



Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago
Ministry of Trade and Industry

A hand is shown interacting with a glowing blue digital shopping cart. The background is a futuristic cityscape with glowing buildings and a blue sky. The overall theme is e-commerce and digital technology.

**NATIONAL
E-COMMERCE STRATEGY
FOR TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO**

2025-2030

Background

This National E-commerce Strategy 2025-2030 aims to provide a framework for the Government to collaborate with the private sector and civil society to foster the successful development of e-commerce for the overall benefit of the nation.

This E-commerce Strategy is based on the findings of the eTrade Readiness Assessment (eT Ready) conducted by United Nations Trade and Development (UNCTAD). The eT Ready is a comprehensive review of the e-commerce eco-system in the following policy areas: the current policy environment and developments regarding e-commerce, ICT infrastructure and services, trade facilitation and logistics, payment solutions, the legal and regulatory frameworks, e-commerce skills and access to financing. The analysis carried out was a combination of desk research, primary data collection through tailored online surveys (for public and private sectors, as well as consumers), multi-stakeholder consultations held in March and July 2024 in Port of Spain, numerous bilateral discussions and two virtual consultations held in November and December 2024 respectively. The conclusions from the eT Ready were a set of actions addressing the identified constraints, noting the anticipated results, the responsible stakeholders and their level of importance.





E-commerce definition

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development 2009 definition of e-commerce is used in the framework of this strategy, that is “the sale or purchase of goods or services, conducted over computer networks by methods specifically designed for the purpose of receiving or placing of orders.”

Other transactions conducted over telecommunications networks but not using methods specifically designed for the purpose of receiving or placing orders are excluded from this definition. These include receiving or placing orders through text messaging, electronic mail or social media, with the exception of platforms that have specific features designed for the purpose of placing or receiving orders (e.g., a shopping cart or “buy it now” incorporated option).

A variety of business models have evolved that do not necessarily fit within these definitions. For example, commercial transactions that occur over or are facilitated by classified ads platforms or online messaging apps, without any features specifically designed for the purpose of placing or receiving orders. While such transactions may not strictly fall within the formal definition described above, they can be considered as enablers for digital transformation and an entry point towards developing formal e-commerce and digital trade. This definition is used by national and regional statistical agencies when compiling statistics about e-commerce.

The Strategy's Vision

An E-commerce strategy, by its nature, covers several areas of Government policy that directly or indirectly support e-commerce. This strategy therefore coordinates measures across Government Ministries and agencies to achieve the vision of:

Widespread adoption of e-commerce that:

- *Enables businesses in Trinidad and Tobago to extend their access to domestic and foreign markets and improve the efficiency of their sales and purchasing processes.*
- *Enables all consumers and the Government to access a more diverse range of merchants and products with confidence.*

The vision explained

Extended market access: Businesses use e-commerce to reach customers beyond their locality and in other parts of the world resulting in new opportunities and revenue for Trinidad and Tobago. This extended reach applies to all businesses from primary producers to retail shops and includes services, as well as physical goods including both formal and informal businesses.

Efficiency of sales and purchasing processes: Business efficiency is improved through the digitalisation of sales, procurement logistics and payment processes inherent in e-commerce. This improvement is reliant on widespread adoption and use of e-commerce, and integration in wider business processes.

All consumers and all businesses: E-commerce can and is used by all consumer groups and all businesses irrespective of their circumstances, with measures in place to support those in rural areas, those who are economically disadvantaged and those living with disabilities. Throughout the strategy, there will be special focus on particular groups of consumers and businesses including youth, women, people living in rural areas who often find that digital services are difficult to access, and persons with disabilities that have an impact on their ability to use ICT.

With confidence: E-commerce services are secure and trusted by all users.



Principles of the Strategy

The mission, goals and measures in this strategy are founded on the following principles.

- **Include all groups:** focus on women, youth, people in rural areas, persons with disabilities and other vulnerable groups.
- **Use what is there:** build on relevant policies, strategies and initiatives.
- **Address small business issues:** focus on those businesses that need additional support.
- **Adopt a cross-sectoral approach:** refer to sector-specific policy and strategy as needed.
- **Collaborate regionally and internationally:** benefit from cross-border and regional cooperation and collaboration.
- **Establish a public-private partnership for e-commerce:** ensure a partnership between the Government as facilitator and the private sector that will respond to e-commerce opportunities.



