



Report by the Chair of the United Nations Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business (UN/CEFACT)

Ms. Sue Probert (United Kingdom)

*UNECE Executive Committee, 132nd session
Geneva, 13 February 2024*



Strategic Objectives and Governance Structure



Objectives

- Focal point for **trade facilitation recommendations & e-business standards**
- Aligned with UNECE cross-cutting themes on **circular economy, digital & green transformations**
- Targeted support to strengthen value chains for **SDGs 8, 12, and 17**

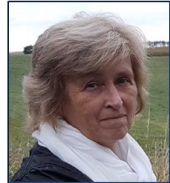









Key tools

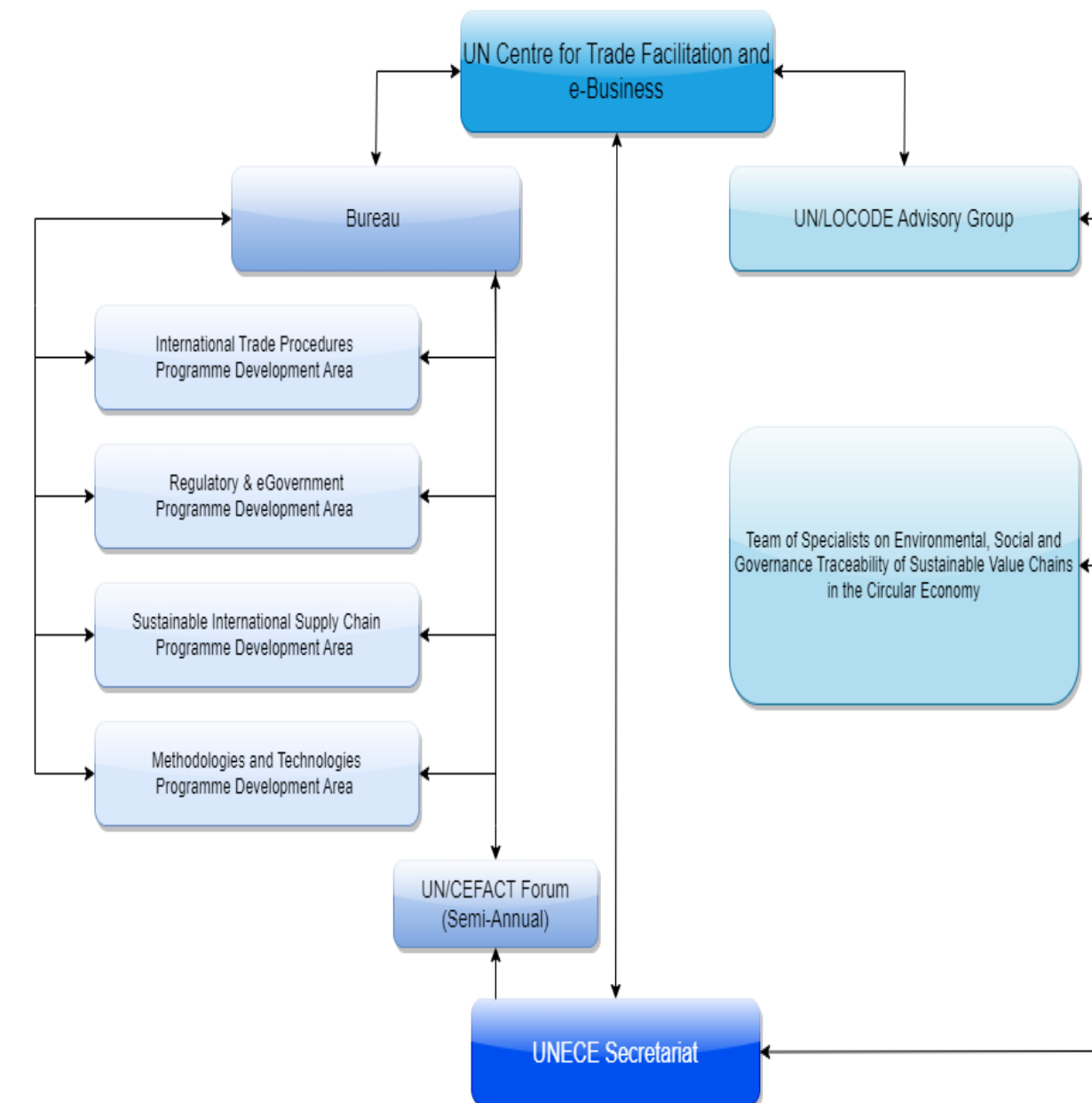
- **48** global trade facilitation recommendations
- **950** e-business standards and guidelines

