

**Webinar invitation: Capacity building for investment facilitation for development**

**1 February 2022**

Dear Colleague,

On behalf of the International Trade Centre (ITC) and the German Development Institute/ Deutsches Institut für Entwicklungspolitik (DIE), we cordially invite you to a webinar on:

**Capacity building for investment facilitation for development**

**1 February 2022, 15:00-16:00 Central European Time (CET)**

This is the 10th of a webinar series on investment facilitation for development, held in the framework of a joint ITC/DIE [project](https://www.intracen.org/itc/Investment-Facilitation-for-Development/) on Investment Facilitation for Development.

**Like all ITC/DIE events, participation in the webinar is free of charge. However, it is necessary to register for the event in order to receive the meeting link details (please**[**click here**](https://intracen.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_YTL9xo7JSjuUfw-jbGkE7Q)**).**

The public webinar will discuss capacity building for investment facilitation for development. In particular, it will focus on issues related to analysing gaps and assessing needs of developing WTO Members. Special attention will be given to least-developed country Members with regard to the implementation of a future Investment Facilitation for Development (IFD) Agreement.

The negotiations on an IFD Agreement ongoing at the World Trade Organisation (WTO) focus on a range of investment facilitation measures relating to the entire life-cycle of investment projects. While a number of these measures have been implemented to a certain extent by a number of developing countries, many others will still have to be implemented or have to be strengthened.

Yet, many foreign direct investment competent authorities in developing countries – including investment promotion agencies – have very limited resources, and implementing the Agreement might require a whole-of-government approach. Participating WTO Members will have to undertake self-assessment analyses of the gaps in implementation that have to be addressed and, following from these analyses, to identify their needs for technical assistance and support for capacity building. This, in turn, is not only important to benefit fully from the Agreement, but also to be able to self-designate the speed with which various investment facilitation measures can be implemented. Such gap analyses and needs assessment are potentially also relevant in the context of other (bilateral and regional) agreements negotiated by individual countries, e.g., by African countries.

The webinar will therefore discuss key issues regarding how to undertake self-assessments of implementation gaps and technical assistance needs. As usual, the results of the discussion will be communicated to the negotiators of the IFD Agreement.

The webinar will have the following agenda and speakers:

**Introduction**: **Rajesh Aggarwal**, Director (oic), Division for Market Development, ITC

**Moderator**: **Karl P. Sauvant,** Resident Senior Fellow, Columbia University, CCSI

**Speakers:**

**Mathias Francke,** Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Chile to the WTO, Coordinator of the Structured Discussion on Investment Facilitation for Development — ***“The status of the WTO investment facilitation negotiations”***

**Joel Richards,** Senior Technical Specialist, Permanent Delegation of OECS in Geneva — **“*The importance of self-designation, gap analyses and need assessments”***

**Sheri Rosenow,**Customs Attorney and Counsellor, WTO – ***“Lessons from implementing the Trade Facilitation Agreement”***

**Vilayphone Xindavong,** Deputy Director General, Department of Foreign Trade Policy, Ministry of Industry and Commerce, Lao PDR – ***“Implementing the IFD Agreement: The need for technical assistance and capacity building – an LDC’s perspective”***

**Ivan Nimac,** Lead Private Sector Specialist and Global Lead, World Bank — ***“Practical issues in conducting gap analyses and need assessments”***

**Concluding remarks: Axel Berger**, Senior Researcher, DIE

To join the meeting, kindly click on the link that will be sent to you shortly before **15:00 pm CET on 1 February** and follow the instructions.

We look forward to welcoming you to the webinar!

With kind regards,

Rajesh Aggarwal, Director (oic), Division for Market Development, ITC

Axel Berger, Senior Researcher, DIE

Karl P. Sauvant, Resident Senior Fellow, Columbia University, CCSI

**Background material**

ITC-DIE project on [Investment Facilitation for Development](https://www.intracen.org/itc/Investment-Facilitation-for-Development/)

Axel Berger and Karl P. Sauvant, eds., *Investment Facilitation for Development: A Toolkit for Policymakers* (Geneva: ITC, 2021), [available here](https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3830031).

