



ONLINE

ENTERPRISES

# DESIGNING AND IMPLEMENTING CONDUCTIVE POLICIES FOR MSME DEVELOPMENT

20 SEPTEMBER – 14 OCTOBER 2022

 20 HOURS

*Information Note*



International  
Labour  
Organization



International Training Centre

## BACKGROUND

According to research by the ILO, two thirds of people worldwide work in enterprises that have fewer than 49 employees. These small economic units, however, tend to offer lower-quality jobs than their larger counterparts, and have been strongly affected by the business disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Furthermore, Micro, Small, and Medium Sized Enterprises (MSMEs), usually find it hard to navigate the set of policies and regulations that relate with owning and running a business. On the one hand, they may miss the opportunities provided by existing business support schemes because they do not have access to the information on them, or to the expertise needed to benefit from them. On the other hand, they may lack the resources needed to fully comply with legal and tax requirements, and thus expose themselves to sanctions and fines.

For this reason, MSMEs are the ones that struggle the most when this set of policies and regulations (the “enabling environment”) is not designed in a way that takes into account their specific needs and aspirations. A complex enabling environment, in fact, generates additional costs for MSMEs, who have to spend time and resources to comply with it, which reduces their ability to invest, grow, and create more and better jobs. Thus, designing and implementing policies that support the development of Micro, Small, and Medium Sized Enterprises (MSMEs) is a fundamental way to contribute to the decent work agenda.

Since 2007, as an application of the International Labour Conference’s Conclusions on the Promotion of sustainable enterprises, the International Labour Organization has been supporting its constituents with specific programme on SME policies, called the Enabling Environment for Sustainable Enterprises (EASE). In its 15 years of existence, EASE has conducted over 50 country-level studies on the business environment and supported tripartite partners (governments, employers, and workers) to jointly identify and introduce conducive policies for SME development.

This course builds on the ILO’s experience, as well as research by other agencies such as the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the World Bank, to provide an overview of global best practices in policy support for MSME development. Throughout the course, you will be exposed to topics such as applying labour law and preferential tax regimes to MSMEs, simplifying the business environment, improving access to finance and non-financial business development service programmes, favouring innovation in MSMEs, and how to design programmes to improve productivity, working conditions, and linkages to value chains for small businesses. Particular attention will be given to ways of involving different actors (governments, development partners, workers, and the private sector) in the design and implementation of policies and programmes to foster small enterprise development.

# TRAINING OBJECTIVES

At the end of this course, participants will have:

- Developed a clear understanding of how the enabling environment affects an enterprise's ability to grow and create more and better jobs
- Acquired technical tools to analyse the enabling environment from the point of view of MSMEs and their contribution to decent work
- Been exposed to best practices and case studies on business environment reform
- Learned how different stakeholders, such as Governments, Employer's and Worker's organizations can best be involved in a policy reform process

## COURSE CONTENT

The course will take place over four weeks, and feature a combination of tutor-based presentations, case studies, interactive group exercises, as well as self-guided learning materials and study guides. Over the duration of this training course, you will have the opportunity to connect with your peers and learn more about the following topics.

### WEEK 1 (3 HOURS)

#### Session 1 – Welcome and on-boarding

**Tuesday September 20th, 14.30 – 15.30 CEST**

The first webinar will be the occasion to meet the other participants and go over the learning objectives and structure of the training, as well as present the methodologies and tools that will be used in the coming weeks. It will also be an opportunity to troubleshoot any technical problems linked with accessing the course's interactive platform (the eCampus).

#### Assignment 1

As a first assignment, you will have to post your introduction on the course's eCampus. Tell us why you chose to attend this course, and why, according to you, policies are key for the development of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises.

#### Study guide – Module 1

After the first session, you will be granted access to the first module of the study guide, which you will have to complete before Session 2. The study guide will give you an introduction to the key concepts related to the enabling environment, and the main tools used to analyse it.

## WEEK 2 (5 HOURS)

### Session 2 – SME policies and the decent work agenda

**Tuesday 27 September, 14.30 – 15.30 CEST**

The second session provides an overview of the rationale behind designing specific policies for Micro, Small, and Medium sized enterprises. During this webinar, we will focus on how SMEs employ the overwhelming majority of the population, especially when the informal economy is also taken into consideration, and are therefore a major channel of poverty reduction through improved wages and working conditions. Finally, we will have a look at a theory of change on how business environment reform can contribute to furthering the decent work agenda and on improving resilience in MSMEs.

### Session 3 – Analysing the business environment

**Thursday 29 September, 14.30 – 15.30 CEST**

During the third session, you will be guided in an interactive exercise where you will use the tools described in Module 1 of the Study Guide to conduct a short analysis of the Enabling Environment on the basis of a fictional case study. Part of the session will be devoted to reflecting on how the methodology can be adapted to analyse the Enabling Environment in fragile and conflict affected settings, and how the methodology can take into account gender dynamics in business.

### Assignment 2

As a second assignment, we will ask you to identify one issue or area in your country's business environment that is affecting the enterprises' capacity to start up and grow, and share it with the rest of the group.

### Study guide – Module 2

The second module of the study guide provides an overview of the different approaches to enabling environment reform, as well as case studies of successful support programmes for Micro, Small and Medium Sized Enterprises.

