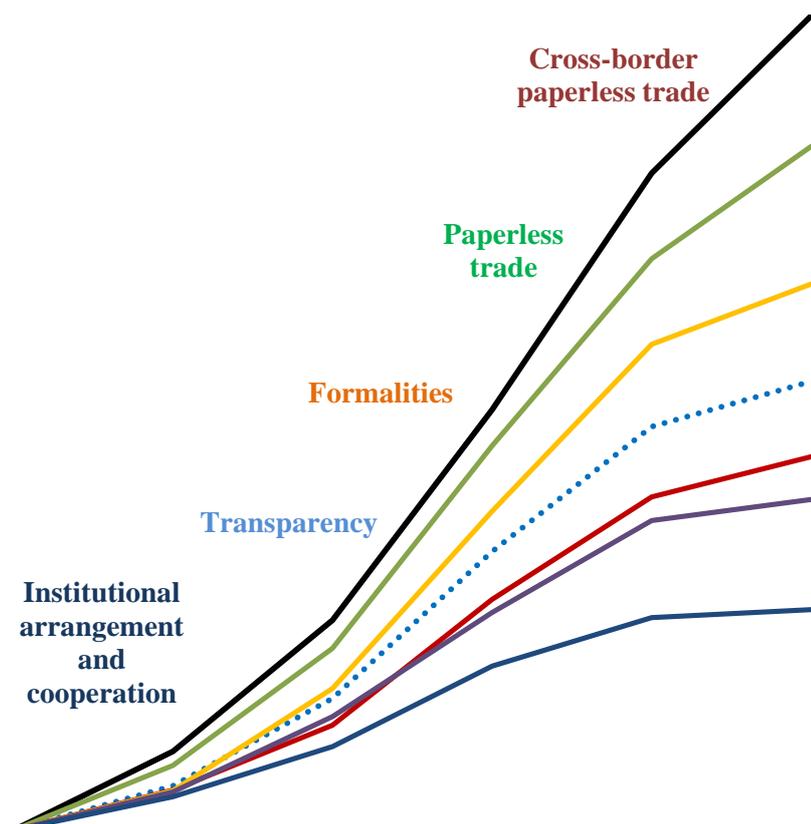

Joint United Nations Regional Commissions

Trade Facilitation and Paperless Trade Implementation Survey 2015

Europe and Central Asia Report



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The report is available at: <http://unnex.unescap.org/UNTFsurvey2015.asp>

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I. Introduction: The Global Survey on Trade Facilitation and Paperless Trade

Background and objectives

The Global Survey on Trade Facilitation and Paperless Trade has been conducted by the United Nations Regional Commissions (UNECA, UNECE, UNECLAC, UNESCAP and UNESCWA), in collaboration with the OECD and UNCTAD in order to collect relevant data and information on trade facilitation and paperless trade from their respective member states.

It covers both the implementation of some important measures included in the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA) and measures aimed at enabling paperless trade, or the conduct of trade using electronic rather than paper-based data and documentation.

The results of this survey are expected to enable countries of the UNECE Region to better: understand and monitor the process of Trade Facilitation implementation; identify good practices and technical needs; and support evidence based policy-making as well as encouraging cross-regional knowledge sharing.

The Global Survey on Trade Facilitation and Paperless Trade is expected to be conducted at a regular frequency (at least biennially), in order to observe the evolution of countries in the UNECE Region in implementing Trade Facilitation Measures and Paperless Trade.

II. Survey Instrument and Methodology

Origin of the data

The dataset was developed following three steps:

Step 1. The survey instrument was sent by the UNECE Economic Cooperation and Trade Division to the UN/CEFACT¹ Heads of Delegations (HOD) and subsequently in a few cases to national chambers of commerce and trade facilitation experts (from government, private sector and/or academia) in UNECE countries.

Step 2. The completed questionnaires were examined and in the case of inconsistencies or unclear responses, contact (emails and telephone calls) was made with the respondents in order to obtain more precise explanations. When it was necessary, and particularly in the case of an ambiguous replies, further research was conducted (for example looking at OECD trade facilitation indicators) in order to complete the dataset as precisely as possible. The data for Central Asian countries were taken from the survey managed by ESCAP for Asia and the Pacific.

Step 3. Based on data collected, each of the trade facilitation measures included in the survey, and for which enough information was available, were rated either as “fully

¹ United Nations Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business (UN/CEFACT)

implemented”, “Partially implemented”, “On a pilot basis”, or “Not implemented”. A score (weighted) of 3, 2, 1, or 0 was respectively assigned to each of these four implementation stages in order to calculate implementation scores and averages for individual measures across countries, region or categories.

