



UNITED NATIONS ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

Recommendations on regulatory cooperation and standardization policies

Working Party on
Regulatory Cooperation and
Standardization Policies

N.

Good Market Surveillance Policies and Practices*

The Working Party on Regulatory Co-operation and Standardization Policies

Recognizing the need to ensure that products placed on the market or imported meet legal requirements on safety, health, environment, fair competition between economic operators, and any other aspects of public interest (hereinafter “legal requirements”).

Noting that market surveillance is an essential public response to addressing that need.

Noting the existing differences in both legal, administrative and operative means for carrying out market surveillance among United Nations Member States.

Noting the lack of systematic guidance for setting up structures that meet basic and essential criteria for the enforcement of legal requirements on products made available on the market.

Considering the best practice developed internationally, including by the Advisory Group on Market Surveillance (MARS Group) and the Working Party on Regulatory Cooperation and Standardization Policies.

In the light of the General Assembly decision 54/449 of 22 December 1999 (United Nations Guidelines for Consumer Protection).

* Recommendation adopted in 2011

Recommends that Governments should:

- N1.** Organize market surveillance to ensure that products meet the legal requirements.
- N2.** Give priority to establishing a legal basis for market surveillance activities, including adequate legal requirements for cooperation with economic operators and proceedings for application of proportionate restrictive measures in relation to marketing of products.
- N3.** Appoint competent authorities to carry out market surveillance activities.
- N4.** Consider risks identified and political priorities and provide for adequate and sufficient administrative capacities, resources and powers for market surveillance authorities to ensure fulfilment of the requirements set for products.
- N5.** Establish effective mechanisms for horizontal and sectoral cooperation and coordination among market surveillance authorities, customs authorities and other stakeholders concerned at the national and international level.
- N6.** Together with market surveillance authorities take advantage of and contribute to channels for co-operation and information exchange internationally.
- N7.** Together with market surveillance authorities should participate in regional and international cooperation efforts such as joint market surveillance actions.
- N8.** Set national priorities for market surveillance according to the market conditions in the country, taking into account available information from regional and international information sources on products risks, and on product related non-compliances.
- N9.** Set annual and/or multi-annual plans at general and sectoral level for market surveillance.
- N10.** Together with market surveillance authorities, when planning and carrying out market surveillance activities, take into account established principles of risk assessment.
- N11.** Encourage donors to recognize market surveillance as a priority in devising bilateral and multilateral technical assistance and cooperation projects.

Checklist for the implementation of the Recommendation N

A. Legal basis

A1. Available legislation on consumer and user protection, including methods for collecting and informing of dangerous and non-compliant products (nationally/internationally).

A2. Available horizontal or sector-specific legislation on enforcement of products

defining:

- product sector(s)
- essential product requirements
- responsible authority /authorities
- powers of authorities
- applicable penalties based on risk assessment of products
- mechanisms to ensure confidentiality
- mechanisms to ensure traceability
- cooperation (a) between market surveillance and other relevant authorities and (b) between market surveillance authorities and other national stakeholders, including in methods for collecting and informing of dangerous and non-compliant products (nationally/internationally).

A3. Legislation covering cross-border measures and cooperation mechanisms between market surveillance authorities and customs authorities.

A4. Explicitly address possible interactions between product legislations at national and or regional level and other national laws (i.e. criminal law).

B. Political priorities

B5. Available national statement (priority) of product safety, health, environment and any other aspect of public concern, including fair competition among economic operators.

B6. Established national quality infrastructure, including a functioning system for accreditation and conformity assessment (inspection, certification, testing) and market surveillance.

- B7.** Annual and/or multi-annual (e.g. 3-year) national market surveillance plans reflecting national priorities.
- B8.** Participation in technical assistance and cooperation projects in market surveillance.
- B9.** Participation in standardization work at the national, regional and international level.

C. Best practices

- C10.** National enforcement plans reflecting surveillance priorities, for instance according to the UNECE “MS Model”.
- C11.** For national legislation and other documents related to market surveillance the terminology listed in the UNECE A Glossary of Market Surveillance Terms should be used.
- C12.** Availability of sector-specific surveillance plans and priorities.
- C13.** Enforcement methods comprising reactive and active surveillance techniques, as well as continuous follow-up routines.
- C14.** Methods for enforcement prioritization and surveillance prioritization, including risk assessment.
- C15.** Availability of information-technology tools for documentation, reporting, follow-up and statistical analysis of market surveillance activities.
- C16.** Penalties for economic operators are proportionate to the risks and dissuasive.
- C17.** Cooperation with stakeholders nationally (e.g. consumer and business organizations, industry, customs).
- C18.** Cooperation with other stakeholders internationally.
- C19.** Training of market surveillance officers and inspectors.
- C20.** Joint actions to assess risks of products as a basis for planning proactive market surveillance activities. Participation of non-EU countries should be supported.