The Strategy's Mission

To achieve this vision and for e-commerce to flourish, any gaps in the resources required and the environment in which it takes place are to be resolved. This strategy intends to provide such resources and environment.

The strategic mission is therefore:

TO CREATE AND MAINTAIN AN ENABLING ENVIRONMENT THAT FACILITATES AND PROMOTES THE USE OF E-COMMERCE IN TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO FOR DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL MARKETS.

Strategic Goals

The strategy has the following strategic goals (SG) aligned to the Vision 2030 themes.

SG1: Fostering and maintaining a legal and regulatory framework for e-commerce. The legal and regulatory framework for e-commerce is regularly reviewed and updated to meet current and future needs, ensuring public trust through necessary safeguards and clear communication. SG1 will contribute to Vision 2030 Theme II: Delivering Good Governance and Service Excellence by improving governance of e-commerce.

SG2: Developing e-commerce awareness and skills for a competitive digital economy. All stakeholders have awareness, capacity and skills in e-commerce for to benefit from the use of e-commerce privately, in the public sector and in business. SG2 will contribute to Theme I: Putting People First: Nurturing our Greatest Asset through the development of human capacity in new methods of doing business.

SG3: Enabling business growth and competitiveness through e-commerce adoption. Businesses have the necessary resources and access to business services to successfully use e-commerce. SG3 will contribute to Theme IV: Building Globally Competitive Businesses by providing the tools necessary for the adoption of e-commerce.

SG4: Streamlining trade and logistics to support efficient and scalable e-commerce operations. Trinidad and Tobago's trade and logistics systems facilitate domestic and cross-border e-commerce.

SG4 will contribute to Theme III: Improving Productivity through Quality Infrastructure and Transportation through measures intended to improve e-commerce delivery services. It will contribute to Theme IV through measures to improve international trading conditions faced by businesses.

Strategic Goals, Expected Outcomes, and Objectives



Strategic goal 1 – Fostering and maintaining a legal and regulatory framework for e-commerce

Expected outcome: The legal and regulatory framework for e-commerce is regularly reviewed and updated to meet current and future needs, ensuring public trust through necessary safeguards and clear communication.

Objective 1.1 Adopt a comprehensive legal and regulatory framework for e-commerce aligned to international best practices

Objective 1.2 Extend participation in international agreements that promote e-commerce

Objective 1.3 Support a widespread understanding of e-commerce related legislation and regulation



Strategic goal 2 – Developing e-commerce awareness and skills for a competitive digital economy

Expected outcome: All stakeholders have awareness and skill in e-commerce to benefit from the use of e-commerce privately, in business, and in the public sector.

Objective 2.1 Conduct a targeted assessment of e-commerce skills

Objective 2.2 Develop consumers' skills, capacity and trust necessary for e-commerce use

Objective 2.3 Strengthen the skills necessary for businesses to exploit e-commerce

Objective 2.4 Promote public sector understanding of policy implications of e-commerce

Objective 2.5 Develop government capacity to collect, analyse and report on e-commerce data

Strategic Goals, Expected Outcomes, and Objectives



Strategic goal 3 – Enabling business growth and competitiveness through e-commerce

Expected outcome: Businesses have the necessary resources and access to business services to successfully use e-commerce.

Objective 3.1 Introduce integrated e-commerce services for start-ups and : Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs)

Objective 3.2 Improve access to banking and finance for e-commerce start-ups and MSMEs

Objective 3.3 Promote widespread adoption of digital payments by merchants

Objective 3.4 Enable support and mentoring programmes for e-commerce start-ups and MSMEs

Objective 3.5 Ensure safe and reliable digital transactions with government and public sector organisations



Strategic goal 4 – Streamlining trade and logistics to support efficient and scalable e-commerce operations

Expected outcome: Trinidad and Tobago’s trade and logistics systems facilitate domestic and cross-border e-commerce in an environmentally sustainable manner.

