

GOVERNMENT OF PAKISTAN
MINISTRY OF COMMERCE
(WTO WING)

No. 1(32)/2023-WTO-II

Islamabad, the 16th August, 2024


CIRCULAR

SUBJECT: - **WTO ADVANCED COURSE ON SERVICES ASPECTS OF ELECTRONIC COMMERCE IN GENEVA SWITZERLAND**

The undersigned is directed to refer to the subject noted above and state that the World Trade Organization (WTO) is organizing an **Advanced Course on Services aspects of Electronic Commerce**. The Workshop will take place from **12 to 15 November 2024 in Geneva**. Enclosed herewith is a copy of the Invitation.

2. Interested/relevant officers, who fulfill the eligibility criteria may send their nominations, duly approved by their respective Head(s) of the Department/ Head(s) of the Wing(s) to WTO-II Section **(along with application forms, C.Vs, valid passport copies, undertaking and details of availed Foreign Training/Workshops) latest by 23-08-2024** positively. Nominations received after the deadline will not be entertained. The policy for short- and long-term foreign training, Cabinet Circular on Visits Abroad and a sample of the undertaking are enclosed.

Encl: **As Above**



(Sadia Sultan)

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Database Administrator
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WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION

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EMAIL

To:	Heads of Delegation WTO Members and Observers	Email:	List attached
From:	Bridget Chilala 	Date:	14/08/2024
	Director Institute for Training and Technical Cooperation		
Number of pages:	3	Ref:	TC24-24

THEMATIC COURSE ON SERVICES ASPECTS OF ELECTRONIC COMMERCE (in English)*

Geneva, 12-15 November 2024

Invitation to present candidates

The WTO Secretariat is organizing a Thematic Course on Services aspects of Electronic Commerce (in English) from 12 - 15 November 2024, in Geneva. The Course is a "Level 3" specialized training activity implemented within the WTO progressive learning framework, and it represents the highest level of learning among WTO training activities.¹

The course aims to provide an extended training for trade officials engaged in negotiations on e-commerce and trade in services. It will explore the relationship and interdependence of e-commerce with services trade, and its relationship of existing GATS disciplines. The course will also address various services sectors that are enablers of e-commerce or are enabled by it. It will further provide an overview of the moratorium, as well as current discussions in the WTO.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the advanced course are to:

- enhance participants' understanding on the relationship between the GATS and e-commerce;
- allow participants to gain knowledge with the trade regime for key services sectors that are enablers of e-commerce as well as sectors that are enabled by e-commerce;
- Improve participants' familiarity with current WTO discussions on e-commerce, particularly as they relate to trade in services.

The course will be delivered through a mix of, lectures, interactive exercises, case-studies, and peer learning.

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¹ For further details about the WTO Progressive Learning Strategy see the Biennial Technical Assistance and Training Plan 2024-2025 (WT/COMTD/W/273 and WT/COMTD/W/273/Corr.1) The TA Plan can also be accessed through the following URL link: http://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/devel_e/teccop_e/tct_e.htm.

WTO OMC

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INVITATION TO PROPOSE CANDIDATES & CANDIDATE PROFILE

The course targets government officials at mid- to senior level with at least two years of relevant work experience who are directly engaged in the formulation of e-commerce policy and/or discussions and negotiations on trade and e-commerce in the WTO or regional context.

Members and Observers to the WTO, which are eligible to benefit from training and technical cooperation activities, are invited to submit the names of **two or three officials** meeting the requirements set out below, for consideration in the selection process.

Candidates are required to have an advanced understanding of the General Agreement on Trade in Services and e-commerce issues. They should be willing to share experiences, prepare short contributions, and participate actively in all sessions.

Candidates should have completed a WTO training activity (E-Learning² or a face-to-face/virtual course) on trade in services and/or e-commerce or have demonstrably commensurate knowledge or professional experience.

Candidates should also possess an excellent ability to communicate in English both orally and in writing.

A passport photocopy and one-page CV must be attached to the application.

COSTS COVERED FOR SELECTED PARTICIPANTS

The Secretariat of the WTO makes available thirty (30) fellowships for this activity. Each fellowship covers the following: a round trip airplane ticket in economy class; daily subsistence allowance; a terminal expenses allowance; and accommodation for the duration of the course.

