



United Nations Conference on Trade and Development

Distr.: General
23 January 2019

Original: English

Trade and Development Board
Intergovernmental Group of Experts
on E-commerce and the Digital Economy
Third session
Geneva, 3–5 April 2019
Item 2 of the provisional agenda
Adoption of the agenda and organization of work

Provisional agenda and annotations

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II. Annotations

Item 1 **Election of officers**

1. The Intergovernmental Group of Experts on E-commerce and the Digital Economy will elect a Chair and a Vice-Chair-cum-Rapporteur.

Item 2 **Adoption of the agenda and organization of work**

2. The Intergovernmental Group of Experts on E-commerce and the Digital Economy may wish to adopt the provisional agenda contained in chapter I above.
3. It is proposed that the first plenary meeting of the third session of the Intergovernmental Group of Experts, which will start at 10 a.m. on Wednesday, 3 April 2019, should be devoted to procedural matters (items 1 and 2 of the provisional agenda) and introductory statements. The closing plenary meeting, on Friday 5 April 2019, will be devoted to the provisional agenda of the fourth session of the Intergovernmental



Group of Experts, to be held tentatively in April 2020, and to the adoption of the report (items 5 and 6 of the provisional agenda). In view of the short duration of the session, the Vice-Chair-cum-Rapporteur will be authorized to complete the final report after closure of the session.

4. The remaining meetings, from 3 April (after the election of officers and general statements) to the morning of 5 April, can be devoted to substantive items 3 and 4 of the provisional agenda. If necessary, the adoption of the report may be postponed until the late afternoon of 5 April in order to allow for an informal working session to be held that afternoon.

Documentation

TD/B/EDE/3/1

Provisional agenda and annotations

Item 3

The value and role of data in electronic commerce and the digital economy and its implications for inclusive trade and development

5. At its sixty-fifth session, part I, held from 4 to 8 and 25 and 26 June 2018, the Trade and Development Board decided that the focus of the third session of the Intergovernmental Group of Experts on E-commerce and the Digital Economy should be on the value and role of data in electronic commerce (e-commerce) and the digital economy and its implications for inclusive trade and development (see TD/B/65(1)/9, annex IV).

6. Data are playing an increasing role in e-commerce and the digital economy, in a context of digital and data divides within and between countries. The data-driven economy gives rise to new opportunities for wealth creation and for addressing development challenges, but it also raises various potential concerns related to, for example, data privacy and security, cross-border data flows, market concentration and taxation. Transforming these opportunities and challenges into inclusive trade and development requires adequate policy responses at the national and international levels.

7. The Trade and Development Board also decided that the Intergovernmental Group of Experts should discuss the following questions at the third session:

(a) What are the role and value of data in e-commerce and the digital economy in the context of inclusive trade and development?

(b) What are the key opportunities and challenges associated with managing and regulating data and data flows?

(c) What are the public policies, regulations and institutional arrangements in different countries and regions for harnessing and protecting data related to e-commerce and the digital economy, and bridging the digital divides including between and within countries and relating to youth, rural economy, microenterprises and small and medium-sized enterprises and gender?

(d) How could developing countries build capacities, including skills, to use new and emerging technologies such as big data analytics and artificial intelligence?

Documentation

TD/B/EDE/3/2

The role and value of data in electronic commerce and the digital economy and its implications for inclusive trade and development

Item 4

Working Group on Measuring E-commerce and the Digital Economy

8. The Intergovernmental Group of Experts on E-commerce and the Digital Economy, at its second session, discussed the matter of establishing a Working Group on Measuring E-commerce and the Digital Economy, based on a concept note prepared by the

UNCTAD secretariat (TD/B/EDE/2/3). The Intergovernmental Group of Experts adopted the following decision:

The Intergovernmental Group of Experts on E-commerce and the Digital Economy, in view of the need for enhancing the availability of official statistics on e-commerce and the digital economy, especially in developing countries, in support of evidence-based policymaking:

1. Recommends to the Trade and Development Board the establishment of a Working Group on Measuring E-commerce and the Digital Economy, as described in document TD/B/EDE/2/3;
 2. Requests that the UNCTAD secretariat prepare terms of reference for the new Working Group, based on the information contained in document TD/B/EDE/2/3, clarifying that its objective is to contribute to and advance cooperation on measuring e-commerce and the digital economy and that it will avoid duplication with other relevant, ongoing work (see TD/B/EDE/2/4, chapter I, section B).
9. The sixty-fifth session of the Trade and Development Board, at its 1171st plenary meeting, took note of the report on the second session of the Intergovernmental Group of Experts on E-commerce and the Digital Economy, as contained in document TD/B/EDE/2/4, endorsing the agreed conclusions contained therein, and further decided to establish the Working Group on Measuring E-commerce and the Digital Economy, in line with the concept note contained in document TD/B/EDE/2/3.¹
10. At its third session, the Intergovernmental Group of Experts on E-commerce and the Digital Economy is therefore invited to consider the matters required to operationalize the Working Group on Measuring E-commerce and the Digital Economy, including:
- (a) Approval of the requested terms of reference for the new Working Group (a draft non-paper is to be provided by the UNCTAD secretariat in time for the meeting);
 - (b) Proposal of topics for the first meeting of the Working Group.

Item 5

Provisional agenda of the fourth session of the Intergovernmental Group of Experts on E-commerce and the Digital Economy

11. Acting in its capacity as the preparatory body for the fourth session, the Intergovernmental Group of Experts is expected to agree on the provisional agenda for the next session of the meeting, which should come out of the discussions under agenda items 3 and 4.

Item 6

Adoption of the report of the third session of the Intergovernmental Group of Experts on E-commerce and the Digital Economy

12. The Intergovernmental Group of Experts will adopt its report to the Trade and Development Board.

Experts are requested to submit papers to the UNCTAD secretariat as soon as possible. For further information, please contact Pilar Fajarnes (pilar.fajarnes@unctad.org), Economic Affairs Officer, Information and Communications Technology Policy Section, Division of Technology and Logistics.

¹ See TD/B/65(1)/9, chapter I, section C, paras. 3 and 4.