Means

- **1,631** experts involved in **30** active projects
- Bi-annual Forums, annual Plenary, regular Bureau calls

UN/CEFACT Bureau
with newly elected Vice Chairs in 2023

	Sue Probert, Chair United Kingdom	
		
VC Capell Australia	VC Becha France	VC Maksutov Kyrgyz Republic
		
VC Heydarov Azerbaijan	VC Fratini Pass Italy	VC Norris Canada
		
RR Sugamata Asia-Pacific	RR Diagne Sub-Saharan African region	RR Leite Latin American & Caribbean region



New Chair election at the 2024 Plenary

UN

UN/ECOSOC

UNECE

EXCOM

UN/CEFACT

Key achievements in 2023



Policy recommendations and standards

- **1 new recommendation: Rec No. 48: Private Sector Participation in National Trade Facilitation Bodies**
- **2023 Summary of ECE Trade Facilitation Recommendations**
- **7 updates to e-business standards:** UN/EDIFACT directories, UN/LOCODE directories, UN CCL, XML Schema Library, Global supply chain and MMT RDM, JSON-LD Web Vocabulary

Advisory services & technical assistance

- **2023 UN Global Survey on Digital and Sustainable Trade Facilitation**
- **8 reports and executive guides** at 29th Plenary
- Update of UN TFIG e-learning platform
- **30+** capacity-building missions in **15** countries (e.g. **Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Türkiye, Ukraine, and Uzbekistan**)