Interested candidates need to duly complete and submit the online application form available at:

https://wto.formstack.com/forms/thematic_course_on_services_aspects_of_electronic_commerce_12_15_november_2024

- The online application form requires the uploading of a scanned copy of: (i) the applicant's passport and (ii) the official nomination letter signed and stamped by the competent government authority nominating the applicant.
- The application form, including the passport and nomination letter, should be submitted via the online application system **no later than Friday 30th August 2024.**
- Applications are to be validated by the Permanent Missions/Embassies to the WTO. Validations should be addressed by email to the WTO Institute for Training and Technical Cooperation (Email: logistics.unit@wto.org) **no later than Friday 30th August 2024.**

The WTO Secretariat reserves the right to postpone or cancel this activity in the event of force majeure or other reasons that render the execution of the activity impracticable for the organizers.

² Please visit the E-Learning website, where you will find information about online courses at <https://www.learning.wto.org/> or you can also contact elarning@wto.org

***Français/Español**

L'Organisation mondiale du commerce organise un cours thématique sur les aspects du commerce électronique liés aux services, à Genève, du 12 au 15 novembre 2024. Ce cours étant donné en anglais, l'invitation et le formulaire de candidature sont publiés en anglais uniquement.

La Organización Mundial del Comercio organiza un Curso Temático sobre los Aspectos del Comercio Electrónico relacionados con los Servicios, en Ginebra, del 12 al 15 de noviembre de 2024. Este curso se impartirá en inglés, por lo que la invitación y el formulario de candidatura se publicarán en inglés solamente.

Policy for Short and Long Term Foreign Trainings

Types of Trainings:-

- **Short Term Trainings:**
The trainings upto 02 months
- **Long Term Trainings:**
The trainings more than 02 months and upto 02 years.

Eligibility:-

- In case of short term courses, regular officers (BS-17 to 19) working in the Ministry and attached department for last 01 years.
- In case of long term courses, regular officers (BS-18 & 19) working in the Ministry attached department for last 02 years.

Ineligibility:-

- In case of short term courses, the officers who have availed the training during last 01 year.
- In case of long term courses, the officers who have undergone/availed the training during last 03 years.

Timeline for finalization of nominations:- *

Display on website of MoC on receipt of training program by fixing deadline for receiving nominations from applicants.	10-12 days before the last date given by the training organization
Compilation of nomination received after recommendations of concerned head of the wing and submission of the file for approval to SJS (HRM)	10 days before deadline
Submission of cases to office of the Additional Secretary	08 days before deadline
Submission of cases to office of the Secretary	05 days before deadline

* The time lines may vary, depending upon the time of receipt/schedule of trainings by the training organization

General Instructions:-

- i. Heads of Wing will ensure equal opportunities & eligibility criteria before forwarding / recommending the nominations.
- ii. Only trainings which are pertinent to working of Ministry of Commerce will be offered.
- iii. Relevant officers may preferably be nominated for the specific courses.

Government of Pakistan
MINISTRY OF COMMERCE

CIRCULAR


No. F. 1(2)/2019-CTG

Islamabad, the 7th December, 2022

Subject: FOREIGN SCHOLARSHIPS / FOREIGN TRAININGS / SELF FUNDED FOREIGN EDUCATION PROGRAMS FOR BS-17 OFFICERS OF COMMERCE AND TRADE GROUP

With reference to above, it has been decided that henceforth:-

- i. No BS-17 officer shall apply for foreign scholarships / foreign trainings / self-funded foreign education,
 - ii. No consecutive tenures of posting abroad, deputation and a foreign scholarship shall be allowed,
 - iii. In case of more than one applications against any foreign training/course, preference shall be accorded as per alignment of the course with job description of CTG officers and ranking of the universities,
 - iv. There shall be a gap of minimum five (05) years between availing two consecutive foreign scholarships / foreign trainings (1 year or more) / self-funded foreign education,
 - v. NOCs already issued by this Ministry with approval of Competent Authority, in respect of BS-17 officers, shall remain valid.
2. All heads of Attached Departments and Autonomous Bodies are requested to ensure compliance to above instructions while sending cases of foreign scholarships / foreign trainings / self-funded education.
3. This issues with the approval of Secretary Commerce.


(Sabiha Parveen)
Section Officer (CTG)

Distribution:-

1. Secretary, Trade Development Authority of Pakistan, Karachi.
2. Director General, Pakistan Institute of Trade & Development, Islamabad.
3. Director General, Intellectual Property Organization of Pakistan, Islamabad.
4. Director General, Directorate General of Trade Organization, Islamabad.
5. Executive Director General, Trade Dispute Resolution Organization, Islamabad.
6. Section Officer (HR-I), Ministry of Commerce, Islamabad.
7. Section Officer (AOs-HR), Ministry of Commerce, Islamabad.

