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UN/CEFACT Programme of Work 2017 - 2018

### United Nations Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business (UN/CEFACT) Programme of Work 2017 - 2018

#### *Summary*

This document presents the Programme of Work of the United Nations Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business (UN/CEFACT) for 2017-2018.

Document ECE/TRADE/C/CEFACT/2017/19 is submitted by the UN/CEFACT Bureau to the twenty-third session of the Plenary for decision.

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## **I. Introduction**

1. This document presents the Programme of Work (PoW) of the United Nations Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business (UN/CEFACT) for 2017-2018.
2. It is submitted by the UN/CEFACT Bureau to the twenty-third session of the Plenary for discussion and approval, and will be subsequently submitted for approval to the Executive Committee of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE).
3. It is consistent with the streamlined project-oriented management approach adopted at the Plenary's eighteenth session in February 2012 and the associated revised foundation document "UN/CEFACT structure, mandate, terms of reference and procedures" (ECE/TRADE/C/CEFACT/2010/15/Rev.5). The PoW for 2017-2018 also aligns with the document "UN/CEFACT Prospective Directions" (ECE/TRADE/C/CEFACT/2016/20/Rev.1).
4. Activities are driven by the expressed needs of the Member States and the recommendations of the UNECE Executive Committee for UN/CEFACT.

## **II. Key elements of UN/CEFACT's vision and mandate**

5. UN/CEFACT's vision is "simple, transparent and effective processes for global commerce".
6. Within the United Nations framework, under the Economic and Social Council, 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 UNECE, mandated to develop a programme of work of global relevance to achieve improved worldwide coordination and cooperation in these areas.
7. UN/CEFACT supports activities dedicated to improving the ability of business, trade and administrative organizations from developed, developing and transition economies to trade in products and relevant services effectively. Its principal focus is on facilitating national and international transactions through the simplification, standardization and harmonization of processes, procedures and information flows, thereby contributing to the growth of global trade.
8. UN/CEFACT provides an opportunity for public and private sector experts to work together under the guidance of its Plenary and Bureau to develop a body of freely available recommendations, standards and guidance materials that can help reduce regulatory and procedural barriers to trade. Its experts conduct projects within Plenary-approved programmes of work, using an open development process, respecting an Intellectual Property Rights Policy and adhering to a Code of Conduct.

## **III. Programme of Work for 2017-2018**

9. Cross-border standardization, simplification and harmonization are fundamental tools for the facilitation of the international trading process and have formed the key nucleus of UN/CEFACT's work for decades. This trade facilitation mission supports the objectives of the Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA) of the World Trade Organization (WTO), which references and emphasizes the importance of several issues covered by

UNECE recommendations (Single Window, National Trade Facilitation Bodies, etc.); and it encourages the use of international standards.

10. During 2017-2018, UN/CEFACT will build on its strengths as it brings together public and private sector experts together to address the next generation of requirements in trade facilitation and electronic business needed around the world. This will be achieved through timely and coordinated responses to identified priority needs within a streamlined project-oriented organizational structure that serves governments and business in achieving greater efficiency and effectiveness within and across borders. These responses and projects will be implemented on the basis of UN/CEFACT's transparent methodology, its open development process and its Intellectual Property Rights Policy.

11. The focus areas of the PoW for 2017-2018, which are described below, reflect the UN/CEFACT Prospective Directions (ECE/TRADE/C/CEFACT/2016/20/Rev.1), adopted by the UN/CEFACT Plenary at its twenty second session. By taking this approach, it is possible to streamline the presentation of the PoW and to bring to the attention of the Plenary and the Executive Committee the different types of substantive work that experts are likely to address.

12. Overall, the key focus areas of the PoW for 2017-2018 demonstrate the following:

- An emphasis on efforts to identify, develop or revise trade facilitation **recommendations** and **standards**;
- An emphasis on acting as a semantic hub through efforts to advance the development of technology-neutral **semantics (data definitions)** and **interoperability**; and
- Support to member States and stakeholders who wish to address requirements in trade facilitation and electronic business that can take full advantage of UN/CEFACT's family of standards (“**one-stop-shop**”).

## A. Progressing trade facilitation and supporting its implementation

13. UN/CEFACT's recommendations, standards and other deliverables can be used by governments and business to implement different aspects of the WTO TFA. The TFA specifically encourages member States to follow best practices in the form of international standards and to participate in the review and development of international standards. In addition to contributing to the implementation of trade facilitation under the WTO TFA, UN/CEFACT deliverables can help achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the United Nations (UN).<sup>1</sup> UN/CEFACT will develop further deliverables to support implementation of the WTO TFA, help achieve the UN SDGs and help advance trade facilitation in general.

