

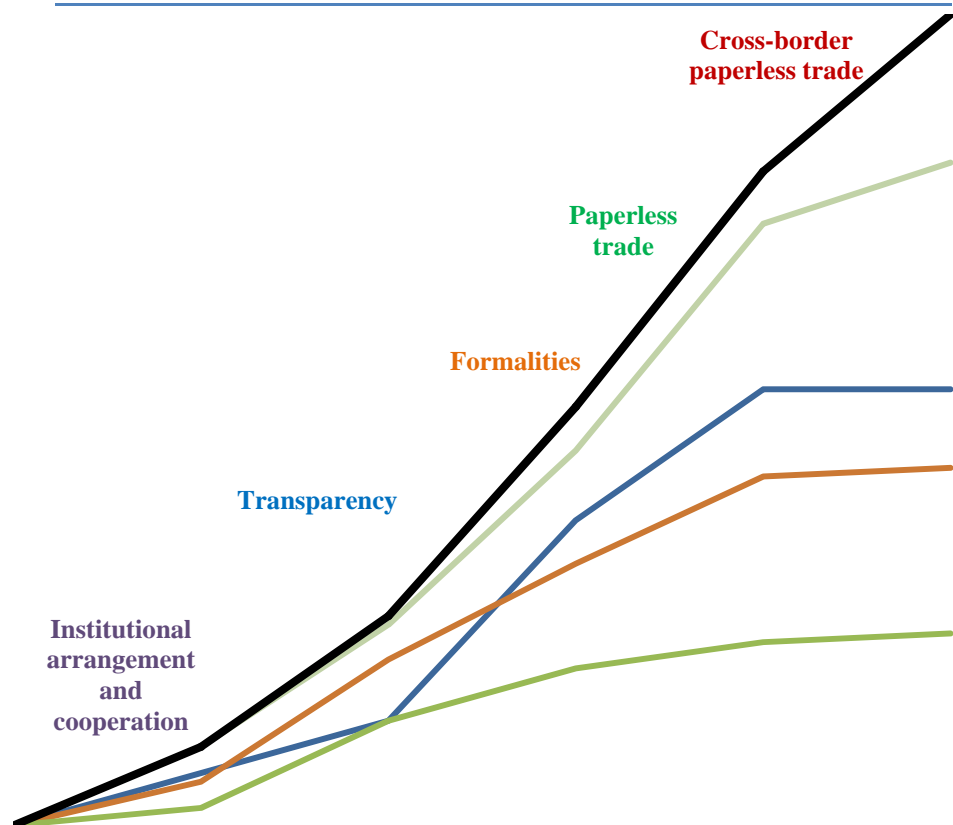


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Joint United Nations Regional Commissions  
**Trade Facilitation and  
Paperless Trade  
Implementation Survey 2015**

*West Asia Report*

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## Preface

In September 2014, the United Nations Regional Commissions (UNRCs) including ECA, ECE, ECLAC, ESCAP and ESCWA, initiated a global survey to collect data and information on trade facilitation and paperless trade implementation from their respective member states. Conducted in collaboration with UNCTAD, OECD, ITC, OCO and SELA, the results of the survey are expected to enable countries and their development partners to better understand and monitor progress in trade facilitation, support evidence-based policy-making, identify good practices and identify capacity building and technical assistance needs.

The global survey represents a key initiative under the framework of the Joint UNRC Approach to Trade Facilitation, which was agreed upon by the Executive Secretaries of the five UNRCs in Beirut (January 2010) to enable the UNRCs to present a joint (global) view on key trade facilitation issues. The questionnaire for the global survey was jointly prepared and finalized by UNRCs and OECD to ensure data could be shared and compared.

The global survey builds on an annual regional survey carried out by ESCAP since 2012. It covers not only implementation of some important measures included in the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA) but also of measures aimed at enabling paperless trade, or the conduct of trade using electronic rather than paper-based data and documentation. Indeed, a recent ESCAP study found that “next generation” trade facilitation measures have just as much potential as more traditional measures to reduce trade costs and increase intra- and extra-regional trade, with full implementation of cross-border paperless trade expected to generate USD 257 billion of additional export potential annually for the Asia-Pacific region alone.<sup>1</sup>

This regional report is part of this global survey effort. It is prepared by Adel Alghaberi, First Economic Affairs Officer, Infrastructure & Trade Logistic, Regional Integration Section, Economic Development & Globalization Division, ESCWA, in collaboration with the Trade Facilitation Unit, Trade and Investment Division, ESCAP. The substantial contribution of Daniel Rabaioli to the preparation of this report during his internship at ESCAP is gratefully acknowledged.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.unescap.org/resources/estimating-benefits-cross-border-paperless-trade>

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## Abbreviations

ADB.....	Asian Development Bank
AEO.....	Authorized economic operator
APoA.....	Almaty Programme of Action
ASEAN.....	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
ASYCUDA.....	Automated System for Customs Data
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
ENEA.....	East and North-East Asia
ESCAP.....	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
ESCWA.....	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia
EU.....	European Union
GATT.....	General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade
GCC.....	Gulf Cooperation Council
ICT.....	Information and communications technology
IRU.....	International Road Transport Union
ITC.....	International Trade Centre
LDC.....	Least developed country
LLDC.....	Landlocked developing country
WEST ASIA.....	West Asia
NCA.....	North and Central Asia
NTFC.....	National trade facilitation committee
OECD.....	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
SELA.....	Latin American and Caribbean Economic System
SSWA.....	South and South-West Asia
TF.....	Trade facilitation
TFA.....	Trade Facilitation Agreement
UAE.....	United Arab Emirates
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
USA.....	United States of America
USD.....	United States dollar
WTO.....	World Trade Organization

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