Categories

The Global Survey was conducted in twenty-seven countries in the UNECE Region. The Survey instrument was prepared taking into account the final list of provisions included in the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA). It covers 31 Trade Facilitation Measures divided into three groups: General Trade Facilitation measures, Paperless Trade and Cross-Border Paperless Trade. The group “General Trade Facilitation” is divided into three subgroups: Transparency, Formalities and, Institutional Arrangements and Cooperation.

		Trade facilitation measures (and question No.) in the questionnaire
General TF measures	Transparency	2. Publication of existing import-export regulations on the Internet 3. Stakeholder consultation on new draft regulations (prior to their finalization) 4. Advance publication/notification of new regulation before their implementation 5. Advance ruling (on tariff classification) 9. Independent appeal mechanism (for traders to appeal Customs and other relevant trade control agencies’ rulings)
	Formalities	6. Risk management (as a basis for deciding whether a shipment will be or not physically inspected) 7. Pre-arrival processing 8. Post-clearance audit 10. Separation of Release from final determination of customs duties, taxes, fees and charges 11. Establishment and publication of average release times 12. Trade facilitation measures for authorized operators 13. Expedited shipments 14. Acceptance of paper or electronic copies of supporting documents required for import, export or transit formalities.
	Institutional arrangement and cooperation	1. Establishment of a national trade facilitation committee or similar body 31. Cooperation between agencies on the ground at the national level 32. Government agencies delegating controls to Customs authorities
Paperless trade		15. Electronic/automated Customs System established 16. Internet connection available to Customs and other trade control agencies at border-crossings 17. Electronic Single Window System 18. Electronic submission of Customs declarations 19. Electronic Application for Customs Refunds 21. Electronic Submission of Air Cargo Manifests 22. Electronic Application and Issuance of Preferential Certificate of Origin 23. E-Payment of Customs Duties and Fees 24. Electronic Application and Issuance of Trade Licenses
Cross-Border Paperless trade		25. Laws and regulations for electronic transactions 26. Recognised certification authority 27. Engagement in trade-related cross-border electronic data exchange

	28. Electronic exchange of Certificates of Origin 29. Electronic exchange of Sanitary & Phyto-Sanitary Certificates 30. Banks and insurers retrieve letters of credit electronically without the lodging of paper-based documents
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III. Trade Facilitation: Key Findings of the Survey