14. Current research activities suggest several potential projects for consideration, including a number of revision projects for existing deliverables that may benefit from maintenance and possible updating. These include:

- Recommendations and other deliverables related to different aspects of Single Window, including interoperability, core principles for operation and vocabulary;

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<sup>1</sup> SDGs: At the United Nations Sustainable Development Summit on 25 September 2015, world leaders adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which includes a set of seventeen Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to end poverty, fight inequality and injustice, and tackle climate change by 2030. <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/?menu=1300>

- Recommendation n°42 on Trade and Transport Facilitation Monitoring Mechanisms (TTFMM);
- Recommendation on cross-border management;
- Deliverables related to post-clearance audit, common custom procedures and trusted trader programmes of government agencies other than customs;
- Recommendation on integrating trade finance and supply chain finance into trade facilitation;
- Development and maintenance of standards, including the Fisheries Language for Universal Exchange (FLUX), Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF), eLAB, eCert, Supply Chain Reference Data Model (SCRDM), Multi Modal Transport Reference Data Model (MMT), Small-scaled Lodging House (SLH), Destination Travel Information (DTI), as well as standards related to supply chain management, procurement, transport, logistics and other domains;
- Implementation of pilot projects based on UN/CEFACT standards;
- Development of solutions for the financial aspects of value chains, such as the purchase order financing request;
- Maintenance and development of standards, recommendations and guidelines supporting the tendering process; and
- Updating and expanding the United Nations Trade Facilitation Implementation Guide (TFIG).

## **B. Providing semantic interoperability**

15. The semantics of business data exchange, i.e. the basic, common and shared meanings for business terms and information, are essential to the standardization and harmonization of business interactions across the world. UN/CEFACT develops deliverables which support this harmonization such as its Core Components Library and Business Requirement Specifications (describing syntax neutral business processes). UN/CEFACT shall be the semantic hub for all of our internal deliverables and will also aim to coordinate and bring together the needs of other organizations.

16. Potential activities for consideration in order to enable UN/CEFACT to provide and support semantic interoperability include:

- Continued development of the UN Core Component Library (UN/CCL);
- Continued maintenance of the Electronic Data Interchange for Administration, Commerce and Transport (UN/EDIFACT) standard;
- Continued maintenance of the United Nations Code for Trade and Transport Locations (UN/LOCODE);
- Projects to promote reconciliation for traders, including revisions of Supply Chain Cross Industry artefacts such as Catalogue, Quotation, Ordering, Delivery, Receiving Advice, etc.;
- Projects to support regulatory oversight and control and to support certification;
- Work on the supply chain process, tendering process, agriculture, transport and other areas; and

- Ensuring semantic interoperability between UN/CEFACT standards, for example between the Small Scale Lodging House (SLH) and Destination Travel Information (DTI) process projects and other standards produced by the Travel and Tourism Domain.

### C. Developing further guidance and standards

17. UN/CEFACT is structured in Programme Development Areas, each supported by a number of domains and focal points. These have an important role in helping to monitor emerging business processes as well as new information and communication technologies. UN/CEFACT will provide guidance to governments, business and its experts on how to leverage the power of new developments, such as blockchain,<sup>2</sup> through the use of existing UN/CEFACT deliverables or the development of new deliverables. In addition, UN/CEFACT will, at the request of the user community, develop guidelines on how to use its deliverables.

18. Potential guidance and standards may be developed in areas such as:
- Financial value chain solution, for instance purchase order financing request;
  - Accounts Reconciliation;
  - Transport carbon emissions accounting (for calculating the carbon footprint of products);
  - Traceability of commodities;
  - Frameworks for sustainable agricultural trade and production and food supply chains;
  - Supply chain;
  - Transport;
  - Travel and tourism, including experience programmes, restaurants and travel data; and
  - Theme of UN/CEFACT products that support semantic interoperability, such as the UN/CCL, by trade-related application developments.

### D. Updating existing deliverables

19. UN/CEFACT will undertake periodic reviews of its deliverables through its domains and working teams. The objective of such reviews shall be to identify the continued relevance of these deliverables and their coherence with other current UN/CEFACT deliverables. These reviews and the finalization of their results will be implemented following the Open Development Process (ODP) for UN/CEFACT (ECE/TRADE/CEFACT/2016/17).

