



Invitation: How to ensure a positive development impact of a future Investment Facilitation for Development Agreement?

Session at the IISD Trade + Sustainability Hub Virtual Conference

3 December 2021, 16:30 to 17:45 Central European Time (CET)

Dear Colleague,

On behalf of the International Trade Centre (ITC) and the German Development Institute/ Deutsches Institut für Entwicklungspolitik (DIE), and as part of the IISD Trade + Sustainability Hub Virtual Conference, we cordially invite you to a session on:

How to ensure a positive development impact of a future Investment Facilitation for Development Agreement?

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Global flows of foreign direct investment (FDI) have been declining for years, a negative trend that accelerated during the COVID-19 pandemic. Against this background, countries are searching for new ways to attract investment. In this context, a group of more than 100 World Trade Organization (WTO) Members are negotiating an Investment Facilitation for Development (IFD) Agreement. This session aims to think ahead towards the implementation phase and the challenges faced by developing and least developed country Members. A future IFD Agreement will only be beneficial for the Members if they are willing and able to implement the Agreement in a way that it contributes to sustainable development.

The session will discuss three key elements of such a forward-looking implementation strategy. First, it is necessary to take stock of the provisions that directly relate to sustainable development, to properly assess the potential impact of the Agreement. Second, there is a need to understand the potential implementation gaps to assess the requirements for technical and financial assistance, in particular for developing countries. Third, the session will discuss how a pro-sustainable development agenda of a future WTO investment facilitation committee could look like. In respect to these three aspects, this session will draw from novel empirical research as well as insights from broad stakeholder consultations conducted in the framework of an ongoing ITC/DIE project on Investment Facilitation for Development, the main results of which are contained [here](#).

Participation in the session is free of charge. However, it is necessary to register for the event (please [click here](#)), to receive the meeting link details.

The session will have the following agenda and speakers:

Welcome and introduction by the chair: Rajesh Aggarwal, Officer in Charge, Director, Division for Market Development, ITC

Speakers:

Valéria Mendes Costa, First Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Brazil – *“What are the key development-related provisions in the current IFD draft?”*

Zoryana Olekseyuk, Senior Researcher, German Development Institute / Deutsches Institut für Entwicklungspolitik (DIE) – *“The role of gap analyses, need assessments and technical assistance/capacity building in implementing a future IFD Agreement”*

Karl P. Sauvant, Resident Senior Fellow, Columbia University, CCSI – *“How could a pro-development agenda of an investment facilitation committee look like?”*

Concluding remarks: Axel Berger, Senior Researcher, German Development Institute / Deutsches Institut für Entwicklungspolitik (DIE)

We look forward to welcoming you to the session!

With kind regards,

Rajesh Aggarwal, Officer in Charge, Director, 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](#)

Axel Berger and Karl P. Sauvant, eds., *Investment Facilitation for Development: A Toolkit for Policymakers* (Geneva: ITC, 2021), [available here](#).

Axel Berger, Ali Dadkhah and Zoryana Olekseyuk, *Quantifying Investment Facilitation at Country Level - Introducing a New Index* (Bonn: DIE, 2021), [available here](#).

Bios

Rajesh Aggarwal

Rajesh Aggarwal is Officer in Charge, Director, Division for Market Development, ITC, Geneva. He is leading a program of assisting the private sector in developing countries to be the change agent for trade policy reform and engage in business advocacy with their governments in design and implementation of trade policies and negotiating positions that reflect the business interests. Before joining the ITC, he worked for the Indian Government and participated in 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.

Valéria Mendes Costa

Valéria Mendes Costa is a diplomat at the Brazilian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. She currently works in the Services and Industry Promotion Department, dealing with investment issues. Previously, she served in the Brazilian Mission to the WTO, where she was in charge of dispute settlement. She has a Bachelor's degree in law from the Catholic University of São Paulo, a Master Degree in Political Science from Sciences Po - Paris and a Master Degree in International Dispute Settlement from the Graduate Institute - Geneva.

Zoryana Olekseyuk

Zoryana Olekseyuk is a Senior Researcher at DIE. Her work focuses on economic integration/disintegration, trade, FDI, and investment facilitation, mainly with respect to developing and emerging economies. Being an experienced computable general equilibrium (CGE) modeler, she developed many innovative CGE models, e.g., incorporating data from heterogeneous firms and FDI in services. She has contributed to many international research projects and acts as a consultant for the World Bank. Her research is published in such journals as World Economy, Empirica, Review of Development Economics, Economic Modeling, and the Journal of International Trade and Economic Development.

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>), 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.