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Advisory Group on the United Nations Code for Trade and Transport Locations (UN/LOCODE)

Programme of Work for 2020-2021 of the United Nations Code for Trade and Transport Locations (UN/LOCODE) Advisory Group

Summary

This document presents the Programme of Work of the UN/LOCODE Advisory Group for the period 2020-2021. It was approved by the UN/LOCODE Advisory Group at its third annual meeting on 27 and 28 November 2019.

Document ECE/TRADE/C/CEFACT/2020/20 is submitted by the Chair of the Advisory Group on UN/LOCODE to the twenty-sixth session of the Plenary for endorsement.

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I. Background

1. The United Nations Code for Trade and Transport Locations (UN/LOCODE) identifies locations related to international trade around the world. It is a five-character code where the first two characters represent the International Standards Organization (ISO) country code followed by a three-character code unique within that country.
2. The basis of UN/LOCODE is the United Nation Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) Recommendation 16. The first edition was published in 1980. It has been revised as a project of the United Nations Centre Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business (UN/CEFACT) since 2018 and will be submitted to the UN/CEFACT Plenary for approval in 2020.
3. These codes have been maintained and published by the UNECE secretariat since 1981. The first issue of UN/LOCODE had 8000 codes and today has over 100,000 from 249 countries, dependent territories and special areas.
4. At the first UN/LOCODE Conference held on 24 April 2015, it was decided to set up a UN/LOCODE Advisory Group which would consist of the different stakeholders of the standard. The group advises and supports the UNECE secretariat and UN/CEFACT in the maintenance and further development of UN/LOCODE.
5. The establishment of the UN/LOCODE Advisory Group was endorsed by the UNECE Executive Committee (EXCOM) in June 2017, and its first meeting took place in Geneva from 30 November to 1 December 2017.

II. Introduction

6. The present document sets out the Programme of Work for the UN/LOCODE Advisory Group for the period of 2020-2021. UN/CEFACT is invited to adopt this Programme of Work at its twenty-sixth meeting and recommend it to the UN/CEFACT Plenary for endorsement. This draft was discussed and finalized at the third UN/LOCODE Advisory Group Annual Meeting, held on 28-29 of November 2019 in Xiamen, China.

III. Scope, Objective, Activities and Work areas

A. Scope

7. The scope of the Programme of Work covers all United Nations member States as well as other organizations and private sector stakeholders involved in UN/LOCODE. It encompasses activities in support of UN/LOCODE maintenance, development, and promotion.
8. It does so by improving, promoting, facilitating and supporting this international standard, including proposing necessary developments and potential use of this standard.
9. The Programme of Work is linked to the Terms of Reference (ECE/TRADE/C/CEFACT/2017/17) as approved at the ninety-second meeting of UNECE EXCOM on 23 June 2017.

B. Objective

10. Aiming at “ensuring the maintenance and development of UN/LOCODE in a sustainable way”, the Advisory Group is expected to achieve its objectives and implement the necessary activities on the assumption that:

- there is active participation and contribution by experts from governments, academia and the private sector in expert group meetings and networks;
- Governments are willing to engage in support of UN/LOCODE, especially in the nomination of the UN/LOCODE National Focal Point (NFP) and in providing resources to fulfil the duties of NFPs; and
- extra-budgetary resources are adequate to support capacity-building, advisory services, the development and maintenance of the system and the electronic maintenance and publication of the standard.

C. Activities

11. To achieve this goal the UN/LOCODE Advisory Group will:

- (a) re-engineer the UN/LOCODE maintenance and publication system with current technology, based on today’s business needs;
- (b) optimize the workflow of Data Maintenance Requests (DMR) validation;
- (c) develop and share best practices;
- (d) advise and assist on UN/LOCODE issues;
- (e) support the enhancement of the UN/LOCODE Focal Point Network;
- (f) improve data quality;
- (g) support dialogue with key stakeholders; and
- (h) organize capacity-building and training sessions.

D. Work areas

12. The Programme of work is structured around the following work areas (WA):

- WA1: Policy dialogue and advice;
- WA2: Technical monitoring, assessment, and support;
- WA3: Communication and outreach;
- WA4: Capacity-building;
- WA5: Data quality.

1. WA1: Policy dialogue and advice

13. This Work Area involves active promotion and support of the implementation of the standard on a policy level. This Work Area encompasses active engagement with policymakers on a global scale by enhancing the UN/LOCODE Focal Point Network and by contacting relevant authorities.

2. WA2: Technical monitoring, assessment, and support

14. The Work Area on technical monitoring, assessment and support has the objective to support UN/LOCODE maintenance and development using the new UN/LOCODE system, and to meet the business needs using the latest technology.

3. WA3: Communication and outreach

15. Activities of this Work Area are as follows:

- Providing DMR validation procedures and policy in writing;
- Sharing information on the work of the Maintenance Team and UN/LOCODE Re-engineering Project Team on the Collaborative UN/CEFACT Environment (CUE);
- Publishing the UN/LOCODE directory biannually on the UNECE website;
- Contributing to relevant events to disseminate the information and promote the standard;
- Providing outreach through activities beyond UN/LOCODE to expand the use of UN/LOCODE;
- Finding funds for the activities laid out in the Programme of Work.

4. WA4: Capacity-building

16. Technical training sessions will be organized for UN/LOCODE Focal Points and potential stakeholders.

17. This Work Area will reach out to the business community to develop UN/LOCODE in a sustainable way by sharing knowledge and expertise.

5. WA5: Data quality

18. The data quality of UN/LOCODE will be improved by

- the implementation of the revised UNECE Recommendation N°16, which is scheduled to be submitted to the twenty-sixth session of the UN/CEFACT Plenary for approval;
- the UN/LOCODE Maintenance Team; and
- the new UN/LOCODE system.

IV. Guiding principles

19. The work of the Advisory Group and the execution of this Programme of Work is guided by the following principles:

- Mutual respect;
- Volunteer work and contributions;
- Expert advice;
- Full alignment with the Terms of Reference and the Programme of Work.

V. Governance

20. The Advisory Group is led by a Chair and supported by the UNECE secretariat.

21. The Chair of the Advisory Group is recommended by the UN/CEFACT Bureau and his/her nomination is endorsed by the UNECE secretariat for a mandate of two years.
 22. It is the responsibility of the Chair and the UNECE secretariat to ensure that the objectives of the Advisory Group are met and aligned with the Programme of Work.
 23. The Chair reports the work of the Group to the annual UN/CEFACT Plenary.
 24. Participation in the Advisory Group is on a self-funded voluntary basis. All members of the Advisory Group must register as experts of UN/CEFACT in accordance with relevant procedures.
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