20. The following existing deliverables are among those that are envisaged for possible update:

- Transboundary movements of waste;

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<sup>2</sup> Blockchain is a new technology key widely used to develop new applications for the “trusted exchange” of financial and trade data.

- Business Requirements Specifications (BRS), Requirements Specification Mapping (RSM) and models of the Supply Chain Management Domain;
- UNECE Recommendation n°1, “United Nations Layout Key for Trade Documents”;
- UNECE Recommendation n°2, “Locations of Codes in Trade Documents”;
- Standards developed by the Travel and Tourism Domain;
- Deliverables related to supply chain, procurement and transport; and
- United Nations Trade Facilitation Implementation Guide (TFIG).

## **E. Proposing comprehensive deliverables based on the Buy-Ship-Pay model**

21. Efforts will be made to ensure that comprehensive end-to-end solutions based on the Buy-Ship-Pay model are freely available to the trade user community. Gap analyses can be conducted to identify areas where guidance or standards are needed in order to cover the full set of supply chain processes involved in cross-border and domestic trade for different sectors. The implementation of these gap analyses and the finalization of their results shall follow the ODP process.

22. This will be achieved through the development of deliverables that address all areas covered by Buy-Ship-Pay including:

- Solutions to the financial aspects of value chains, for example, the purchase order financing request;
- Integrating the processes for trade finance and supply chain finance into trade facilitation;
- Gap analysis of current deliverables, including “Buy” deliverables and the international supply chain reference data model, as well as “Ship” deliverables and the multi-modal transport reference data model;
- Identifying gaps in the use of international standards in public procurement;
- Identifying new areas covered by the Buy-Ship-Pay model to be developed such as manufacturing; and
- Gender inequalities in trade facilitation, such as the project on women in trade facilitation.

## **F. Improving communications and enlarging participation**

23. UN/CEFACT will develop guidance material for the use of its deliverables, adapted to different target audiences. Particular focus will be placed on creating guidance material to make current deliverables more accessible, especially to non-technical audiences.

24. Internal communication will be maintained and external communication shall be enhanced.

25. Through the UNECE secretariat, UN/CEFACT will work together with other organizations of the United Nations system and relevant organizations to support developing countries in adopting its recommendations, standards and best practices.

26. The following activities are among those that will promote improved communications and enlarged participation:

- Organizing meetings to inform stakeholders about UN/CEFACT deliverables and encouraging their participation in UN/CEFACT work;
- Targeted outreach to other relevant organizations on specific issues, such as in the Transport and Logistics Domain in order to increase awareness of the Multi-Modal Transport Reference Model (MMT) and to encourage contributions to the work from the different transport modes; and
- Identifying relevant international and regional users of international standards in private and public procurement.

## **G. Enhancing cooperation with other UN bodies**

27. In order to ensure the coherence of guidance provided by UN bodies in the spirit of the “One UN” principle, UN/CEFACT works closely with the UNECE Executive Committee, the secretariat, and other bodies of the UNECE and the United Nations, such as: United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL); United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD); International Trade Centre (ITC); United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO); International Telecommunication Union (ITU); Universal Postal Union (UPU); International Maritime Organization (IMO); International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) and United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

28. In order to effectively fulfill its mandate of global outreach, UN/CEFACT will also seek to enhance, through the UNECE secretariat, collaboration with all of the United Nations Regional Economic Commissions.

29. Some activities for consideration for enhancing cooperation activities with other UN bodies include involving them, according to their expertise and interest in:

- Relevant areas of UN/CCL development;
- Development and promotion of the Recommendation n°42 on Trade and Transport Facilitation Measuring Mechanism (TTFMM);
- SLH, DTI and the other information processing projects;
- Other projects such as those on the supply chain management process, procurement management and transport information process; and
- Background research on public procurement using international standards.

## **H. Enhancing cooperation activities with other standards bodies through bilateral agreements**

30. UN/CEFACT will seek to engage actively with other organizations through the UNECE secretariat in order to ensure the coherence of its work with that of other organizations, to announce its projects in a timely manner in order to avoid duplication of efforts and to find ways of further enhancing cooperation. An important vehicle for this will be the Memorandum of Understanding on e-business between the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC), the International Organization for Standardization (ISO), ITU and UNECE.

31. Some activities for consideration for enhancing cooperative activities with other standards bodies through bilateral agreements include:

- UN/CCL development; and

- Improving cooperation with appropriate standardization committees and bodies.

