
Economic Commission for Europe

Informal UN/LOCODE Consultation

Geneva (online), 8-9 November 2021

Discussion of a draft Programme of Work for 2022-2023

Draft Programme of Work for 2022-2023 of a UN/LOCODE Advisory Group

Summary

This document presents the Programme of Work of a UN/LOCODE Advisory Group for the period 2022-2023.

This document will be submitted together with a request for intersessional approval to re-establish the UN/LOCODE Advisory Group.

I. Background

1. The United Nations Code for Trade and Transport Locations (UN/LOCODE) identifies locations related to international trade around the world. It is a five-character code where the first two characters represent the International Standards Organization (ISO) country code followed by a three-character code unique within that country.
2. The basis of UN/LOCODE is UNECE Recommendation 16. The first edition was published in 1980. The fourth edition was approved in 2020.
3. These codes have been maintained and published by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) secretariat with support of the UN/LOCODE Maintenance Team. The first issue of UN/LOCODE directory in 1981 had 8000 codes and today has over 100,000 from 249 countries, dependent territories, and special areas.
4. At the first UN/LOCODE Conference held on 24 April 2015, it was decided to set up a UN/LOCODE Advisory Group which would consist of the different stakeholders of the standard. The group advises and supports the UNECE secretariat and the United Nations Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business (UN/CEFACT) in the maintenance and further development of UN/LOCODE.
5. The establishment of the Group was endorsed by UNECE EXCOM in June 2017 and its first annual meeting took place in Geneva from 30 November to 1 December 2017.

II. Introduction

6. The present document sets out the Programme of Work for the UN/LOCODE Advisory Group (AG) for the period of 2022-2023. UN/CEFACT is invited to adopt this programme of work at its 28th session and recommend it to the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) Executive Committee (EXCOM) for approval. This draft will be discussed at the Informal UN/LOCODE Consultation, to be held on the 8-9 of November 2021 in Geneva.

III. Scope, Objective, Activities and Work areas

A. Scope

7. The scope of the Programme of Work covers all UN member states as well as other organisations and private sector stakeholders involved in UN/LOCODE. It encompasses activities in support of UN/LOCODE maintenance, development, and promotion.
8. It does so by improving, promoting, facilitating and supporting this international standard, including proposing necessary developments and potential use of this standard.
9. The Programme of Work is linked to the Revised Mandate and Terms of Reference (ECE/TRADE/C/CEFACT/2017/17/Rev.1) as approved at the twenty-fifth session of the UN/CEFACT Plenary on 8-9 April 2019.

B. Objective

10. Aiming at “ensuring the maintenance and development of UN/LOCODE in a sustainable way”, the Advisory Group is expected to achieve its objectives and implement the necessary activities on the assumption that:

- (a) there is active participation and contribution by experts from governments, academia and the private sector to expert group meetings and networks;
- (b) Governments are willing to engage in support of UN/LOCODE, especially nomination of the UN/LOCODE National Focal Point (NFP) and providing resources to fulfil duties of NFPs; and
- (c) extra-budgetary resources for capacity-building, advisory services, the development, enhancement and maintenance of electronic maintenance and publication system of the standard are adequate.

C. Activities

- 11. To achieve this goal the UN/LOCODE Advisory Group will:
 - (a) deploy the new UN/LOCODE maintenance and publication system developed through the UN/LOCODE Re-engineering Project;
 - (b) optimize the workflow of Data Maintenance Requests (DMR) validation;
 - (c) develop and share best practices;
 - (d) advise and assist on UN/LOCODE issues;
 - (e) support to enhance the UN/LOCODE Focal Point Network;
 - (f) improve data quality;
 - (g) support dialogue with key stakeholders; and
 - (h) organize capacity-building and training sessions.

D. Work areas

- 12. The Programme of work is structured around the following work areas (WA):
 - WA1: Policy dialogue and advice.
 - WA2: Technical monitoring, assessment, and support.
 - WA3: Communication and outreach.
 - WA4: Capacity building.
 - WA5: Data quality.
 - WA6: Data exchange.

1. WA1: Policy dialogue and advice

- 13. This Work Area involves active promotion and support of the implementation on a policy level of the standard. This Work Area encompasses active engagement with policy makers on a global scale, by enhancing the UN/LOCODE Focal Point Network and by contacting relevant authorities.

2. WA2: Technical monitoring, assessment, and support

14. The Work Area on technical monitoring, assessment and support of the UN/LOCODE maintenance and development with the new UN/LOCODE system, with the objective to meet the business needs with the latest technology.

3. WA3: Communication and outreach

15. Activities of the Work Area are:

- providing DMR validation procedure and policy;
- sharing information on the work of the Maintenance Team and UN/LOCODE Re-engineer Project Team on the Collaborative UN/CEFACT Environment (CUE);
- publishing the UN/LOCODE directory bi-annually on the UNECE website;
- contribution to relevant events to disseminate the information and promote the standard;
- outreach to activities to expand the use of UN/LOCODE; and
- finding funds for the activities as laid out in the Programme of Work.

4. WA4: Capacity building

16. Technical training sessions will be organized for UN/LOCODE Focal Points and potential stakeholders.

17. By sharing knowledge and expertise through partnerships, the Work Area will reach out to the business community to develop UN/LOCODE in a sustainable way.

5. WA5: Data quality

18. The data quality of UN/LOCODE will be improved by:

- the implementation of the revised UNECE Recommendation 16;
- the UN/LOCODE Maintenance Team; and
- the new UN/LOCODE management system.

6. WA6: Data exchange

19. This Work Area involves implementation of the data exchange in real-time mode between the new UN/LOCODE system and the business systems of external stakeholders by using Application Programming Interface (API) technology.

IV. Guiding principles

20. The work of the Group and the execution of this Programme of Work is guided by the following principles:

- mutual respect;
- based on volunteer work and contributions;
- expert advice; and
- the work of the Group will be fully aligned with the Terms of Reference and the Programme of Work.

V. Governance

21. The Advisory Group is led by a Chair and a Vice-Chair and supported by the UNECE secretariat.
22. The Chair of the Advisory Group is recommended by the UN/CEFACT Bureau and his/her nomination is endorsed by the UNECE secretariat for a mandate of two years.
23. It is the responsibility of the Chair and the UNECE secretariat that the objectives of the Advisory Group are met and aligned with the Programme of Work.
24. The Chair reports the work of the Advisory Group to the annual UN/CEFACT Plenary.
25. Participation in the Advisory Group is on a self-funded voluntary basis. All members of the Advisory Group must register as experts of UN/CEFACT in accordance with relevant procedures.