



ISTIA IN BRIEF

INTERNATIONAL SERVICES TRADE INFORMATION AGENCY (ISTIA) • CASE POSTALE 3547 • CH-1211 GENEVA 3 • [HTTP://WWW.SERVICESTRADE.ORG](http://www.servicestrade.org)

ISTIA, the **International Services Trade Information Agency** is an international agency, based in Geneva, with the mandate of providing training and technical assistance on the topic of services trade information, to developing countries, LCD, economies-in-transition, being WTO Members, or acceding WTO Members.

The Mandate of **ISTIA** Capacity Building Comprises:

- **Services Trade Information Capacity Building** at the national level for Developing Country WTO Members and Acceding Members to the WTO. This comprises the provision of training to national agencies empowered by their respective governments to collect information, usually national accounts based statistics, on services related trade. The objective of this training is to allow statistical agencies to collect information that is more rich in character, that provides greater depth and allows for deeper interpretation by trade negotiators, government officials and the private sector.
- **WTO Negotiator Training in the use of Services Trade Information**, especially for developing economies, least-developed economies (LDCs) and economies in transition.
- **Services Trade Information Co-ordination and Information-Sharing at the International Level** – This will comprise, *inter alia*, cooperation with national statistical agencies, inter-governmental agencies, national trade negotiation agencies and outside experts will be sought, with a view towards providing a world-class solution to the need for services trade information enhancement vis-à-vis technical assistance and capacity building.

The Clients of **ISTIA** Capacity Building Comprise:

- **Services Trade Negotiators from Developing and Least Developed Countries**: Being persons with a proven need for assistance in the area of services trade information, most specifically statistical-related information for their use in bilateral and multilateral trade negotiations.
- **Statisticians from in national offices of Developing and Least Developed Countries**: who may seek guidance in exploring new means for collecting services trade statistics in a manner which yields richer and more useful services trade and FDI statistics.
- **Policymakers and Government Officials from Developing and Least Developed Countries**: Many of whom are interested in improving services trade statistics for the purposes of major policymaking decisions. The involvement of such persons is crucial; national policy coherence in any capacity building efforts has been correlated with long term sustainability and positive outcomes.

The Tools of **ISTIA** Capacity Building Comprise:

- **International and regional best practices**: Providing a synthesis of OECD, WTO, IMF, and high-performing national statistical offices with longtime experience in collection of services trade statistics.
- **Interdisciplinary Approach**: Making statistics seem easy to non-statistical persons, and introducing the new services trade statistics policy framework, including FDI to non-policymakers, being statisticians.
- **Building a competence base**: For the implementation of this process in many developing countries and LDCs.
- **Providing a forum**: For statisticians being official of national governments, to exchange experiences and share advice, with other developing country partners as well as developed country statistical officials.

For more information on the mandate, objectives and current events relating to **ISTIA** can be found on the website: <http://www.servicestrade.org>