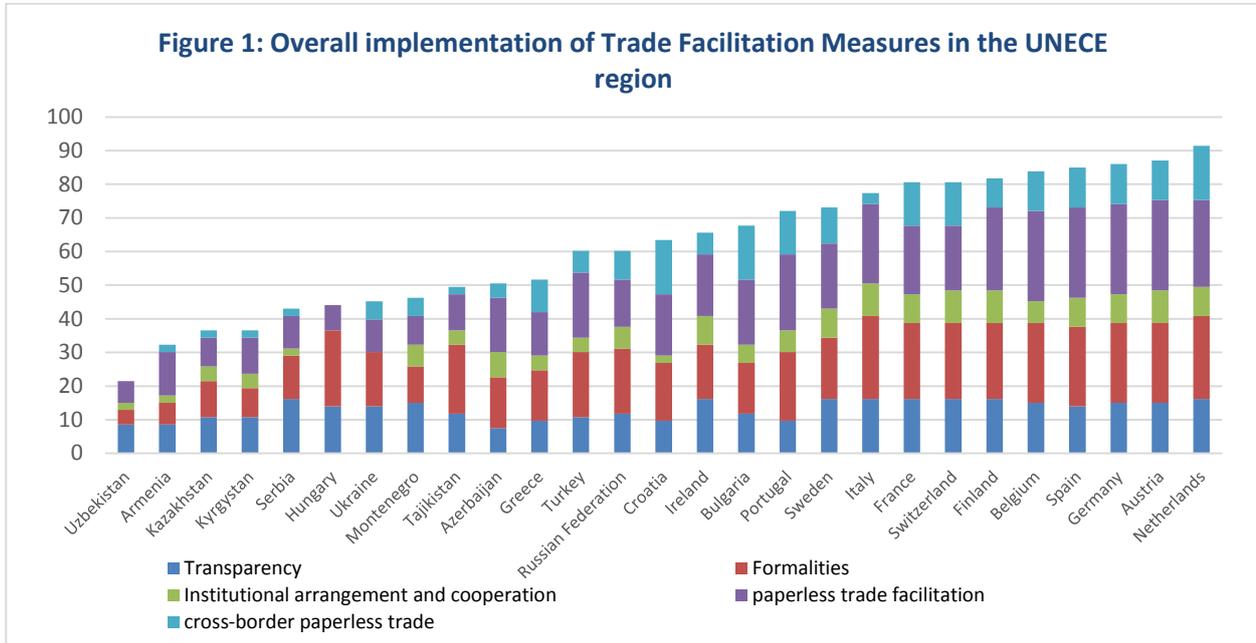
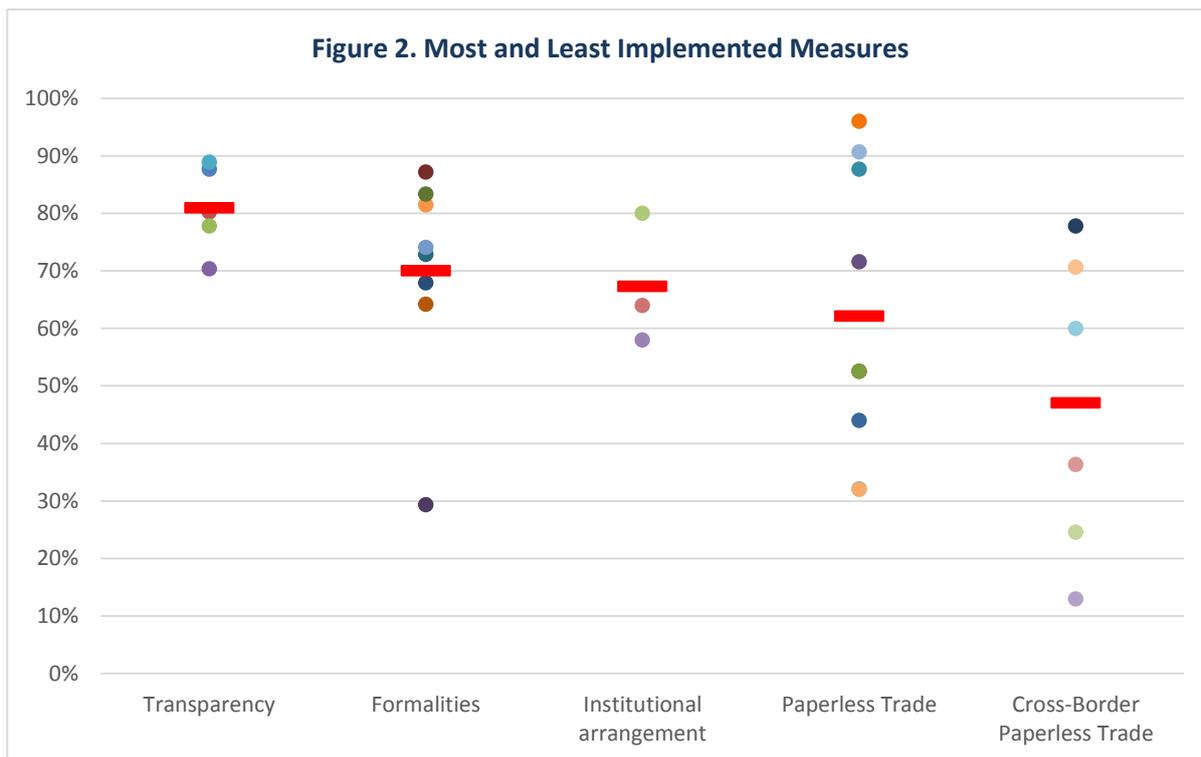


Figure 1 shows the overall implementation levels for each country (percentage implemented out of possible score of 93) and, inside of that, the implementation level for each category proportionate to the full implementation (100 percent) score of all measures for countries included in the Survey.² It is based on a collection of 31 trade facilitation and paperless trade measures. The implementation of trade facilitation measures is relatively heterogeneous.

The Regional average for implementation is 62%. About a third of the countries included in the Survey have a level of implementation of 80% or above. On the other hand, the level of implementation barely reaches 60% in about half of the countries surveyed (thirteen). Most of these countries are from Central Asia and the Caucasus region. As could be expected, more economically advanced economies have a higher level of implementation. The Netherlands reaches a level of implementation that is above 90% for each category of measures.

² The score 93 is the maximum score for all categories in total, it corresponds to a full implementation level.



Note: Coloured dots show average implementation in the UNECE region for the individual measures within each category.

The next figure (Figure 2) reviews average implementation for individual measures within the five categories of measures (Transparency, Formalities, Institutional Arrangement, Paperless Trade, Cross-Border Paperless Trade).

The level of implementation for the measures included in each category presents some disparities. On the one hand, Transparency, Formalities and Institutional Arrangement exhibit a relatively homogeneous and high percentage of implementation for each measure (except from one). In contrast, the implementation levels for measures included in the Paperless Trade and Cross-Border Paperless Trade categories vary from very low to high.

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