## **I. Seeking new cooperation with other standards bodies**

32. Cooperation with other standards bodies will be sought by:
- a) Encouraging them to join the development and review work within UN/CEFACT;
  - b) Engaging with them in discussions on cooperation, establishing liaison or contact points; and,
  - c) Where useful and appropriate, establishing new bilateral agreements through the secretariat.
33. Some activities for consideration for enhancing cooperative activities with other standards bodies without bilateral agreements include:
- UN/CCL development; and
  - Identifying relevant international and regional users of international standards in private and public procurement.



## Annex I

### Proposed publications for 2017-2018

#### A. Recurrent publications

<i>Item no.</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Mandate</i>	<i>Print and/or electronic</i>	<i>Size</i>	<i>No. of pages</i>	<i>Original language(s)</i>	<i>Translated language(s)</i>	<i>No. of copies and language(s)</i>
1	Summary of UNECE Trade Facilitation Best Practice and Recommendations	ST/SGB/2012/2; ECE/TRADE/C/CEFACT/2010/15/Rev.5, para. 6	Electronic	A4	20	E	R	

#### B. Non-recurrent publications

<i>Item no.</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Mandate</i>	<i>Print and/or electronic</i>	<i>Size</i>	<i>No. of pages</i>	<i>Original language(s)</i>	<i>Translated language(s)</i>	<i>No. of copies and language(s)</i>
1	Trade Facilitation Recommendations	ST/SGB/2012/2; ECE/TRADE/C/CEFACT/2010/15/Rev.5, para. 6	Print and electronic	A4	30	E; F; R		E-100; F-100; R-100
2	Trade Facilitation Recommendations	ST/SGB/2012/2; ECE/TRADE/C/CEFACT/2010/15/Rev.5, para. 6	Print and electronic	A4	25	E; F; R		E-100; F-100; R-100
3	Trade Facilitation Recommendations	ST/SGB/2012/2; ECE/TRADE/C/CEFACT/2010/15/Rev.5, para. 6	Print and electronic	A4	32	E; F; R		E-100; F-100; R-100
4	Trade Facilitation Recommendations	ST/SGB/2012/2; ECE/TRADE/C/CEFACT/2010/15/Rev.5, para. 6	Print and electronic	A4	30	E; F; R		E-100; F-100; R-100
5	Trade Facilitation Recommendations	ST/SGB/2012/2; ECE/TRADE/C/CEFACT/2010/15/Rev.5, para. 6	Print and electronic	A4	32	E; F; R		E-100; F-100; R-100
6	Trade Facilitation Recommendations	ST/SGB/2012/2; ECE/TRADE/C/CEFACT/2010/15/Rev.5, para. 6	Print and electronic	A4	30	E; F; R		E-100; F-100; R-100

7	Brochure on Trade Facilitation	ST/SGB/2012/2; ECE/TRADE/C/ CEFACT/2010/15/ Rev.5, para. 6	Electronic	A4	15	E	R	
8	Single Windows Interoperability – Best Practices and Experiences	ST/SGB/2012/2; ECE/TRADE/C/ CEFACT/2010/15/ Rev.5, para. 6	Print and electronic	A4	35	E; F; R		E-100, F-100, R-100
9	UN/CEFACT standards to support the implementation of the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement	ST/SGB/2012/2; ECE/TRADE/C/ CEFACT/2010/15/ Rev.5, para. 6	Electronic and print on demand	A4	30	E; F; R		
10	Traceability and risk management through standards	UNECE standard on traceability in agriculture trade developed under the open Development Process by UN/CEFACT available at <a href="https://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/trade/agr/meetings/wp.07/2015/PPTs/CEFACT-Standards-TraceabilityInAgriculture.pdf">https://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/trade/agr/meetings/wp.07/2015/PPTs/CEFACT-Standards-TraceabilityInAgriculture.pdf</a>	Electronic and print on demand	A4	25	E; F		
11	Guide to support policy makers to develop national trade facilitation strategies	ST/SGB/2012/2; ECE/TRADE/C/ CEFACT/2010/15/ Rev.5, para. 6	Electronic	A4	25	E; F; R		E-100; F-100; R-100
12	White Paper on Women in Trade Facilitation	ST/SGB/2012/2; ECE/TRADE/C/ CEFACT/2010/15/ Rev.5, para. 6	Electronic	A4	20	E; F; R		E-100; F-100; R-100
13	Green Paper or White Paper on Cross-Border Management Coordination	ST/SGB/2012/2; ECE/TRADE/C/ CEFACT/2010/15/ Rev.5, para. 6	Electronic	A4	20	E, F; R		E-100; F-100; R-100