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**GOVERNMENT OF PAKISTAN
MINISTRY OF COMMERCE**



No. 5(1)/2022-Admn-I/HR-I

Islamabad, the 18th April, 2022

CIRCULAR

SUBJECT: - REQUIRED DOCUMENTS FOR PROCESSING OF 'NOC' FOR APPLYING/AVAILING FOREIGN TRAININGS / SCHOLARSHIPS.

All cases of NOC for applying/ availing foreign trainings /scholarships should be accompanied by the duly filled attached proformas. All Attached Organizations and Autonomous Bodies should also ensure process of subject cases through said documents:

NOC to apply	
Sr. No.	Required Documents
1.	Forwarding letter of Ministry / Division / Department / Provincial Governments
2.	Request of the officer
3.	CV including details of pervious foreign training, if any.
4.	Copy of advertisement (mentioned deadline for submission of online application)
NOC to avail	
1.	Forwarding letter of Ministry / Division / Department / Provincial Governments
2.	Request of the officer
3.	Copy of application form duly filled in for scholarship
4.	Final award letter / terms and conditions of scholarship
5.	Surety bond (Specimen is attached)
6.	Undertaking (Specimen is attached)
7.	Revised 'T' form (Specimen is attached)


(Dr. Beenish Noor)
Deputy Director (HR-I)

Distribution:

All Officers of the Ministry of Commerce, Islamabad.
All Attached Organizations of Ministry of Commerce.

Copy for information:

Database Administrator, Ministry of Commerce, Islamabad with the request to upload the same on the Ministry's official website for information of all the concerned

Government of Pakistan
Cabinet Secretariat
(Cabinet Division)

No.9-148/2002-Min.II.

Islamabad, the 7th March, 2024.

INSTRUCTIONS ON VISITS ABROAD

These Instructions have been consolidated and explicated on basis of the decisions of the Cabinet dated 18th October 2018, 22nd February 2023 and 2nd March 2024

1. Foreign travel of officers shall be allowed only in: (i) obligatory visits; and (ii) the Economy Class.
2. In the case of non-obligatory visits (i.e. those not classified as *obligatory*), that are to be funded, wholly or in part, by the Government of Pakistan (GoP), its Attached Departments, Corporations, Autonomous or Semi-Autonomous Bodies etc., exemption shall be obtained from the Austerity Committee constituted by the Ministry of Finance vide Notification dated 20th February 2024 or any successor Austerity Committee. Non-obligatory visits that are not funded by the GoP or its Attached Departments etc. shall not require such exemption.
3. Officers on visit abroad shall not stay in five-star hotels.
4. No support staff shall accompany on foreign visits; if required, Pakistan's missions abroad can be approached to provide support staff.
5. Where funding by the GoP or its Attached Departments etc. is involved, whole or in part, teleconferencing shall be the first preference in both obligatory and non-obligatory visits to reduce travelling and lodging expenditures.
6. The approval processes for various cases of visits abroad shall be as follows:

	Nature of Visit	Approval Process
(i)	Visits abroad of Federal Ministers, Ministers of State, Advisors/Special Assistants to the Prime Minister.	Visits abroad by Federal Ministers, Ministers of State, Advisors/Special Assistants to the Prime Minister shall require approval of the Prime Minister.
(ii)	Visits abroad of Secretaries and Additional Secretaries Incharge of Ministries/Divisions.	Visits abroad by Secretaries/Additional Secretaries Incharge shall require approval of the Prime Minister.
Obligatory Visits:		
(iii)	Visits abroad of officers in BPS-20 and above and their equivalent working in Autonomous/Semi-Autonomous Bodies and Corporations etc.	Where the size of the delegation is up to three members, the Federal Minister/Minister-in-Charge of the Ministry/Division concerned shall be competent to accord approval.



