



**UNECE**  
UN / CEFAC

**Executive Guide**

**e-CMR**

## Introduction

The Convention on the Contract for the International Carriage of Goods by Road (CMR) was developed in 1956. This convention standardizes contractual and carrier liability conditions of transporting goods by road in vehicles for reward if

**The first ever cross-border e-CMR was used between France and Spain on January 19, 2017**

the origin and destination are in two different countries, and at least one of the countries is a contracting party. It has been acceded to by 55 states around the world, thus making the use of the CMR obligatory in these countries. In 1976, the International Road Union introduced a

United Nations Layout Key aligned CMR Note template in cooperation with the International Chamber of Commerce. This road consignment note template was updated in 2007 and is now used by most, if not all, parties to contracts of carriage in CMR contracting countries.

The CMR Note is primarily used for commercial transport contract purposes (business-to-business) and is often used by law enforcement and customs authorities for checking the goods details and consignor/consignee/carrier information for clearance in cross-border trade, or additional information in different situations.

In 2008, an Additional Protocol on e-CMR was introduced to support paperless versions of the e-CMR Note. Though several pilot tests have been conducted in the subsequent years, there has not been an official standardized message format for the Electronic Consignment Note. In 2017, a United Nations Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business project developed a business requirements specification, core component e-CMR message structure and XML message standard.

**Luxembourg launched e-CMR on April 20, 2018 (the first Electronic Consignment was signed for a road transport between the airports of Luxembourg and Amsterdam)**

## Applications

The CMR note is used to accompany the transport of goods by road and is legally recognized in 55 states around the world. At present, 13 countries have ratified or acceded to the Additional Protocol on e-CMR. The electronic version, on the basis of the Additional Protocol on e-CMR, automates the documentary process. Instead of recapturing data from a paper document (which might produce errors) the data can be reused and integrated automatically in subsequent processes.

## Benefits

**In 2017, Slovenia became the twelfth EU Member State to accede to e-CMR**

Since 2017, there have been several proposals on how to format an e-CMR; however, no clear single standard has prevailed. If this point-to-point approach continues, then it is likely that transport operators will need to manage multiple electronic formats depending on the partners

they work with. This would make the electronic version of the road consignment note more complicated and expensive to implement than the paper version. The UN/CEFACT e-CMR model, available free of charge, proposes a single standard format for this message which would resolve these issues, allowing companies to easily integrate the information.

## More information

- UNECE Convention on the Contract for the International Carriage of Goods by Road (CMR) of 19 May 1956 ECE/TRADE/C/CEFACT/2018/14 3
- Protocol to the Convention on the Contract for the International Carriage of Goods by Road (CMR) of 5 July 1978
- Additional Protocol to the CMR concerning the electronic consignment note (e-CMR) of 20 February 2008
- UN/CEFACT e-CMR Business Requirement Specification

# What is UN/CEFACT?

UN/CEFACT, the United Nations Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business, supports activities dedicated to improving the ability of business, trade and administrative organizations, from developed, developing and transition economies, to **exchange products and relevant services effectively**. Its principal focus is on facilitating national and international transactions, through **the simplification and harmonization of processes, procedures and information flows**, and so contributing to the growth of global commerce.

**UN/CEFACT has a global mandate. Participation in the UN/CEFACT Forum is open to all.** There are some 300 experts representing every region in the world.

Within the framework of the United Nations Economic and Social Council, the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) serves as the focal point for **trade facilitation recommendations and electronic business standards**, covering both commercial and government business processes that can foster growth in international trade and related services. In this context UN/CEFACT was established, as a subsidiary, intergovernmental body of the UNECE.

Participation in the development of UN/CEFACT standards and recommendations is free of charge.

If you are interested in joining us, you should register at <https://uncefact.unece.org/display/uncefactpublic/UNCEFACT+Expert+Registration>

All resulting deliverables are available online free of charge at <http://www.unece.org/cefact>

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