
Economic Commission for Europe

Inland Transport Committee

Working Party on Customs Questions affecting Transport

Informal Ad hoc Expert Group on Conceptual and Technical Aspects of Computerization of the TIR Procedure

Twenty-first session

Bratislava, 25-26 September 2012

Item 3 (a) of the provisional agenda

Reference Model of the TIR procedure:

Contributions of the network of eTIR focal points

Summary of the activities of the network of eTIR focal points

Note by the secretariat

I. Background

1. At its 124th session (February 2010), the Working Party on Customs Questions affecting Transport (WP.30) supported the secretariat's call to organize activities of the Informal Ad hoc Expert Group on Conceptual and Technical aspects of Computerization of the TIR Procedure (GE.1 or Expert Group) at long distance, by means of a network of focal points for eTIR (ECE/TRANS/WP.30/248, para. 22). At its 125th session, the Working Party stressed the importance for every Contracting Party to nominate a focal point for the eTIR project and to inform the secretariat accordingly (ECE/TRANS/WP.30/250, para. 19). This document presents the status of the network of eTIR focal points and summarizes its activities since the twentieth session of the GE.1.

II. Members of the network of eTIR focal points

2. Since the twentieth session of the GE.1, a further eight Contracting Parties to the TIR Convention have nominated eTIR focal points. The following thirty Contracting Parties have now nominated, at least, one eTIR focal point: Albania, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Belgium, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, France, Hungary, Ireland, Latvia, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Netherlands, Poland, Romania, Russian Federation, Serbia, Slovakia, Sweden, The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia,

Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland as well as Uzbekistan. The e-mail addresses of the focal points are available on the eTIR website (www.unece.org/trans/bcf/etir/focals.html).

III. Information received from the network of eTIR focal points

3. Since the twentieth session of the Expert Group, eTIR focal points have not communicated to the secretariat any issue or input to be brought to the attention of GE.1.

IV. Queries to the network of eTIR focal points

4. Since the 20th session and further to a request by the Expert Group (ECE/TRANS/WP.30/2012/7, para. 14), the secretariat sent an email to eTIR focal points on 30 April 2012 (see Annex), soliciting their considerations on the draft Cost Benefit Analysis (CBA), as contained in Informal documents GE.1 No. 6a, 6b, 6c, 6d and 6e. Table 1 presents the comments received from focal points on the CBA¹.

Table 1

Comments by eTIR focal points on the draft CBA

<i>Country</i>	<i>Comments</i>
France	<p>Please find below two general remarks about the CBA documents.</p> <p>1- My first remark concerns cost evaluation (id12-06be).</p> <p>Even if I have nothing to add to the implementation scenarios which have been studied in depth by Siveco, I am a bit surprised by the lack of details about "project management" costs. In fact, similar projects appear to be quite costly in terms of management, coordination, project meetings organisation etc.</p> <p>Such a project requires not only a technical team in charge of coding the program but also a management team in charge of project coordination. For instance, if we look at EU projects or international projects (like Asycuda for example ...), we can see that progress is only possible if work is planned, followed and controlled by a dedicated team.</p> <p>It will be the same, a fortiori, within the framework of the eTIR project where the number of partners involved is much higher and even more heterogeneous.</p> <p>Perhaps is it a bit late to add in the document now, but, at least, we should be aware of that and be prepared for associated costs at global and national level when the project is launched.</p> <p>2- My second remark will (hopefully) be easier to integrate. In the general recommendations and conclusions (id12-06de), a positive ROI is indicated for each of the scenarios. I suggest to underline that ROI will even be higher for Contracting Parties dealing with a high quantity of TIR Carnets. In fact, this principle seems quite obvious: costs associated with national developments do not depend on volume (except architecture matters ...); on the opposite, benefits depend on that figure (because expenses will be</p>

¹ Some focal points replied to the email to inform that they did not have comments. They are not included in the table.

<i>Country</i>	<i>Comments</i>
	<p>quickly balanced by benefits, and because of "mass" effect).</p> <p>Obviously, that kind of statement could be dangerous, because "small" TIR countries (like France ...) could conclude that eTIR is not their business.</p> <p>But, what is really at stake? Trying to convince "major" TIR countries to go further, by showing the real opportunity to improve efficiency. If "major" TIR countries choose to walk the step forward, I hope all others will go.</p> <p>From my experience, I know that top managers frequently decide on the basis of "local" benefits: so even if showing the global benefits of eTIR is necessary (because we are working in an international system, with international goals), perhaps it would be more relevant to highlight the huge benefits to be obtained at national level in these countries.</p>

5. These comments have been transmitted to the consultant, together with the comments made by GE.1 at its 20th session.

6. Furthermore, on 29 August 2012, the secretariat sent an email to eTIR focal points to inform them about the launch of the project to revise UN/CEFACT Recommendation 14 on "Authentication of documents by means other than a (manual) signature". This project is of high relevance in the context of the GE.1 work on the international declaration mechanisms.

V. Further considerations

7. GE.1 may wish to take note that more Contracting Parties have nominated eTIR focal points, take note of the French comments on the CBA and may wish to request the secretariat to query the experts of the network on other specific issues.

Annex

Email sent on 30 April 2012 to eTIR focal points

Dear eTIR focal points,

first of all allow us to thank you for your contributions to the 20th session of the GE.1. The draft report of the session will be available on the UNECE and eTIR web sites (etir.unece.org) tomorrow.

In the course of the discussions on the financial implications of the introduction of the eTIR international system and in particular on the draft Cost-Benefit analysis (CBA) presented in Informal documents GE.1 No. 6a, 6b, 6c, 6d and 6e, the GE.1 proposed that eTIR focal points should also be given the opportunity to submit their contributions on this issue (see ECE/TRANS/WP.30/2012/7, para. 14) .

The informal documents can be downloaded from the following page:
http://www.unece.org/trans/bcf/adhoc/conc_tech/conc_tech_inf_docs.html .

We kindly ask you to submit your contributions, if any, at your earliest convenience but not later than 15 May 2012.

We thank you in advance and would like to stress that your contributions should ideally be specific and accompanied, to the extent possible, by concrete proposals that would help improving the final CBA and hopefully not be too generic, vague or proposing radical and methodological changes.

Kind regards,

Artur and André
