnosis and ecosystem mapping <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Which specific segments of the cultural and creative segments are most active in the national economy? b. Who are the central agents (artists, producers), intermediary agents (ministries, associations, NGOs), and support agents (IT providers, financial institutions) currently in these sectors? c. How does the value chain function for priority sectors? Where are the bottlenecks? 2. ICT and business services nexus <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. To what extent do creative enterprises utilize intermediate business services (legal, accounting, marketing, consulting)? b. What are the specific infrastructure or regulatory barriers (e.g., payment gateways, internet connectivity/cost, intellectual property enforcement) hindering the digital transformation of creative services? c. Are there any examples of manufacturing or traditional sectors (i.e., fashion, software, tourism) increasingly incorporating creative or ICT service inputs to add value to their exports?

	<p>3. Competitiveness and market access</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Who are the primary trading partners for creative services? What are the key external barriers faced by creative service exporters (e.g., visa requirements for touring artists, withholding taxes on royalties, data transfer restrictions, lack of recognition of ATA Carnet)? Which sub-sectors show the highest potential for export and diversification? <p>4. Policy and institutional framework</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> What are the mechanisms for coordination between the different ministries, departments, and agencies of the government that deal with the cultural and creative ecosystem? What policy initiatives (e.g. tax incentives, grants) are available now, or have been made available in the past? Have previous initiatives been monitored or evaluated using data? If so, what were the outcomes? <p><i>Open floor discussion</i></p>
Session 2 11.30-12.30	<p>Training session: Introduction to key concepts underpinning the workshop, including servicification, digital trade and creative services, use of services trade data, intellectual property and standards.</p> <p><i>Participants are kindly requested, if possible, to bring their laptops for some of the training activities.</i></p> <p>Topics to be covered:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Digital trade: servicification, capturing ICT and “modern” services, and monetizing and measuring intellectual property in the digital age – delivered by Mr. Kieron Swift, UNCTAD Consultant
12.30 p.m.–1 p.m.	Light lunch
1 p.m.–4.30 p.m.	
Session 2 (continued)	<p>Training session: Introduction to key concepts underpinning the workshop, including servicification, digital trade and creative services, use of services trade data, intellectual property and standards.</p> <p>Topics to be covered:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> International technical standards in digital services – delivered by Ms. Hildegunn Kyvik Nordas, UNCTAD Consultant Quantitative services trade policy analysis – delivered by Ms. Hildegunn Kyvik Nordas, UNCTAD Consultant
Thursday, 12 March	
9 a.m.–12.30 p.m.	
Session 3	<p>Group work: evidence-based diagnostics and policy problem-solving</p> <p>Mixed stakeholder groups work on selected data-driven and policy-oriented topics, including priority services subsectors, market access opportunities, regulatory constraints and value chain linkages. Focus on translating data and stakeholder insights into concrete findings.</p> <p><i>Participants are kindly requested, if possible, to bring their laptops for some of the training activities.</i></p> <p>Topic 1: Mapping the “invisible” creative value chain <i>Challenge:</i> Clarify how value creation is hindered in systems of value creation <i>Discussion focus:</i></p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trace the lifecycle of a key creative product (e.g. a song or a festival) from creation to export Identify specific bottlenecks in the value chain (e.g. lack of financing for production; difficulty receiving online payments from abroad; inability to protect IP (to be identified by the participants)) <p><i>Planned output:</i> A bottleneck map showing where the most value is lost before it reaches the export market (N.B. this includes Mode 1, Mode 2 and Mode 4)</p> <p>Topic 2: Export competitiveness and market access <i>Challenge:</i> There is limited bilateral trade data, and the specific external barriers to services trade are unclear <i>Discussion focus:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify the top 3 target markets for national creative services (e.g. diaspora in the United States/United Kingdom, regional CARICOM market). OR identify the 3 key issues over how ICT and business services trade can enhance the sectoral development of the services sector List the specific external barriers faced in these markets (e.g. artist visa denials, double taxation, lack of mutual recognition of qualifications (to be identified by the participants)) <p><i>Planned output:</i> A market access hit list for trade negotiators to prioritize in future bilateral or regional talks.</p> <p>Topic 3: Design the “Trade in Services” Working Group <i>Challenge:</i> Institutional coordination is strained and/or certain departments have limited staff. <i>Discussion focus:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft the Terms of Reference (ToR) for a National Trade in Services Working Group Identify key participants (“Who must be at the table?” – data producers and data users) Set operational terms (meeting frequency, data sharing protocols) Identify relevant legislation or policy that would help or hamper this Working Group’s function <p><i>Planned output:</i> A draft ToR for the Working Group</p>
12.30 p.m.–1 p.m.	Light lunch
1 p.m.–4.30 p.m.	
Session 3 (continued)	<p>Group work continuation and plenary discussion</p> <p>Finalization of group outputs and presentation of key findings and policy options in plenary. Cross-group discussion to identify converging priorities and feasible short- and medium-term actions.</p>
Wrap up of Day 1 and 2	<p>Reflections on key messages and next steps by Mr. Matthan Walter, Director of Trade, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Business, Trade and Energy, OECS, and UNCTAD.</p> <p>Discussion of how workshop outputs will feed into the country advisory report and follow-up activities.</p>
Friday, 13 March	
9 a.m.–5 p.m.	Structured interviews with selected stakeholders not participating in the workshop