



Online course on trade negotiation techniques
UNCTAD trade policy e-learning series

10 February–24 March 2025

<https://elearning.unctad.org>

DITC/MISC/2025/4
(25/45)

UN Trade and Development (UNCTAD) is pleased to inform the permanent missions of member States in Geneva of the launch of a new online course on trade negotiation techniques, to take place in English from 10 February to 24 March 2025.

The course is the third in the UNCTAD trade policy e-learning series and is tailored to respond to the needs of developing countries and the least developed countries in bilateral, regional and multilateral trade negotiations. It is aimed at strengthening the negotiation capacities of trade officials in a way that best promotes the achievement of national sustainable development goals. Upon completion of the course, participants will have improved their understanding of the key concepts and techniques of trade negotiations.

The course is open to officials involved in trade negotiations in all countries, including developed countries, to promote a common understanding of the challenges faced in negotiation processes by officials of both developing and developed countries.

Access to the course is free of charge. Interested candidates should apply by following the instructions at <https://elearning.unctad.org/enrol/index.php?id=277>. Once the account has been validated, log in and select the course on the programme page at <https://elearning.unctad.org/>.

The deadline for applications is 9 February 2025.

UNCTAD kindly requests the permanent missions of member States in Geneva to forward this notification to relevant ministries in the capital, including ministries in charge of issues related to trade and other economic issues.

To obtain assistance with the online application process, please contact elearningtrade@un.org. Requests for further information or clarification about the course should be sent to Ms. Ebru Gökçe Dessemond, Economic Affairs Officer, Trading Systems Section, Division on International Trade and Commodities; email: ebru.gokce@unctad.org.

(signed)

Luz María de la Mora
Director, Division on International Trade and Commodities
3 February 2025



Background

Trade is an important instrument for sustainable economic growth and development, yet trade policymaking has become more complicated in the context of current trade dynamics affected by geopolitical tensions, increasing protectionism, new industrial policies and global energy transition efforts. Reaping effective development benefits from participation in the multilateral trading system, as well as addressing the proliferating bilateral, subregional and regional trade integration processes, remains a significant challenge for national policymakers and trade negotiators, particularly in developing countries.

The course is the third in the UNCTAD trade policy e-learning series and is offered in English over a period of six weeks from 10 February to 24 March 2025. It consists of five modules, with pre-recorded videos prepared by the instructor, along with two webinars to be held in February and March 2025, at which participants can engage in interactive discussions with the principal course instructor, as well as trade experts from UNCTAD and other international organizations.

Objectives

The course is aimed at addressing the need to build the negotiation capacities of trade officials in developing countries. It is open to officials involved in trade negotiations in all countries, including developed countries, to promote a common understanding of the challenges faced in negotiation processes by officials of both developing and developed countries.

The course is aimed at strengthening the negotiation capacities of trade officials in a way that best promotes the achievement of national sustainable development goals. Upon completion of the course, participants will have improved their understanding of the key concepts and techniques of trade negotiations. A detailed description of the course content and timetable is provided in the annex.

Target audience and prerequisites

The course targets government officials involved in trade negotiations. Applicants from a broad range of backgrounds in policymaking including, but not limited to, international trade, industry, agriculture, services, intellectual property rights, the environment, labour and technology, are encouraged to apply.

Applicants must meet the following requirements:

- Hold at least a bachelor's degree in economics or related areas
- Possess excellent knowledge of the English language

To successfully complete course activities, participants need to devote around two hours per week to the course.



Certificate of completion

Participants who successfully complete the course modules and quizzes with passing grades will receive a certificate of completion.

Application information and deadline

Interested candidates should apply by following the instructions at <https://elearning.unctad.org/enrol/index.php?id=277>. Once the account has been validated, log in and select the course on the programme page at <https://elearning.unctad.org/>.

The deadline for applications is 9 February 2025. To obtain assistance with the online application process, please contact elearningtrade@un.org.

Requests for further information or clarification about this course should be sent to:

Ms. Ebru Gökçe Dessemond

Economic Affairs Officer

Trading Systems, Services and Creative Economy Branch

Division on International Trade and Commodities

UNCTAD

ebru.gokce@unctad.org

Annex

Online course: Trade negotiation techniques
10 February–24 March 2025
Content and timetable

The course consists of the following five modules:

1. Negotiations theory and practice: Review
2. Conduct of multilateral trade negotiations
3. Preferential and non-preferential market access negotiations
4. Understanding a negotiating partner, part 1: Economic issues
5. Understanding a negotiating partner, part 2: Political issues

Webinars on the following topics will be held in February and March 2025:

Webinar 1: Trade negotiations in today's context

Webinar 2: Negotiating trade agreements: World Trade Organization (WTO) and non-WTO issues

Webinar 3: Implementing trade agreements

Participants will be requested to pass a multiple-choice quiz after each module, to be able to move on to the following module. An Internet connection is required to access the online course modules, complete the quizzes and participate in webinars.

The timetable is as follows:

Dates	Title	Content
Week 1 10–16 February	Module 1 Negotiations theory and practice: Review	Trade negotiations as a process with multiple chances to fail Zone of possible agreement in a distributive negotiation Zone of possible agreement in an integrative negotiation Information, honesty and theatricality in negotiations
Week 2 17–23 February	Module 2 Conduct of multilateral trade negotiations	Vocabulary of WTO Stages in a negotiation and associated texts Role of the chair and evolution of texts Special modalities of multilateral negotiations on goods market access Multilateral decision-making, from the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade green room to WTO coalitions
Webinar 1 19 February, 2–3.30 p.m. (CET)	Trade negotiations in today's context	Past, present and future of trade negotiations International trading system in today's context Challenges in reaching consensus in international trade negotiations
Week 3 24 February–2 March	Module 3 Preferential and non-preferential market access negotiations	Fundamentals of tariffs and market access commitments for goods Differing objectives of preferential and non-preferential agreements Can regional trade agreements (RTAs) with the largest markets replace multilateral liberalization? Potential and limitations of preferential agreements and programmes Structure of market access commitments for goods in trade agreements Market access negotiations on services at WTO and in RTAs
Week 4 3–9 March	Module 4 Understanding a negotiating partner, part 1: Economic issues	Differences between negotiating partners Differences in trade interests between negotiating partners What can be learned from examining a partner's existing RTAs? Profiling the bilateral trade relationship and examining a partner's data Profiling a partner's tariffs and other trade barriers Trade in services and other issues
Webinar 2 5 March, 2–3.30 p.m. (CET)	Negotiating trade agreements: WTO and non-WTO issues	Negotiations outside the WTO framework Environment-related trade agreements, such as the Agreement on Climate Change, Trade and Sustainability Negotiation of issues: Going beyond WTO
Week 5 10–16 March	Module 5 Understanding a negotiating partner, part 2: Political issues	Political issues in trade negotiations Political issues before a negotiation: Selection of RTA partners Political issues during a negotiation: Leveraging domestic politics Political issues after a negotiation: Approval of agreements Profiling the political issues in a partner's trade policy
Webinar 3 19 March, 2–3.30 p.m. (CET)	Implementing trade agreements	What kinds of challenges do countries face in the domestic coordination and implementation of a trade agreement? What are lessons learned from such experiences?