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**Economic Commission for Europe**

Inland Transport Committee

**Working Party on Rail Transport**

**Seventy-fifth session**

Geneva, 17–19 November 2021

Item 15 (a) of the provisional agenda

**Facilitation of international rail transport in the pan-European region:**

**Facilitation of rail border crossings**

**Revised survey on Annex 9 of the International Convention  
on the Harmonization of Frontier Controls for Goods, 1982  
(Harmonization Convention)**

**Note by the secretariat**

Revisions are identified with the additions underlined and deletions are marked with a strikethrough.



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**Economic Commission for Europe****Inland Transport Committee****Working Party on Customs Questions affecting Transport****159th session**

Geneva, 9 and 10 June 2021

Item 5 (b) of the provisional agenda

**International Convention on the Harmonization of  
Frontier Controls for Goods, 1982 (Harmonization Convention):  
Issues in the application of the Convention****Revised survey on Annex 9<sup>1</sup>****Note by the secretariat****I. Background and mandate**

1. At its eleventh session (June 2019), the Administrative Committee for the Harmonization Convention (AC.3), recalled that Annex 9 to the Harmonization Convention entered into force on 30 November 2011. This is a second annex to the Harmonization Convention dealing with a particular mode of transport. Annex 9 provides, inter alia, requirements for border (interchange) stations and for cooperation between adjacent countries. It foresees also a mechanism for reciprocal recognition of controls of rolling stock, containers, etc., a need to comply with time limits for reception and transfer of trains, means of documentation facilitation (through the use of the CIM<sup>2</sup>/SMGS<sup>3</sup> railway consignment note, instead of other shipping documents, and also as a customs document). The Committee recalled that, in 2013–2014, the Working Party on Rail Transport (SC.2) conducted a survey on national applications of Annex 9. The survey is contained in document ECE/TRANS/SC.2/2013/6 and its results in Informal document SC.2 No. 2 (2014). The Committee invited SC.2 to assess whether it would be worthwhile to relaunch the survey (ECE/TRANS/WP.30/AC.3/22, paras. 21 and 22).

2. At its seventy-third session (November 2019), the Working Party on Rail Transport (SC.2) was updated on developments with Annex 9 to the “Harmonization Convention” for the facilitation of rail border crossings in the pan-European region. The secretariat noted that in the past a survey had been sent to members of SC.2 on annex 9 but that there had been little interest shown over the years. Given that WP.30 conducts its own survey on the implementation of the Harmonization Convention the secretariat suggested that it was not

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<sup>1</sup> New text as compared to document ECE/TRANS/WP.30/2021/4 is underlined, deletions are in ~~strike through~~.

<sup>2</sup> CIM stands for “Uniform Rules concerning the Contract of International Carriage of Goods by Rail”

<sup>3</sup> SMGS stands “Agreement on International Goods Transport by Rail”

necessary to undertake this survey in future within the framework of the Working Party on Rail Transport (ECE/TRANS/SC.2/232, para. 58).

3. At its eighty-third session (February 2021), the Inland Transport Committee (ITC), entrusted SC.2 and WP.30 to include on the agenda of the meetings the issue of monitoring the implementation of Annex 9 “Facilitation of border crossing procedures for international rail freight traffic” to the International Convention on the Harmonization of Frontier Controls of Goods (ITC Informal document (2021) No. 8/Rev.5, decision No. 57).

4. Further to this request, the secretariats of SC.2 and WP.30 jointly prepared a survey to monitor the implementation of Annex 9.

5. At its 158th session, the Working Party considered document ECE/TRANS/WP.30/2021/4 by the Secretaries of the Working Party on Rail Transport and WP.30, containing a draft survey on Annex 9 of the Harmonization Convention. The Working Party also took note of Informal document WP.30 (2021) No. 6 by the Organization for Cooperation between Railways (OSJD) with some additional proposals for questions to add to the draft survey. The Working Party accepted the survey, as outlined in document ECE/TRANS/WP.30/2021/4 and was of the opinion that it should be distributed among participants in SC.2 and interested railway partners, such as, but not limited to, the International Union of Railways (UIC) and the Community of European Railway and Infrastructure Companies (CER). With regard to the additional proposals by OSJD, the Working Party was of the view that points one to four (implementation of the New Computerized Transit System (NCTS); delays due to COVID; language barriers and availability of advance cargo information) could be added to the survey, as yes/no questions. The Working Party felt that point 5 (use of CIM/SMGS consignment note as customs document) and point 6 (obstacles in the use of the CIM/SMGS consignment note as customs document) could be covered by question fifteen (reformulated) and agreed with the OSJD proposal in point 7 to split question fourteen of the draft survey in two, distinguishing between the railway consignment note and the customs declaration. The Working Party requested the secretariat to revise the draft survey and submit it to SC.2 for further consideration (ECE/TRANS/WP.30/316, paras. 27 and 28).