## WEEK 3 (5 HOURS)

### Session 4 – Starting a business: simplifying registration procedures

**Tuesday 4 October, 14.30 – 15.30 CEST**

During this session, we will focus on the process of starting a business: how can we simplify it to ensure that more businesses can be created and formalized? Specific attention is given to the work done by the ILO in the area of enterprise formalization, and linking simplified registration procedures to other incentive packages.

### Session 5 – Running a business – Linking SME policies to decent work

**Thursday 6 October, 14.30 – 15.30 CEST**

This session concentrates on the policies that can better support SMEs in their path to growth and decent job creation. It will cover topics such as preferential tax regimes for SMEs, best practices in applying labour laws to MSMEs, and policies that help improving productivity and innovation in small enterprises.

### Assignment 3

The third assignment for the course will consist in reflecting on which policies can help solve or alleviate the issue that you identified during Week 2's assignment

### Study guide – Module 3

The third module of the study guide focuses on the governance of MSME policies. It will provide you with an overview of best practices on tripartite dialogue mechanisms for the design and implementation of SME policies.

## WEEK 4 (3 HOURS)

### Session 6 – Social Dialogue and Tripartism in the SME policy cycle

**Tuesday 11 October, 14.30 – 15.30 CEST**

This session will build on the contents of Module 3 of the study guide to go over some practical case studies and examples of tripartite collaboration for the implementation of enabling environment reform. An interactive exercise will allow you to brainstorm on the ideal governance model for a specific reform programme.

## Session 7 – Monitoring of SME Policy and Results

**Thursday 13 October, 14.30 – 15.30 CEST**

The final session looks at the systems that can be put into place to monitor the progress of the SME policy reform process, and assess the impact of SME policies on business creation and growth. During this final webinar, we will also discuss the main takeaways from your learning journey, as well as how you can implement what you have learned in your own day-to-day work. Finally, you will have the space to present some of the individual assignment you completed during the course.

### Assignment 4

The final assignment consists in identifying the key actors that could and should be involved in the implementation of the policies identified during week 3's assignment

## WHO ATTENDS THIS COURSE

This course is intended for:

- Line ministries involved in employment promotion and Small and Medium Enterprise promotion
- Government agencies in charge of promoting SME development
- Representatives from Workers' and Employers' organizations with an interest in learning how to influence the SME policy development process
- Practitioners from international organizations and NGOs that are implementing SME development programmes or policy support programmes
- Researchers with an academic interest on how SME policies can contribute to decent job creation

## PRACTICAL INFORMATION

The course is offered in English and French, with a total estimated time commitment of 20 hours. The course runs from the **19th of September to the 15th of October, 2022**, and will be held on the ITC-ILO's digital learning platform, the eCampus.

The participation fee is of **980 EUR**, contact us at [see@itcilo.org](mailto:see@itcilo.org) if you would like to know about partial scholarship opportunities. On completion of all required course activities, participants will obtain an ITCILO Certificate of Participation.

# COURSE AGENDA

	Monday 19 September	Tuesday 20 September	Wednesday 21 September	Thursday 22 September	Friday 23 September
Webinars 14.30 – 15.30 CEST		<b>Session 1</b> Welcome and on-boarding			
Self-learning			<b>Assignment 1</b> Study Guide – Module 1		

	Monday 26 September	Tuesday 27 September	Wednesday 28 September	Thursday 29 September	Friday 30 September
Webinars 14.30 – 15.30 CEST		<b>Session 2</b> SME policies and the decent work agenda		<b>Session 3</b> Analysing the business environment	
Self-learning			<b>Assignment 2</b> Study Guide – Module 2		

	Monday 3 October	Tuesday 4 October	Wednesday 5 October	Thursday 6 October	Friday 7 October
Webinars 14.30 – 15.30 CEST		<b>Session 4</b> Starting a business: simplifying registration procedures		<b>Session 5</b> Running a business: Linking SME policies to decent work	
Self-learning			<b>Assignment 3</b> Study Guide – Module 3		

	Monday 10 October	Tuesday 11 October	Wednesday 12 October	Thursday 13 October	Friday 14 October
Webinars 14.30 – 15.30 CEST		<b>Session 6</b> The Governance of SME Policies (EN)		<b>Session 7</b> Monitoring of SME Policy and Results (EN)	
Self-learning		<b>Assignment 4</b>			

## WITHDRAWAL, CANCELLATION POLICY, AND REFUNDS FOR OPEN COURSES

If an enrolled participant wishes or must withdraw from a course, they may choose to apply to a different course or be substituted by another candidate. The participant must notify the Centre, in writing, of their decision at least 14 days prior to the start date of the course. Cancellation of participation in regular courses will result in the following penalties:

- 14 days or more prior to the start date of the course: No penalty, 100% refund of amount paid less applicable bank charges
- 8 to 13 days prior to the start date of the course: Penalty of 50% of course price, refund of residual amount paid (if any) less applicable bank charges
- 7 days or less prior to the start date of the course: Penalty of 100% of course price.

## INFO

### FOR FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT

**International Training Centre of the ILO**  
Sustainable enterprises and economies (SEE)  
Viale Maestri del Lavoro, 10  
10127 Turin – Italy

see@itcilo.org  
www.itcilo.org

**COURSE CODE: A9715006**