(iv)	Visits abroad by officers/ officials up to and including BPS-19 and their equivalent working in Autonomous/Semi-Autonomous Bodies and Corporations etc.	Where the size of the delegation is up to three members, the Secretary/Additional Secretary Incharge of the Ministry/Division concerned shall be competent to accord approval.
(v)	Where size of the delegation exceeds three members.	(a) Where GoP funding* is involved, the matter would be submitted for approval of the Prime Minister through the Foreign Affairs and Finance Divisions; (b) Where GoP funding* is not involved, the matter would be submitted for approval of the Prime Minister through the Foreign Affairs Division.
<p>Non-Obligatory Visits: <i>Non-obligatory visits shall also require exemption from the Austerity Committee as specified in para 2 of these Instructions</i></p>		
(vi)	Visits abroad of officers in BPS-20 and above and their equivalent working in Autonomous/ Semi-Autonomous Bodies and Corporations etc.	In case of events/meetings organised by UN Agencies/International Financial Institutions, where no GoP funding* is involved and the size of the delegation is up to three members, the Minister / Minister-in-Charge of the Ministry/Division concerned shall be competent to accord approval, subject to NOC by the Foreign Affairs Division.
(vii)	Visits abroad by officers/officials up to and including BPS-19 and their equivalent working in Autonomous/Semi-Autonomous Bodies and Corporations etc.	In case of events/meetings organised by UN Agencies/International Financial Institutions, where no GoP funding* is involved and size of the delegation is up to three members, Secretary/Additional Secretary Incharge of the Ministry/Division concerned will be competent to accord approval subject to NOC by the Foreign Affairs Division.
(viii)	Visit abroad of officers/officials to events/meetings, where size of the delegation exceeds three members.	(a) Where GoP funding* is involved, the matter would be submitted to the Prime Minister through the Foreign Affairs and Finance Divisions. (b) Where no GoP funding* is involved, the matter would be submitted to the Prime Minister through the Foreign Affairs Division.
(ix)	Visits abroad of officers/officials for bilateral and multilateral meetings/events.	(a) Where GoP funding* is involved, the matter would be submitted to the Prime Minister through Foreign Affairs and Finance Divisions. (b) Where no GoP funding* is involved, the matter would be submitted to the Prime Minister through the Foreign Affairs Division.

**GoP funding includes funding by the Attached Departments, Corporations, Autonomous or Semi-Autonomous Bodies-etc of the Government of Pakistan.*

7. Notwithstanding the provisions of para 6 above, but subject to the requirements specified in para 2 of these Instructions:

- (i) In cases of urgent nature, the Prime Minister may dispense with the requirement of routing the summaries for visits abroad through one or more Divisions;
- (ii) Information pertaining to all foreign visits, irrespective of the approving authorities, should immediately be shared with the Foreign Affairs Division as well as the concerned Pakistani Missions Abroad in advance;
- (iii) In case of foreign visits by officers/officials of the Foreign Affairs Division, where size of the delegation is up to five members, the Minister for Foreign Affairs shall be empowered to grant approval; and where size of the delegation exceeds five members, matter would be submitted for approval of the Prime Minister;
- (iv) Both the Minister and the Secretary of a Ministry/Division shall not be out of the country at the same time. However, simultaneous visit abroad of both the Minister and the Secretary may only be allowed in unavoidable and very exceptional circumstances. The Ministries/Divisions seeking such an exemption shall submit the case for approval of the Prime Minister and should add a paragraph to the summary fully justifying the exemption being sought;
- (v) Ministries/Divisions shall ensure that to the maximum extent possible, officers of Pakistan Embassies in the country in which a meeting/conference is to take place, represent Pakistan at such meetings. However, the Ministries/Divisions concerned shall provide proper briefing material to the Pakistan Missions abroad well in time. Meetings/Conferences which can be handled by Pakistan Missions abroad will be identified and proper intimation sent to the concerned missions. Ministry of Foreign Affairs shall coordinate in such matters. In case the visit is considered absolutely unavoidable, it should be explicitly mentioned in the summary as to why Pakistan Mission Abroad cannot handle the issue;
- (vi) All Federal Ministers, Ministers of State, Advisers, Special Assistants to the Prime Minister and officers etc. will be allowed to avail not more than three (03) visits abroad per year, except for special circumstances. However, the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Minister for Commerce are exempted from the restriction of three (03) visits;
- (vii) All Divisions should obtain NOC from Economic Affairs Divisions for visits with respect to International Financial Institutions.

8. In cases of participation in conferences, seminars, workshops etc. categorisation of the same i.e. either "obligatory" as classified and circulated vide Cabinet Division's O.M. No. 9-148/2002-Min.II, dated 26.10.2018 may invariably be indicated in the summary.

9. Cabinet Division shall update the lists of obligatory visits in consultation with the concerned Ministry/Division by 2nd July 2024.

10. For trainings/workshops of government officers up to BS-19, where no GoP funding is involved, Establishment Division, in consultation with all Ministries/Divisions, shall formulate detailed policy guidelines. Till such time that these guidelines are issued, the current dispensation shall continue.

11. No Minister or Government functionary shall solicit at his own an invitation for participation in Trainings, Seminars, Conferences, Workshops, Meetings etc. from any source.