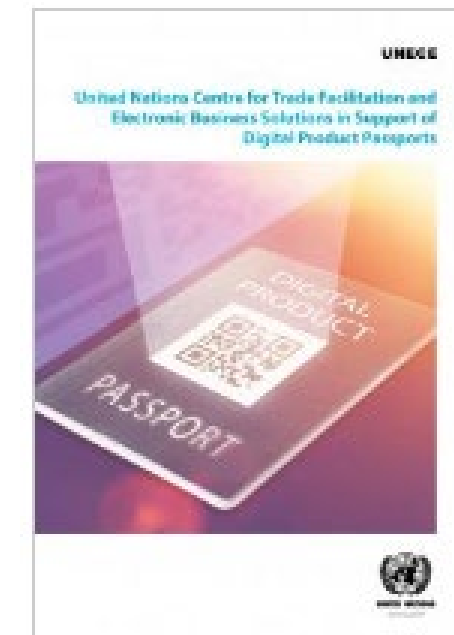
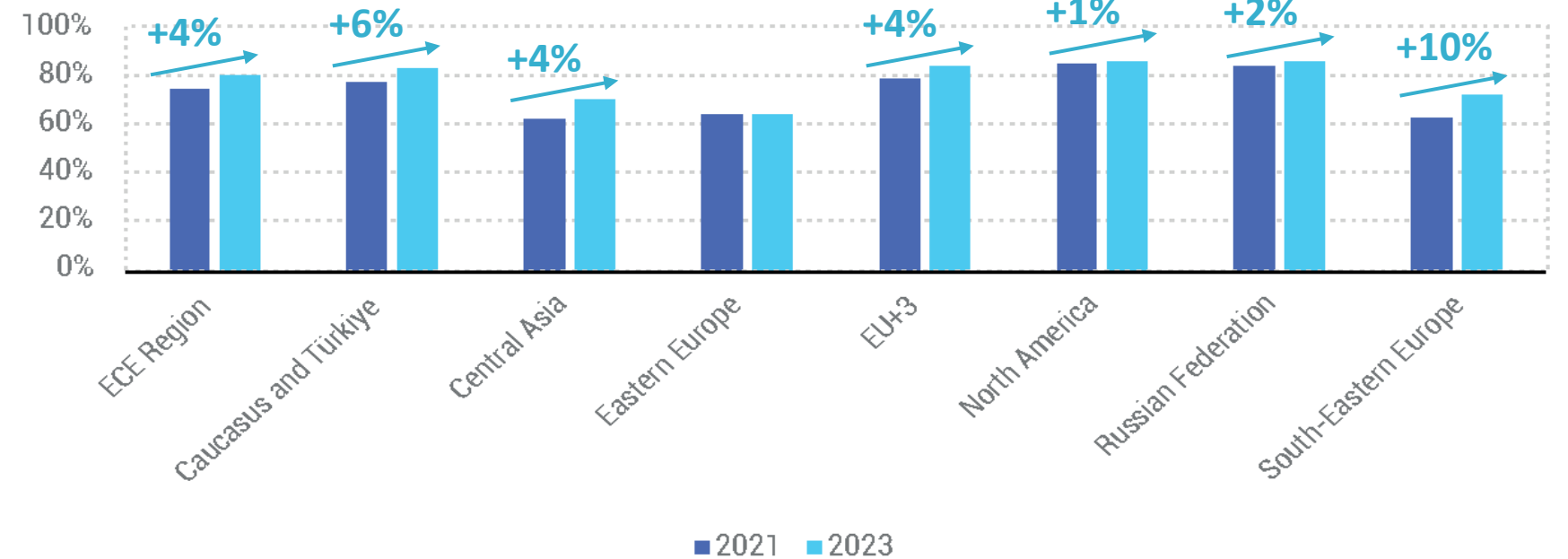
Communication and outreach

- Mentioned in **564 articles & 271 tweets** with **1.4 billion** social media impressions
- Biannual newsletters, nearly **20** news pieces and press releases
- LinkedIn page gaining **1,100 new followers & doubled** total followers
- Contribution to **50+** high-level events (e.g. organized by ADB, European Commission, ICC DSI, UNCITRAL, UNCTAD, WTO)

ECE Region improved from **76%** in 2021 to **80%** in 2023

Key trends in the ECE region

Implementation rates of trade facilitation measures, by country group, ECE, 2021 and 2023 (%)



For more information on the survey: bit.ly/unglobalsurvey2023
For publications: unece.org/publications/trade/cefact

Key impacts in 2023



Policy recommendations and standards

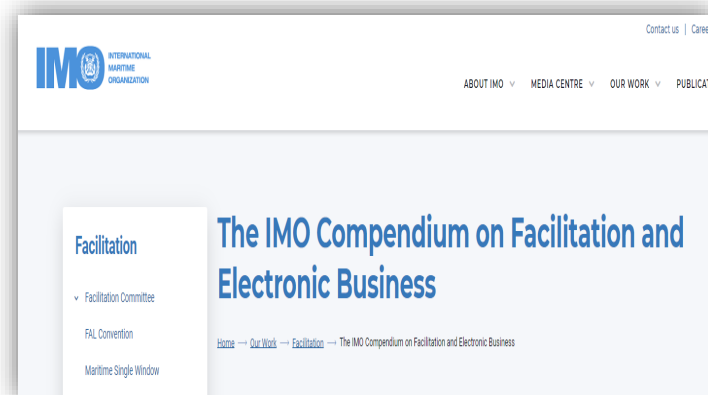
- Improved institutional capacity to adopt and implement national reforms (**Rec No. 48**)
- Enhanced participation of private sector in **sustainable and digital trade facilitation** efforts
- Enhanced standardization and harmonization of e-business practices
- Uptake of UN/CEFACT recommendations and standards in relevant policies & regulations (e.g. **MMT RDM in EU regulations on eFTI & MSW environment, SPECA Roadmap, Rec No. 46 in EU regulations on circularity & due diligence in textiles industry**)

