Paperless Trade as e-Commerce enablers

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Agenda

- **Paperless Trade as E-commerce enablers**

- **Trade Facilitation and Paperless Trade Programme @ESCAP**
  - Framework Agreement on Facilitation of Cross-border Paperless Trade in Asia and the Pacific
  - Knowledge products
  - Readiness assessment for cross-border paperless trade
  - Online training courses
  - Joint UN project on transport and trade connectivity (covid-19)

Paperless Trade as E-commerce enablers

- E-market places brings buyers and sellers together, making contract/commercial procedures easier

- But goods still need to be transported to buyers, goods still need to be paid for,

- and **regulations still need to be complied with**.

- … **all of which typically involve a lot of paperwork acting as a barrier to cross-border e-commerce development**

United Nations ESCAP

- UN ESCAP - Asia and the Pacific Regional Branch of the United Nations Secretariat
- 53 member countries covering Central, South, Southeast, East and South Pacific countries
- Mandate: Promote sustainable and inclusive socio-economic development in Asia and the Pacific - **through regional cooperation**
- Areas covered: <u>Trade, Investment and Innovation</u>, Transport, Macroeconomic Policy, Environment, Emerging Social issues, Information and Communication Technologies
- **Trade, Investment and Innovation**:
  (1) Trade Facilitation;
  (2) Trade Policy;
  (3) Investment and Enterprise Development;
  (4) Science, Technology and Innovation

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Trade Facilitation and Paperless Trade Programme in ESCAP

Legislative	• Enabling paperless trade (Res. 68/3) • Interim Intergov. Steering Group on Cross-border Paperless Trade Facilitation (Res. 70/6) • Framework Agreement on Facilitation of Cross-border Paperless Trade in Asia and the Pacific (Res. 72/4)
Knowledge	• ESCAP-WB Trade Cost Database • UN Global Digital and Sustainable Trade Facilitation Survey • Trade Process Analysis Database • UNNExT Single Window & Paperless Trade Implementation Guides & Impact analyses • ESCAP-OECD Guide on Indicators for Trade Facilitation
Capacity Building	• Business/Trade Process Analysis • Single Window & Paperless Trade Implementation • UNNExT Masterclass (Single Window & Paperless Trade Implementation) • Readiness assessment on CBPT • Trade & Transport Facilitation Monitoring Mechanism

Framework Agreement on Trade Facilitation of Cross-Border Paperless in Asia and the Pacific

A new UN Treaty

- Open to interested (53) ESCAP member states
- Enabling and action-oriented agreement

Objective

To facilitate cross-border paperless trade (data exchange) among willing ESCAP member states by providing a dedicated intergovernmental framework to develop legal and technical solutions

*Also supporting full digital implementation of the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement.
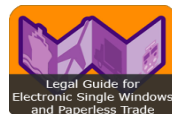
Progress

- Three countries either ratified or acceded (Azerbaijan, Islamic Republic of Iran, and the Philippines)
- Plus, China completed its domestic ratification process.
- **Only 1 more country now need to accede or ratify before it enters into force.**
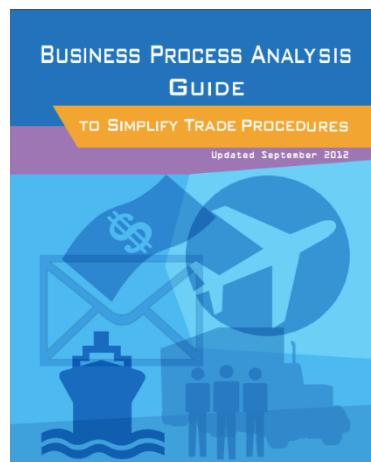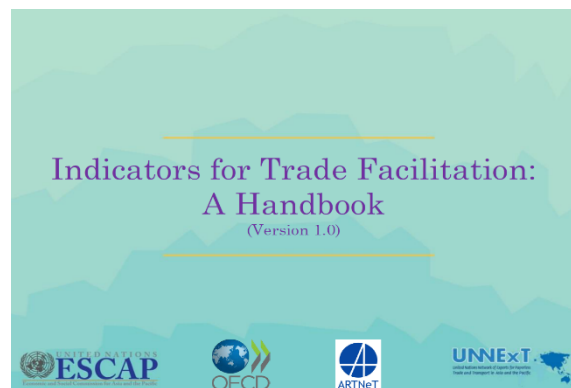
Knowledge products

United Nations Network of Experts for Paperless Trade and Transport in Asia and the Pacific