Objective 4.1 Expedite streamlined processes and procedures for cross-border e-commerce

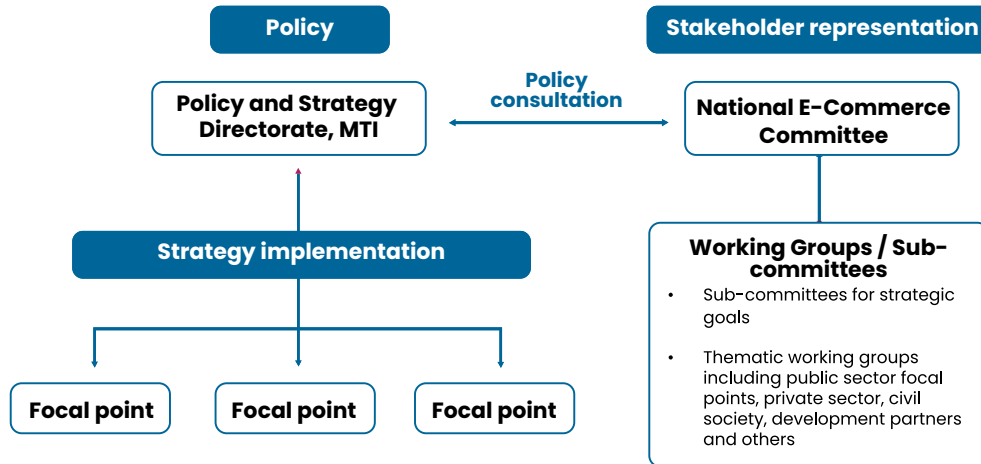
Objective 4.2 Improve fulfilment services available to e-commerce merchants

Governance

The Governance Framework for the strategy vests authority for e-commerce within the Ministry of Trade and Industry (MTI). A public-private partnership will be established through a National E-commerce Committee with members from both the private and public sectors. Implementation of individual measures will be the responsibility of focal points within the owning organisations. Advisory institutions will be kept informed and invited to participate in meetings when their expertise is relevant to the Strategy's implementation. This committee will bring together the public sector organisations, business organisations, consumer organisations and

individual companies that will ultimately be involved in strategy implementation. Working groups and sub-committees will be formed as necessary to consider the achievement of particular goals or to cover specific themes.

Those organisations that have responsibility for any measure will need to nominate a focal point who will be responsible for the measure and for reporting progress. The focal points will report within their own organisation and to the Policy and Strategy Directorate of the MTI.



National E-commerce Committee Members

Given the cross-cutting nature of e-commerce—spanning trade, finance, digital infrastructure, consumer protection, and cybersecurity—a coordinated, multi-stakeholder approach is necessary for the effective implementation of e-commerce initiatives in Trinidad and Tobago. The structure includes a core Committee responsible for implementation and decision-making, co-chaired by the Permanent Secretaries of the Ministry of Trade and Industry and the Ministry of Digital Transformation:

National E-Commerce Committee Members:

- Ministry of Trade and Industry, Permanent Secretary (Co-chair)
- Ministry of Digital Transformation, Permanent Secretary (Co-chair)
- Central Bank of Trinidad and Tobago
- Trinidad and Tobago Manufacturers Association
- Trinidad and Tobago Chamber of Industry and Commerce
- AMCHAMTT (American Chamber of Business, Trinidad and Tobago)
- Trinidad and Tobago International Financial Centre (TTIFC)
- Ministry of Finance

Additionally, the following institutions will be kept informed and invited to participate in meetings when their expertise is relevant to the Strategy's implementation.

Advisory Institutions:

- Ministry of Planning and Development
- Ministry of Labour
- Ministry of Education
- Port Authority of Trinidad and Tobago
- Trinidad and Tobago Coalition of Services
- Bankers Association of Trinidad and Tobago
- Ministry of Youth Development and National Service
- TTPost

Implementation Plan

The Strategy includes a comprehensive implementation plan that outlines specific activities for each strategic objective. The details for each strategic measure are as follows:

- **Expected Results:** Clearly defined outcomes that each initiative aims to achieve.
- **Key Performance Indicators (KPIs):** Measurable benchmarks to track progress and effectiveness.
- **Responsible Entities:** Identification of key stakeholders and organizations leading or supporting implementation.
- **Timelines:** Defined schedules and milestones to ensure timely execution.
- **Resource Requirements:** Allocation of financial, technical, and human resources necessary for successful implementation.

This structured approach ensures accountability, facilitates coordinated action among stakeholders, and enables ongoing monitoring and evaluation to achieve the Strategy's objectives effectively.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The E-Commerce Strategy includes Key Performance Indicators KPIs at both the overall strategy level and within each strategic goal, covering both outcome- and progress-oriented metrics. Effective monitoring and evaluation will be critical to its success. The MTI will lead the development of a robust E-Commerce Monitoring and Evaluation Framework through the development of KPIs at activity level, data collection, and market analysis. This will ensure informed decision-making and continuous improvement.





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