12. Members of the National Security Committee, Federal Ministers, Ministers of State, Advisers, Special Assistants to the Prime Minister, persons holding the status of Federal Minister or Minister of State without Cabinet rank, Parliamentary Secretaries, and Provincial Governors shall not avail of any offer of airfare or per-diem made by a Foreign Government or International Agency for a visit abroad except made by the UN Agencies/OIC.

13. Summaries seeking orders of the Prime Minister should reach 14 days prior to the visit abroad through Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Finance (where applicable) and shall contain details of expenditure involved including the Foreign Exchange component and balance in the relevant budget head (in the main body of the Summary) and details of previous visits abroad during the last twelve months.

14. Entitlement of different government functionaries to the facility of air travel abroad shall be as follows:

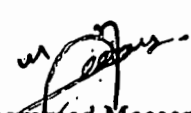
S. No.	Designation.	Class
1.	The President	1 st Class
2.	Chief Justice of Pakistan	
3.	The Prime Minister	Business Class <i>Subject to the provisions of para 1 (ii) of these Instructions, where applicable</i>
	Chairman, Senate.	
	Speaker, National Assembly	
	Minister for Foreign Affairs	
	Federal Ministers	
	Ministers of State	
	Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee	
	Services Chiefs	
	Senators	
	Members of the National Assembly	
	All Federal Secretaries, officers in BPS-22, Additional Secretaries Incharge and equivalent in Armed Forces	
	Ambassadors	
4.	All other officers of the Federal Government, Attached Departments, Autonomous and Semi-Autonomous Bodies, Corporations and other Institutions under the administrative control of various Ministries/ Divisions	Economy Class

15. All Federal Ministers, Ministers of State, Advisers, Special Assistants to the Prime Minister and Government officers/officials shall use PIA flights during their foreign visits, in case the airline is flying to these destinations and on relevant dates.

16. The Ambassadors of Pakistan should normally sign agreements with the countries of their accreditation and, as far as possible; visits abroad shall not be undertaken by the officers of the Ministries/Divisions to sign such agreements.

17. The Federal Ministers, Ministers of State, Advisers, Special Assistants to the Prime Minister shall not take their personal staff along with them on foreign tours and, instead, use the services of the embassy staff.

18. The members of the Cabinet shall, as far as possible, not undertake any local or foreign tour during National Assembly/Senate Sessions.
19. The visits of Ministers and other delegations should be well planned and be made only if essential and serve vital national interests.
20. At the conclusion of a foreign visit, the delegation/official shall submit post visit report to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and concerned Division within 15 days of completion of the visit.
21. All Ministers/delegations proceeding abroad on official visits shall secure necessary briefing from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs before departure.
22. No contact shall be made with the countries with whom Pakistan does not have any diplomatic relations.
23. For countries with whom Pakistan has strained diplomatic relations, prior concurrence of the Foreign Office and the Prime Minister, shall be required for any official/semi-official contact, on case to case basis.
24. No official/semi-official contact with Taiwan is to be made under any circumstances, as part of Pakistan's declared One China policy.
25. Specific permission shall also be sought for any visits involving meetings with the officials of Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK).
26. NOC for proceeding abroad by all government servants shall be required from parent Division/Head of Department. In case of visit to India, NOC by Ministry of Interior and Ministry of Foreign Affairs is mandatory.
27. For undertaking private visits, clearance of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is not required.
28. The hospitality of foreign companies shall be discouraged as a matter of policy.
29. Name and designation of the officer who is authorised by the Secretary/Additional Secretary Incharge to look after the work in his absence, shall be indicated in the main body of the Summary.
30. Experts/Consultants engaged temporarily and on the basis of the expertise which they already possess, will be eligible for visits abroad, where negotiations at a bilateral/multilateral fora are involved. However, they shall not be recommended for foreign trainings/Workshops etc.
31. If any doubt or dispute arises as to the interpretation of these Instructions, the matter shall be referred to the Cabinet Division, whose decision shall be final.
32. Amendments in these Instructions shall be made with the approval of the Prime Minister.


(Muhammad Meesam)
Section Officer (Min-II)
Tel. 9206601

UNDERTAKING

I, [Your Name], hereby sign this understanding that if the WTO Secretariat does not select me for the training on [Name of the Training] and I wish to file a complaint for not being selected, I will do so by filing the complaint with the Ministry of Commerce or the Permanent Mission of Pakistan to the WTO in the first instance.

[Signature]

[Your Name]
[Designation]
[Organisation]