

Trade Facilitation and Paperless Trade Implementation

Global Report 2017



UNITED NATIONS

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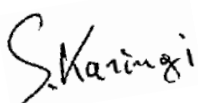
Foreword

The Second Global Survey on Trade Facilitation and Paperless Trade was jointly conducted by the five United Nations Regional Commissions (for Africa, Asia and the Pacific, Europe, Latin America and Caribbean, and West Asia). It aims to gather information from countries worldwide on implementation of trade facilitation and paperless trade measures. The results of the survey will enable countries and development partners to better understand and monitor progress on trade facilitation, support evidence-based public policies, share best practices and identify capacity building and technical assistance needs.

The First Global Survey was conducted in 2015 as a key initiative under the *Joint UNRC Approach to Trade Facilitation* agreed upon in Beirut, Lebanon in January 2010 by the Executive Secretaries of all five United Nations Regional Commissions. The joint approach was designed to enable the Regional Commissions to present a joint and global view on trade facilitation issues in the context of the negotiations of the Doha Round at the World Trade Organization (WTO). The Second Global Survey builds upon the first one. Its significance has increased in light of the entry into force of the World Trade Organization's Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA) in February 2017.

The results of the Second Global Survey have benefitted from the input of many partners such as the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the International Trade Centre (ITC), Asian Development Bank (ADB), Oceania Customs Organization Secretariat (OCO) and Eurasian Economic Commission (EEC).

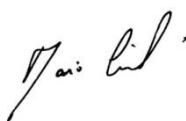
The Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development recognizes international trade - along with science, technology and innovation - as one of the key means of implementation of the agreed Sustainable Development Goals. Against this background, we hope that the current report further supports the economies around the world to make trade simpler and cheaper through the use and application of technology and innovation in international trade procedures.



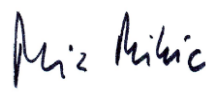
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¹ <http://unnexnext.unescap.org>

² https://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/devel_e/a4t_e/aid4trade_e.htm

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Abbreviations

ADB	Asian Development Bank
AEO	Authorized economic operator
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
ECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
ECE	United Nations Economic Commission for Europe
ECLAC	United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
ESCAP	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
ESCWA	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia
GATT	General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade
ITC	International Trade Centre
LDC	Least developed country
LLDC	Landlocked developing country
NTFC	National trade facilitation committee
OCO	Oceania Customs Organization
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
PIDE	Pacific island developing economies
SIDS	Small island developing states
TFA	Trade Facilitation Agreement
UN/CEFACT	United Nations Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNNExT	United Nations Network of Experts for Paperless Trade and Transport for Asia and the Pacific
UNRC	United Nations Regional Commission
WTO	World Trade Organization

Executive Summary

Reducing trade costs is essential for developing economies to participate in international production networks and to effectively use trade as an engine of growth and sustainable development. This can be accomplished by tackling non-tariff sources of trade costs and addressing cumbersome regulatory procedures and documentation requirements. Indeed, trade facilitation including paperless trade has taken increasing importance, as evidenced by the entry into force of the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA) in February 2017 and the growing number of regional and subregional initiatives in this area.

This Report presents the main findings of the Second Global Survey on Trade Facilitation and Paperless Trade Implementation, jointly carried out in 2017 by the five United Nations Regional Commissions (UNRCs). The Survey covers 120 economies from 8 regions. It focuses on three main areas. The first area relates to the implementation of selected measures under the TFA. The second area is about the implementation of innovative, technology-driven measures aimed at enabling trade using electronic rather than paper-based data and documentation - otherwise referred to as “paperless trade”.³ The third area examines specific trade facilitation measures targeted at small and medium enterprises (SMEs), the agricultural sector and women. The key findings of the Survey are summarized as follows.

- The global average implementation rate of a set of 31 common trade facilitation measures considered in this Report stands at 59.6%. Developed economies have the highest implementation rate (78.5%), while Pacific Islands have the lowest (28.2%). Among the developing regions, Latin America and the Caribbean and South-East and East Asia achieve high implementation rates at 67.8% and 62.7%, respectively. In contrast, Sub-Saharan Africa - which includes some of the poorest countries in the world – and South and East Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia – a region largely made up of landlocked developing countries (LLDCs) – achieve implementation rates of 51.8% and 50.7%, respectively.
- The Netherlands (93.6%) stands out as the best overall performer. In developing regions, Singapore, the Republic of Korea, China, Malaysia and Thailand are the top performers in South-East and East Asia, all with implementation rates exceeding 80%. Qatar and United Arab Emirates lead the Middle East and North Africa region, both with implementation rates exceeding 90%. Benin (79.6%) is the top performer in Sub-Saharan Africa, while India (72.0%) leads the way in South Asia. The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (81.7%) leads the

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