



UNECE
UN / CEFAC

Executive Guide

eInvoicing

Introduction

Creating a paperless environment for trade must address the need for an electronic version of an invoice. But how to create a standard to dematerialize an invoice? There are

eInvoicing is not only cost-effective, but it also has social benefits: a reduction of 10 billion paper invoices annually in the US could save over one million trees and reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 360 tons

multiple sectors that use invoices as part of their core sources of information, from the commercial business transaction, transport, customs clearance, fiscal declarations, banking, insurance, etc. Depending on the type of commodity being traded, different types of information must be present on the invoice; an invoice for automobile parts will be very different from an invoice for milk products, and these will both be different from an invoice for transport services.

UN/CEFACT has developed a maximum data-set invoice which covers multiple sectors and multiple types of commodities called a cross-industry invoice (or CII for short). It is unlikely that all the data in the UN/CEFACT CII will be necessary all the time. Most usages will be a subset of the full CII. By creating a standard model with all the potential information, it is easier for parties to identify any possible version of an invoice.

The UN/CEFACT CII is part of a group of messages in supply chain procedures called the “Cross-Industry family of deliverables.” These are all based on the principle of a maximum data set, are integrated into the Supply Chain Reference Data Model, and are fully interoperable with each other. These include the CI-Cataloguing Process, CI-Ordering Process, CI-Quotation, CI-Delivery Process, CI-Remittance Advice, etc.

Application

The UN/CEFACT CII can be used in any sector, for any commodity. It uses the base principles of the Core Component Library, which makes it semantically compatible with all UN/CEFACT work as well as that of the World Customs Organization Data Model and the International Air Transport Association’s Cargo-XML, to name just a few.

Under Directive 2014/55/EU UN/CEFCAT CII is chosen as one of two obligatory standards within the EU for public procurement

The UN/CEFACT CII was chosen in 2016 as one of two obligatory standards within the European Union (EU) for public procurement. This means that every public agency within the EU, however small, will be obliged to accept this standard for electronic invoicing. The objective is to make e-invoicing the only means of accepting invoices in the future.

Benefits

Using a standard allows sender and receiver to understand all the data content in the same way, unambiguously. As an invoice is potentially reused for multiple operations (sale, transport, clearance, fiscality, remittance, insurance), many actors will play the role of receiver (very often in different economies) making it important to use an international standard with clear semantic definitions.



More than 50 countries around the world are pushing invoicing and other paperless processes

The UN/CEFACT CII is particularly beneficial to the international trading community as it is available free of charge and it covers all sectors of activity and all potential types of commodities. It is further of interest as it has been chosen as an official standard for all procurement within the European Union.

More information

The UN/CEFACT Cross Industry Invoice is available free of charge on the UN/CEFACT web site:

- Cross Industry Invoice Business Requirement Specification:
http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/uncefact/BRS/BRS_CII_v2.0.6.pdf
- Cross Industry Invoice Requirement Specification Mapping:
http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/cefact/rsm/RSM_CrossIndustryInvoice_v3.0.1.zip
- Cross Industry Invoice XML Schema (version 16B):
http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/cefact/xml_schemas/D16B_SCRDM_Subset_CII.zip

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 1000 experts from 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>

For more information:
<http://www.unece.org/cefact>
See also: <http://tfig.unece.org/>

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