Policy analysis, advice and dialogue

- High-level policy dialogue (participation from **WTO, UNCTAD, ITU, ESCAP, EC & private sector**)
- Increased country capacity to develop & implement strategies & reforms (e.g. **TFIG has 300,000+ global users**)
- Improved capacity of industry actors on innovative solutions for climate impacts and ESG risks (e.g. ECE traceability and transparency toolbox piloting with **90 industry actors in 23 countries**)

Communication and outreach

- Enhanced the cooperation and partnership for sustainable and digital trade facilitation
- Wide referencing of UN/CEFACT recommendations, standards and solutions in international flagship publications & Sustainability Pledge within the garment and footwear sector



Examples of referencing UN/CEFACT tools :

- 5th version of the IMO Compendium
- CITES Electronic Permitting Toolkit V 3.0
- ICC DSI report Key Trade Documents and Data Elements
- EU4Digital eCommerce Report

Key events Dec 2022 – 2024



5-6 Dec 2022
(online)

39th UN/CEFACT
Forum

800+ experts
65 countries
14 sessions

8-12 May 2023
Geneva (hybrid)

40th UN/CEFACT
Forum

1000+ experts
55 countries
36 sessions

11 May 2023
Geneva (hybrid)

UN/LOCODE AG
Meeting

22 delegates &
experts (incl. 4
national focal
points)

2-5 Oct 2023
Bangkok (hybrid)

41st UN/CEFACT
Forum

500+ experts
60 countries
23 sessions

9-10 Nov 2023
Geneva

29th UN/CEFACT
Plenary

50+
delegates 23
countries

90 experts
20+ countries

3rd Session of ToS
on ESG Traceability

23 Nov 2023
Geneva (hybrid)

Forthcoming

UN/LOCODE AG
Meeting

16-17 Apr 2024

42nd UN/CEFACT
Forum

8-10 Jul 2024

30th UN/CEFACT
Plenary

11-12 Jul 2024

4th Session of ToS
on ESG Traceability

3 Oct 2024

43rd UN/CEFACT
Forum

December 2024
(TBC)

Major activities planned for 2024 and beyond



Policy recommendations and standards

- Strengthen contribution to UNECE cross-cutting themes
- Ensure the sustainability of flagship information exchange standards and their publication
- Focus efforts and resources based on relevance and impact of UN/CEFACT deliverables



NEW Programme of Work 2025-26

Policy analysis, advice and dialogue

- Further develop recommendations & standards (i.e. Rec No.49).
- Provide policy advice and dialogue and offer demand-driven technical assistance with XB funding
 - Policy brief for Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan in support of WTO accession
 - National TF Roadmap for Uzbekistan

Communication, outreach and partnerships

- Further enhance outreach, communication & partnerships to
 - Promote UN/CEFACT solutions so that they are more widely implemented
 - Provide targeted support to small actors in emerging economies



Cooperation with other organizations



EC
DG-MOVE
DG-TAXUD
DG-MARE
DG-INTPA
DG-DIGIT

EEC
OECD

GS1
IPCSA
PROTECT
FIATA
SMDG
DCSA

ISO
IEC
ITU
WTO
ITC
IATA
WCO

Decision for consideration of approval



The Executive Committee is invited to approve:

The Programme of Work of the United Nations Code for Trade and Transport Locations (UN/LOCODE) Advisory Group,
as contained in document (ECE/TRADE/C/CEFACT/2023/23),
as well as the extension of its mandate for the period 2024-2025.

Thank you!

More information is available on the UNECE website: <https://unece.org/trade/>
For any questions, please contact the Secretariat via email uncefact@un.org

