

**Virtual Joint ADB-IRU Regional Workshop on
TIR Digitalization for Improved Trade in STKEC Region**
15:00pm-17:00pm, 7 September 2021

I. Introduction

Strengthening cross-border transport connectivity is one of the six intertwined thematic focus areas identified in the [road map](#) for Shymkent-Tashkent-Khujand Economic Corridor (STKEC) development. TIR, the only global transit system is an effective instrument in facilitating cross-border transport connectivity for improved trade. TIR digitalization enhances further transparency and effectiveness of customs formalities.

Since 2016, several digital TIR projects have been conducted in Iran, Turkey, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan. The objective of these pilots is to prepare countries for implementation of eTIR according to Annex 11 of the TIR Convention, which entered into force on 25 May 2021. Digital TIR projects allow customs administrations to test and implement business to customs (B2C) part of the eTIR, increase transparency in border crossings, align internal customs processes, and provide capacity building to customs agencies and the private sector.

In this context, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan launched digital TIR transports in November 2020. Tajikistan expressed interest to join the digital TIR project in December 2020, and implemented TIR-electronic pre-declaration (EPD) in February 2021, and made necessary adjustment to take part in the digital TIR project.

The first successful digital TIR transports between Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan took place on 5 May 2021. The first 3 Tajik TIR trucks under TIR eGuarantees were duly processed by customs administrations in Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan, marking a milestone for TIR digitalization in the STKEC region.

This project allows Tajikistan customs administration to test and align their customs processes and benefit from digital TIR experience of Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan. It also provides Uzbekistan customs administration with new capacities for eGuarantee management in their customs system. Finally, with some pending adjustments in Kazakhstan customs ASTANA-1 system, Kazakhstan will fully benefit from digital TIR, making STKEC fully digital under TIR in both directions.

II. Objectives of the Workshop

The objectives of the workshop are to:

- (i) share results and experiences of TIR digitalization projects among the STKEC countries;
- (ii) increase transparency of regional trade through improved coordination among customs administrations, taking into account that the three countries receive the same information from the transport operators, which reduces double invoicing and grey channels;
- (iii) encourage STKEC's other relevant public stakeholders to support their customs administration and the private sector in using TIR digital solutions, by showcasing the benefits and encouraging increased use of digital TIR in their transport operations in the STKEC region;

- (iv) identify challenges and finding solutions which could further improve transit and border crossings including establishment of TIR Green Lanes/Green Windows at border crossing points (BCPs);
- (v) prepare the three countries for smooth transition towards full implementation of eTIR based on Annex 11 of the TIR Convention.

Relevant recommendations will also be proposed to further facilitate TIR digitalization in the STKEC countries:

- (i) implement Green Lanes (if not yet done) at the BCP Yallama-Konysbayev between Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan;
- (ii) in case of limited infrastructure, implement Green Windows at first stage and seek for infrastructural adaptations for building two Green Lanes at the BCP Fotehobod-Oybek between Tajikistan and Uzbekistan;
- (iii) increase quality/speed interconnection of all regional customs offices in Tajikistan for the purposes of digital TIR;
- (iv) make adjustment of ASTANA-1 customs system in Kazakhstan to allow the opening of digital TIR transport at departure from Kazakhstan, which is currently not possible from technical point of view; and
- (v) extend digital TIR to all TIR hauliers in Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan and to all customs offices of the three countries.

Participants

Central, oblast and city level government agencies from Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan in charge of STKEC development, including transport connectivity and trade facilitation (e.g., customs administration); national TIR associations, representatives of the business communities (e.g., transport operators) of the three countries; and development partners.

Organization

The workshop will be jointly organized by ADB (CAREC Secretariat) and the International Road Transport Union (IRU).