



**P166 SHORT COURSES
ON KEY ISSUES ON
THE INTERNATIONAL
ECONOMIC AGENDA**

Short courses for Permanent Missions in Geneva
Organised by the Division on Technology and Logistics-Knowledge Development Branch
Policy Capacity Building Section / P166 courses

The Digital Economy and the Challenge of Structural Transformation in Developing Countries

Monday, 28 October 2019

Delivered by the Division for Africa, least developed countries and special programmes and the Division of Technology and Logistics

PROGRAMME

Geneva, Palais des Nations		Room XXV
10:00 - 10:15	Welcoming remarks by Mr. Angel Gonzalez Sanz, Chief, Science, Technology and ICT Branch, Division on Technology and Logistics, UNCTAD <i>Sessions will be moderated by Ms. Randa Jamal, Project Coordinator, Policy Capacity Building Section</i>	
10:15 - 11:30	Session 1 This session will shed light on the emergence and spread of digital technologies are transforming modes of production and consumption worldwide. Additionally, it will zoom in on the effects on firms and business models, and how they alter patterns of employment and international trade. These technologies are very differentiated between developed and developing countries, and among firms with different levels of technological capabilities, which is a major challenge for innovation and development policies. <i>Q&A session</i> <i>Presented by Mr. Angel Gonzalez Sanz, Chief, Science, Technology and ICT Branch, Division on Technology and Logistics, UNCTAD</i>	
11.30 – 11.45	Coffee break	
11.45 – 13.00	Session 2 This session will address digitalization on structural transformation and their impact on developing countries. Structural transformation is a defining feature of the process of economic development and a pre-condition for the achievement of the SDGs. It will also analyse the current impact of technological capabilities on developing countries – including the LDCs – in terms of productive transformation, employment generation, and foreign trade. Based on this, it will examine the policy options available to national policymakers and to the international community to strengthen the technological capabilities of developing countries and narrow the digital divide. These policies will contribute to the realization of the 2030 Agenda.	

The Digital Economy and the Challenge of Structural Transformation in Developing Countries

28 October 2019, room XXV

Delivered by the Division for Africa, Least Developed Countries and Special Programmes, and the Division of Technology and Logistics

The emergence and spread of digital technologies are transforming modes of production and consumption worldwide. They have disruptive effects on firms and business models, and deeply alter patterns of employment and international trade. The impacts of these technologies are very differentiated between developed and developing countries, and among firms with different levels of technological capabilities. A small number of firms and countries are typically leaders and winners in the digital economy, which tends to widen productivity, income and welfare gaps between and within countries. For developing countries, the digital economy presents steep challenges, but also some opportunities in their quest for structural transformation. Understanding the impact of digitalization on structural transformation is crucial for developing countries since structural transformation is a defining feature of the process of economic development and a pre-condition for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

The short course will present the main technological and economic features of the so-called fourth industrial revolution such as the Internet of things, artificial intelligences, big data, machine learning, and robotization. It will analyse their current impacts on developing countries – including the LDCs – in terms of technological capabilities, productive transformation, employment generation, and foreign trade. Based on this, it will examine the policy options available to national policymakers and to the international community to strengthen the technological capabilities of developing countries and narrow the digital divide. These policies will contribute to the realization of the 2030 Agenda.

Rolf Traeger is Chief of the Least Developed Countries Section of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and he coordinates the research and writing of the flagship publication *The Least Developed Countries Report*. Based on his research work, he undertakes capacity-building and training activities for policymakers and researchers. He has worked at the United Nations for almost 30 years and he was previously a co-author of the *Economic Survey of Europe*, of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe. His main research interests include: sustainable development strategies and policies, structural transformation, technology, poverty, international trade and economic geography. He holds a PhD in economics from the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies and an MSE from the University of Lausanne (both in Switzerland), and a BA in economics from the Getúlio Vargas Foundation in São Paulo (Brazil).

Angel González Sanz is the Chief of the Science, Technology and ICT Branch of the Division on Technology and Logistics of UNCTAD. He joined the United Nations as an economist in 1994. Since then the main focus of his work has been on programmes dealing with technology including ICTs, and innovation policy. Prior to his current functions, he led the supporting intergovernmental policy dialogue in UNCTAD in the area of technology and innovation as well as the implementation of advisory and technical assistance programmes, including UNCTAD's programme of Science, Technology and Innovation Policy Reviews.