UNNExT Single Window Implementation Toolkit for Trade Facilitation

Course Certificate on BPA for Trade Facilitation

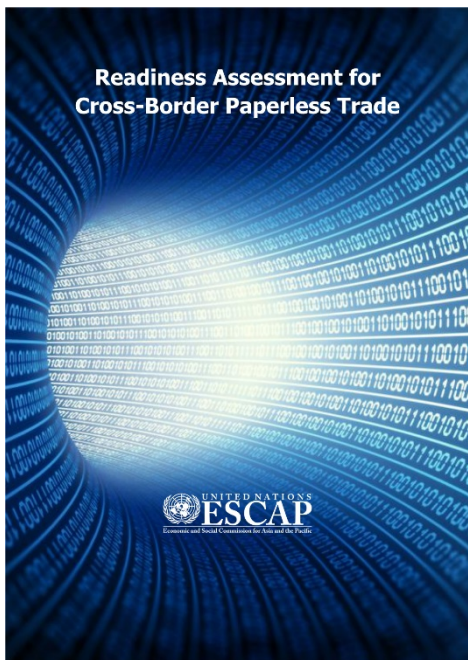ESCAP-OECD Handbook on Indicators for Trade Facilitation

For more information: www.unnext.unescap.org

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Readiness Assessment for Cross-Border Paperless Trade

- Technical and legal readiness assessments on cross-border paperless trade
- Conducted in 8 countries
- https://www.unescap.org/resources/readiness-assessments-cross-border-paperless-trade
- Recommendations, and individual action plans for countries to move forward towards cross-border paperless trade

Online guide for self-assessment

:Will be launched in October 2020 Jointly by ESCAP/UNCITRAL

Online training courses

- ESCAP-ARTNET-ITD Online Course on Trade Facilitation for Sustainable Development
  - Including enhancement of National Trade Portals
- https://www.unescap.org/events/escap-artnet-itd-online-course-trade-facilitation-sustainable-development

- E-Learning Series on Business Process Analysis for Trade Facilitation
- https://www.unescap.org/our-work/trade-investment-innovation/trade-facilitation/bpa-course

Planned for expansion of online training courses

Expert Group Meeting on Trade Facilitation in Time of Crisis and Epidemic

Event: https://www.unescap.org/events/expert-group-meeting-trade-facilitation-times-crisis-and-epidemic

Subregional studies: reviewing (best) practices in trade facilitation in response to COVID-19

- *East and North- East Asia: https://www.unescap.org/resources/trade-facilitation-times-pandemic-practices-east-and-north-east-asia*
- *North and Central Asia: https://www.unescap.org/resources/trade-facilitation-times-pandemic-practices-north-and-central-asia*

Highlighted practices - 1

- **Simplification and digitalization of trade procedures**: most implemented
- **Expedited customs clearance**: especially for essential goods

Highlighted practices -2

- **Coordination mechanisms**: considered crucial but lacking (no mandate given to NTFC or equivalent)
- **Supporting small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs):** crucial and call for regional and multilateral cooperation to achieve cross-border harmonization of trade-related regulations and procedures.
- **Transportation, logistics and transit facilitation:** holistic approach needed. Especially important for Central Asian landlocked countries.

Recommendations

- **Further development for digitalization of trade procedures**

- **Acceleration of simplification of trade facilitation measures**
  - Temporary paperless TF measures to permanent

- **Need for capacity building**
  - Trade digitalization and simplification of trade facilitation measure

- **Emphasize on the regional cooperation**
  - Learning and sharing experiences
  - Regional initiatives such as the Framework Agreement

UN Global Survey on Digital and Sustainable Trade Facilitation

Objective

- To monitor progress on trade facilitation (TF), including paperless trade and other forward-looking measures towards SDGs

- To enable evidence-based policy making, capacity building and tech. assistance

UNTFSURVEY.ORG

- 2012-14: Regional (Asia-Pacific) surveys conducted since 2012

- 2015: 1st global survey on trade facilitation implementation; presented at the 5th Global Review of Aid for Trade. [partnerships with UNCTAD, ITC, OECD, Subregional org…]

- 2017: 2nd global survey; presented at the 6th Global AfT Review. [new partnerships: ADB, Rep. of Korea…]

- 2018: Launch of interactive website (now UNTFSURVEY.ORG)

- 2019: 3rd global survey – Digital and Sustainable Trade Facilitation [new partnerships: ICC (Banking Commission)]

- **2021: 4th Adding additional survey component on TF measures in time of crisis and epidemic**

THANK YOU

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