**Bios**:

**Rajesh Aggarwal**

Rajesh Aggarwal is Officer in Charge, Director, Division for Market Development, ITC, Geneva. He is leading a programme of assisting the private sector in developing countries to be the change agent for trade policy reforms and engage in business advocacy with their governments in the design and implementation of trade policies and negotiating positions that reflect business interests. Before joining the ITC, he worked for the Indian Government and participated in the WTO Doha Round of trade negotiations. He has published papers in the area of trade negotiations, including a paper titled “Dynamics of Agriculture Negotiations in WTO” in the Journal of World Trade.

**Axel Berger**

Axel Berger is a Senior Researcher at the German Development Institute / Deutsches Institut für Entwicklungspolitik (DIE). He works on the design, effects and diffusion patterns of international trade and investment agreements, with a focus on emerging markets and developing countries. Other areas of current research include the effects of an international investment facilitation framework, the impact of free trade agreements on upgrading within global value chains and the role of the G20 in global governance. He teaches international political economy at the University of Bonn and regularly advises developing countries, development agencies and international organisations on trade and investment matters.

**Mathias Francke**

Mathias Francke is Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Chile to the WTO and Coordinator of the Structured Discussions on Investment Facilitation for Development. Previously, he was APEC SOM Chair (2019), Director General for Multilateral Economic Affairs, Director for Bilateral Economic Affairs, Chief of Cabinet, and senior advisor at the Chilean Vice Minister of Trade. As a Foreign Service officer since 1989, he was posted at the Embassy of Chile in the UK (2014 to 2018), Chile’s Permanent Mission to the WTO (2000 to 2005, and as Deputy Head of Mission from 2006 to 2010) and the Trade Office of the Embassy of Chile in the USA (1992 to 1996). He is a lawyer from the Catholic University of Chile.

**Ivan Anton Nimac**

Ivan Anton Nimac has been the World Bank Group’s (WBG) Global Lead for Investment Policy and Promotion since July 2018. His team supports a portfolio of activities, including government advisory, development lending and an array of learning and knowledge activities to help countries attract and retain FDI. Before joining the WBG in 2006, he held positions in law, diplomacy and international development with the Australian and Croatian governments and the United Nations. He holds degrees in economics, law and international relations.

**Joel Richards**

Joel Richards is an international trade policy and private sector development professional with over 12 years of advising senior government officials and business executives within the Caribbean Community bloc on issues relating to trade and competitiveness. He is currently a senior advisor to the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) Commission's Diplomatic Mission in Geneva where he represents OECS member states at the World Trade Organization and other relevant international bodies.

**Sheri Rosenow**

Sheri Rosenow is a customs attorney and counsellor at the WTO. She has been involved in issues related to the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement since the negotiations began. She was responsible for the trade facilitation needs assessment programme and is currently responsible for the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement Facility. Prior to joining the WTO Secretariat, she worked as an advisor on customs and WTO accession issues for USAID projects in Central Asia and the Middle East. She started her career on the commercial legal staff of the US Customs Service.

**Karl P. Sauvant**

Karl P. Sauvant introduced the idea of an International Support Program for Sustainable Investment Facilitation in the E15 Task Force on Investment Policy in 2015. From there, the proposal was taken forward in the WTO. He has written extensively on this subject (see [https://ssrn.com/author=2461782](https://ssrn.com/author%3D2461782) ), participated in various events relating to it and currently assists the ITC and DIE on a project on Investment Facilitation for Development. He retired in 2005 as Director of UNCTAD’s Investment Division and established, in 2006, what is now the Columbia Center on Sustainable Investment (CCSI). He stepped down as the Center’s Executive Director in 2012, to focus his work, as a CCSI Resident Senior Fellow, on teaching, research and writing.

**Vilayphone Xindavong**

Vilayphone Xindavong is a Deputy Director General of the Department of Foreign Trade Policy, Ministry of Industry and Commerce, Lao PDR. She obtained her Master’s Degree in International and Development Economics from the Australian National University in 2006. She has been working in the ministry since 2007 as a member of the negotiating team for Lao’s WTO accession. Currently, she is working on WTO-related areas such as investment facilitation for development; trade remedies; e-commerce; MSMEs; and WTO reform. Apart from WTO matters, she was also a Lead Negotiator for Trade Remedies, Sub-Working Group, under the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement.