



Sixth Technical Cooperation Workshop for the Western Balkans
***EU ELECTRONIC FREIGHT TRANSPORT INFORMATION REGULATION AND THE
USE OF UN/CEFACT SEMANTIC STANDARDS AND MULTIMODAL TRANSPORT
REFERENCE DATA MODEL IN THE WESTERN BALKANS***

Skopje, 18-19 December 2023

This event follows is part of a sequence since 2006 of regional technical cooperation workshops in the Western Balkans on trade facilitation, single window, and data sharing along digital trade corridors. This year the workshop will respond to the need of the regulatory agencies and business community the Western Balkans to deepen the process of European integration, and focus on the roll out of the EU Regulations [2022/2399 establishing the European Union Single Window Environment for Customs](#) and [2020/1056 on Electronic Freight Transport Information \(eFTI\)](#) as they are related to the implementation of UN/CEFACT recommendations, [semantic standards and Multimodal Transport Reference Data Model \(MMT RDM\)](#).

The objective of the workshop is to assist relevant stakeholders in the Western Balkans, notably ministries of transport, trade, digitalization, customs, other regulatory agencies, and the business community to use the UN standards and implement the EU legislation. It also aims at assisting implementers of Single Window projects in keeping track with the implementation of relevant new additions to the *acquis communautaire*. The seminar will be organized as a structured training for better understanding of the EU regulations, and how UN/CEFACT global semantic standards and reference data models help achieve them. The eFTI Regulation, adopted in July 2020 to be implemented in five years, aims at providing opportunity to the private sector to exchange with competent authorities all information on the transportation of commercial cargo inside the European Union in a multimodal and electronic format. It offers a foundation for the transition from exchanging paper or electronic documents accompanying goods in international trade and transport to electronic exchange of data and data sets. Aligned and standardized information exchange on this level will very much benefit the collection of data and functioning of Single Window systems. Knowledge about these developments is very much in the interest of the Western Balkan countries, which aspire accession to the EU.

The use of UN/CEFACT global standards and reference data models is discussed at the [Digital Transport and Logistics Forum \(DTLF\)](#): an expert group of the European Commission bringing together public and private stakeholders from various communities to support the European Commission in promoting digital transformation, notably for the development of corridor freight information systems based on interoperability of data. The workshop will aim at harnessing the knowledge accumulated in this forum to the benefit of stakeholders in the region.

Important objective of the Workshop will be to establish in the countries, at this stage, the link between the business and regulatory agencies that are responsible for implementation of this EU regulation on Electronic Freight Transport Information and Single Window Environment for Customs. Therefore, participants will be invited from the government institutions as well as private sector (transporters, forwarders, exporters, and importers) to come to this workshop.

Establishing cooperation between the countries of the Western Balkans is an important undertaking. The connection between the European Union legislation on electronic freight transport information, customs single window environment, and maritime single window and the UN/CEFACT standards and Multimodal Transport Reference Data Model will contribute to more efficient transport and trade in the region, the

queues at the border crossings will be reduced, and the existing bottlenecks will be greatly reduced. A recent study estimated the savings from implementing the EU Regulation on eFTI could be over EUR 20 million annually in the region and EUR 27.3 million annually when kit is fully implemented.

As the internal mechanism of implementing the two Regulations covers the internal information exchange in the European Union, the progress in its implementation is not well known in third countries, including countries aspiring accession to the EU. For this reason, stakeholders requested UNECE to organize this webinar to raise awareness among the regulatory agencies and the business community in the country about the developments in the European Union, and how relevant UN/CEFACT tools can help.

UNECE is currently supporting pilot testing projects and will be delighted to discuss further projects with stakeholders in the region.

The workshop will involve representatives from the Western Balkans, UNECE, the European Commission, the World Bank, CEFTA, UNCTAD/ASYCUDA, the Transport Community in the Western Balkans, and other stakeholders on trade facilitation and the Single Window.

For more information, please contact Mr. Mario Apostolov, Regional Adviser, ECE Economic Cooperation and Trade Division: mario.apostolov@un.org, tel. +41 79 2790936; Mr. Zoran Jolevski: z.jolevski@eurm.edu.mk; or Mr. Grant Akopyan: grant.akopyan@un.org. The materials of this workshop will be uploaded on the UNECE web site.