## II. Considerations by the Working Party

5. — The Working Party is invited to express itself on the questions in Annex and the intended addressees as well as to provide the secretariat with instructions about the distribution of the survey and deadlines for reply.

6. — The Working Party is invited to take note of the survey, adjusted in line with its instructions at the 158th session, as transmitted to SC.2.

**Annex****[Please do not fill in – draft only]****Joint SC.2/WP.30 draft questionnaire on the implementation of Annex 9 to the Harmonization Convention**

Please return by .....to the ECE secretariat at.....

Your name is .....

You work for the following competent authority:

- Customs
- Ministry of Transport
- Ministry of Railways
- Railway company (please specify) .....
- Other (please specify) .....

Country: .....

1. Does your country use the European Union's New Computerized Transit System (NCTS) for rail transport?

 no yes

2. Did the pandemic lead to any particular delays in border crossing clearance procedures in your country?

 no yes

3. Do you experience any particular problem in dealing with border crossing procedures due to language barriers?

 no yes

4. Does your country transmit any advance information on border crossing documents and procedures to train crews?

 no yes

45. Please provide information about the publication of Annex 9 in your country.

- It has been published on (date of publication) .....
- It is scheduled to be published (expected date of publication) .....
- It has neither been published nor scheduled to be published
- Other (please specify) .....

26. Does your country have border (interchange) stations?

(Defined in Annex 9 as: "Border (interchange) station" shall mean a railway station where operational or administrative procedures are performed in view of enabling a border crossing of rail freight. This railway station may be at the border or near the border.)

- no
- yes. Please indicate the number of stations

37. Does your country allow that crews, persons accompanying shipments and staff can actually cross the border beyond the immediate border station?

- no
- yes

48. Has your country taken measures to facilitate the granting of visa for locomotive crews, refrigerated unit crews, persons accompanying shipments and staff at border (interchange) stations?

- no
- yes

If no, please briefly explain why not .....

If yes, please briefly describe the measures taken .....

59. Are there any bilateral agreements between your country and neighbouring countries to facilitate the granting of visa?

- no
- yes. If yes, please indicate with which neighbouring countries such agreements exist .....

610. Do the border (interchange) stations identified in Question 2 dispose of any of the following? If so, how many stations have these facilities?

- buildings (premises) plant, facilities and technical equipment; – Number: .....
- possibility to conduct phytosanitary, veterinary and other controls; – Number:.....
- sufficient traffic capacity and adjacent tracks to cope with volume of traffic; – Number: .....
- inspection areas and warehousing for temporary storage; - Number: .....

equipment, facilities, information technology and communication systems to enable the exchange of advance information; - Number: .....

sufficient qualified staff of railway, customs, border and other agencies; - Number:...

technical equipment, facilities, information technology and communication systems to receive and use in advance data on technical approval and technical inspections of rolling stock. - Number: .....

~~7~~11. Are there any bilateral agreements between your country and neighbouring countries to coordinate actions with respect to the controls of rolling stock, containers, piggyback semi-trailers and goods as well as the processing of shipping and accompanying documentation?

no

yes. If yes, please indicate with which neighbouring countries such agreements exist .....

~~8~~12. Does your country carry out customs controls based on risk assessment?

no

yes

~~9~~13. ~~Does your country perform simplified controls at borders and move, where possible, certain forms of control to the stations of departure and destination?~~

~~no~~

~~yes~~

13a Does your country perform simplified procedures at borders?

no

yes

13b Does your country move, where possible, certain forms of controls to the stations of departure and destination?

no

yes

~~10~~14. Does your country, as a rule, carry out inspections of transit goods only in cases where these are warranted by the actual circumstances of risks?

no

yes

~~11~~15. Does your country engage with neighbouring countries (through bilateral agreements) to reduce time limits for the reception and transfer of trains at border (interchange) stations?

no

yes. If yes, please indicate with which neighbouring countries such agreements exist and what good practice solutions you have identified.....

1216. Does your country record delays of trains or wagons at border (interchange) stations?

no

yes. If possible, please send any such data separately to the ECE secretariat.

1317. Does your country transmit information on delays to other parties?

no

yes

1418. Does your country engage in using electronic systems for the exchange of information contained in railway consignment notes ~~and customs declarations~~?

no

yes

19. Does your country engage in using electronic systems for the exchange of information contained in customs declarations?

no

yes

1520. Does your country use the CIM/SMGS railway consignment note as transit customs declaration?

no

yes (please indicate in which cases and how often).....  
.....  
.....

21. Are you aware of any obstacles/difficulties in implementing the CIM/SMGS railway consignment note as transit customs declaration in your country?

no

yes (please explain) .....  
.....  
.....

Thanks for your participation. Please do not forget to return the filled in questionnaire to the ECE secretariat at...

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