Planning for Virtual Thematic Sessions

Purpose: Information
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Planning for Virtual Thematic Sessions

Agenda Item 3.3

TPTWG 50 – Closing Plenary Session

25 March 2021
First, a big thank you to economies who have volunteered to lead our first Main Policy Themes.

These sessions are an example of how we adapted from the travel restrictions caused by COVID-19, and proved that virtual meetings can advance our agenda.

I would like to highlight a few tips for making our 2021 Virtual Thematic Sessions a success.
Successful Strategies for Virtual Thematic Sessions – Volunteer Organizing Economy

• When preparing the agenda, the volunteer economy should consider how to frame the Main Policy Theme.

  • **Suggestion:** Create a question (with explanation) that all presenting economies can answer, and then the volunteer economy can open the discussion by raising the challenge and how their economy seeks to respond to it.

• Ensure that many economies (and NMPs) submit brief, pertinent presentations.

  • **Suggestion:** Work with your economy’s experts to identify other economies with compelling case studies, and then proactively ask those economies to present. Also, presentations should be focused (**not** economy reports).
• **Discussion** should be the primary focus and goal of a Virtual Thematic Session.

  • **Suggestion:** Volunteer economy should prepare a set of questions that the moderator can ask to encourage discussion.

• Virtual Thematic Sessions should be goal-oriented, meaning that discussions should focus on how the TPTWG can address this topic through future Concept Notes, development of best practices, guidance, etc.

  • **Suggestion:** Reserve a period at the end of the Virtual Thematic Session to propose next steps, either for the next Experts Group virtual meeting or for future work.
Successful Strategies for Virtual Thematic Sessions – Participating Economies

• **ALL** economies have a role to play in making these meetings successful.

• **HODs** are encouraged to identify appropriate experts to attend the Virtual Thematic Sessions and provide presentations.

• Economies are also encouraged to invite members of industry, academia, and other organizations with relevant knowledge to enrich discussions.

• Please begin to socialize the Main Policy Themes within your economies now, so that everyone is well-prepared for when they begin in June.
Example of a Successful Thematic Session Agenda

• Australia hosted a successful Thematic Session in September 2020, and used this format for their discussions.

- Set the discussion question.
- Elaborate on your expectation for presentations.
- Recruit multiple economies to present and share their experiences.
- Consider what other experts and industry groups can join.
The Virtual Thematic Session vs. Experts Group Meeting – 2021 (All Virtual Meetings Year)

- This is an unusual year, since all TPTWG meetings are virtual.
- For 2021, the distinction between Virtual Thematic Sessions and Virtual Experts Group Meetings will be less clear than in future years.
- Each meeting should be focused on elements of the Main Policy Theme, so the Virtual Thematic Session could lay out key challenges. The later-2021 EG meetings could focus on other elements of the Main Policy Theme, OR focus on key deliverables (best practices, guidance, etc.).
- EG meetings should also reserve 30-minutes to discuss the next Main Policy Theme.
Next year, we will see this new format fully blossom. With 1-1.5 days worth of in discussions dedicated to the Main Policy Theme at in-person meetings, the relationship between the Virtual Thematic Session and the EG meetings will change.

Virtual Thematic Sessions are meant to build momentum and scope out the challenge in the leadup to the TPTWG meeting.
Conclusion

- Questions or Ideas?