To join the workshop online, please register at the hyperlinks below:

PRELIMINARY AGENDA
Sixth Technical Cooperation Workshop for the Western Balkans
*EU's Electronic Freight Transport Information Regulation and the Use of
 UN/CEFACT Semantic Standards and Multimodal Transport Reference Data
 Model in the Western Balkans*

18 December 2023

10:00 – 10:20 Opening

Moderator: Representative of the Government of North Macedonia (digitalization)

10:00 – 10:10 Representative of the Government of North Macedonia

10:10 – 10:20 *Ms. Elisabeth Tuerk*, Director, Economic Cooperation and Trade Division, UNECE

10:20 - 10:35 Introduction to the structure and objectives of the seminar

Mr. Mario Apostolov, Regional Adviser, ECTD, UNECE

Adoption of the agenda

10:35 – 10:45 coffee break

10:45 – 13:00 Session I: Digitalization of multimodal transport and trade information flows; EU legislation and UN/CEFACT standards: challenges for the Western Balkans

Moderator: t.b.c.:

10:45 – 11:05 Keynote presentation: the European Union's electronic Freight Transport Information (eFTI) Regulation and progress in its implementation

Ms. Lia Potec, Policy Officer, DG MOVE, European Commission

11:05 – 11:20 Progress in the implementation of the EU Single Window Environment for Customs

Mr. Zahouani Saadaoui, Head of Sector, DG TAXUD, European Commission

11:20 – 11:40 The Multimodal Transport Reference Data Model (MMT RDM) and other semantic standards of the UN Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business (UN/CEFACT) in the implementation of the EU eTFI, maritime and customs single window legislation

Ms. Sue Probert, Chairperson, UN/CEFACT

11:40 – 11:55 Representative of the Customs Administration of North Macedonia on the development of the Single Window in North Macedonia and perspectives to include the data from the

11:55 – 12:10 Link between Single Window and standardized digitalization of data in documents accompanying goods in the supply chain.

Representatives of the World Bank

- 12:10 – 12:30 Discussion
- 12:30 – 13:30 Lunch break
- 13:30 – 15:30 Session II: Digitalization of multimodal transport and trade data and document exchange and the international standards**
Moderator: *Mario Apostolov, UNECE*
- 13:30 – 14:00 Panel on digitalization of documents in the five modes of transport using the UN standards: road (eCMR), rail (eCIM/SMGS), inland water, air (eAWB), maritime, as well as commercial documents (invoices and certificates), dangerous goods declarations:
Ms. Sue Probert, Chairperson, UN/CEFACT, *Mr. Erik Evtimov*, CIT, *Mr. Mario Apostolov*, UNECE Regional Adviser, *Mr. David Roff*, *Mr. Dmytro Iakymenkov*, and other UN/CEFACT experts
- 14:00 – 14:30 Implications, readiness, and ongoing projects for the implementation of the standards, eFTI legislation. (from Session I). Presentations on projects in the region. Transport Community (*Matej Zakonšek*, Director, *Nedim Begovic*, Desk officer for eFTI, or *Mate Gjorgjevski, t.b.c.*)
- 14:30 – 15:15 Implications, readiness, and ongoing projects for the implementation of the standards, eFTI legislation. Representatives of transport ministries, customs, freight forwarders on the digitalization of documents accompanying goods in the main modes of transport:
Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo (SC1244), Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia
- 15:15 – 15:30 Discussion on the development implications for the region
- 15:30 – 15:45 coffee break
- 15:45 – 17:30 Session III: Using the UN/CEFACT digitalization standards for interoperability between multimodal transport data exchange and regulatory systems**
Moderator: *Mario Apostolov, UNECE*
- 15:45 – 16:15 Standards for multimodal transport data exchange, UN/CEFACT Multimodal Transport Reference Data Model; their use in regulatory systems (Single Window; Customs, inspection agencies)
Ms. Sue Probert, Chairperson, UN/CEFACT, other UN/CEFACT experts
- 16:15 – 16:30 Use of international standards in ASYCUDA
Mr. Constantin Ciuta, Economic Affairs Officer, UNCTAD/ASYCUDA team
- 16:30 – 16:50 Update on CEFTA and SEED+ activities from the perspective of integrating business information
CEFTA Secretariat and SEED+

16:50 – 17:30 discussion

19 December 2023 (to be developed further)

10:00 – 12:30 Session IV: The development perspective

Moderator:

- 10:00 – 10:30 Readiness of the Western Balkan countries and the business community to implement the EU legislation and UN/CEFACT standards for digitalization of multimodal data and document exchange.
Presentations of representatives of:
Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo (SC1244), Montenegro, North Macedonia, and Serbia
- 10:30 – 10:45 Project on the Implementation of the eFTI Regulation in the Western Balkans
Mr. Arturas Piliponis, EU4Digital Facility
- 10:45 – 11:15 Discussion on needs and next steps from the perspective of the countries
- 11:15 – 11:30 coffee break
- 11:30 – 12:30 representatives of international partners, development partners, technical assistance projects, etc. Ms. Sue Probert, UN/CEFACT; Ms. Violane Konar-Leacy, Mr. William Gain, Mr. S.P. Sahu, Mr. Zahouani Saadaoui, DG TAXUD
- 12:30 – 13:00 Conclusions and recommendations
- 13:00 Closing the workshop**