

Good Regulatory Practice

Report and Main Takeaways from
CTS Thematic Session (12-13 June 2025)

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Background

- First of three thematic sessions agreed by the CTS under the MC13 mandate.
- **Purpose of thematic sessions:** "Reinvigorate work on trade in services discussions ... including through thematic, evidence-based discussions."
- Session on Good Regulatory Practice (GRPs) proposed by China, European Union, and the Philippines
- **Objective of the GRP session:**
 - Deepen understanding and exchange experiences on good regulatory practices for services trade through Secretariat analysis, international expert insights, and Members' experience-sharing
 - The session aimed to explore how GRPs operate in domestic frameworks, regional trade agreements, and reform agendas. Discussions aimed to identify success factors, implementation challenges, and the development impact of GRPs, including their role in crisis preparedness and regulatory cooperation.
- Focus: trade in services

What are GRPs in a Trade in Services context?

- GRPs aim to improve transparency, predictability, and efficiency of regulations.
- They typically apply across the full regulatory lifecycle: design, implementation, enforcement, review.
- Not originally trade-specific, but critical for services markets where unclear rules act as barriers.
- Quality of regulation is a determinant of real market access opportunities for service suppliers and investors.

International Organizations' Contributions

- Presentations by: **OECD, World Bank, UNCTAD, APEC, ASEAN, and ITC.**
- IOs shared diagnostic tools, capacity-building initiatives, and regulatory benchmarking methods.
- OECD and World Bank highlighted GRPs as drivers of investment and trade competitiveness.
- UNCTAD and ITC emphasized practical support programs support for developing countries and MSMEs.
- APEC shared lessons from regional co-operation, including the 2016 Services Competitiveness Roadmap and 2018 Non-binding Principles for Domestic Regulation of the Services Sector.
- ASEAN presented its Services Facilitation Framework, which promotes good regulatory practices, digital facilitation, talent mobility, and sustainability, with implementation supported at both national and regional levels.

Member Interventions: GRPs in Practice

- Presentations by 7 Members: **EU, Korea Rep., Philippines, Hong Kong China, China, UK, Australia.**
- Other Members shared additional insights, including from the perspective of LDCs and acceding governments.
- Focus on embedding GRPs in legal reforms, licensing simplification, and regulatory impact assessments.
- Members reported using digital platforms and single windows to enhance service transparency.
- Common tools: public consultations, online portals, and streamlined authorization procedures

How GRPs Support MSMEs in Services Trade – *Main Takeaways*

- 1. Transparency and Clarity Enable Better Compliance**
- 2. Simplified Licensing and Procedures Lower Entry Barriers**
- 3. Digital Tools Expand Access to Government Services**
- 4. Stakeholder Engagement supports MSME-Inclusive Regulation**
- 5. Regulatory Impact Assessments Promote Proportionality**
- 6. User-Centric Design Is Key to Effective Reform**

Lessons and Outlook

- Broad support for continuing thematic sessions as part of post-MC13 services work programme.
- Frontier topics under domestic consideration: GRPs in digital regulation, use of AI in regulatory review, and regional approaches.
- Emphasis on the need to develop practical tools and capacity-building activities.
- Interest in tracking GRP implementation and fostering peer learning among Members.
- The Chair highlighted that GRPs deliver practical economic benefits and require not only legal reforms but effective implementation across ministries and agencies, supported by digital tools and stakeholder engagement.
- He underscored that regulatory reform is an evolving process and called for continued peer learning, technical assistance, and international cooperation to ensure GRPs keep pace with global services trade while respecting regulatory autonomy.



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Thank you

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