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Economic Commission for Europe

Inland Transport Committee

Working Party on Customs Questions affecting Transport

**Informal Ad hoc Expert Group on Conceptual and
Technical Aspects of Computerization of the TIR Procedure**

Thirtieth session

Budapest, 18-19 September 2019

Item 6 (a) of the provisional agenda

Reference Model of the TIR Procedure

Contributions of the network of eTIR focal points

Results of the GE.1 survey on the connection to the eTIR international system and the “opting out” of Annex 11

Note by the secretariat

I. Background

1. At its twenty-ninth session, the Informal Ad hoc Expert Group on Conceptual and Technical Aspects of Computerization of the TIR Procedure (further referred to as “the Expert Group”) mandated the secretariat to prepare a survey and circulate it among TIR and eTIR focal points to assess:

- the readiness of TIR contracting parties to connect to the eTIR international system once Annex 11 and the eTIR specifications have been adopted, and
- the intention of TIR contracting parties not to accept Annex 11 and, if so, for which reason.

2. The Expert Group set the deadline for replying to the survey to 31 January 2019. It also requested the secretariat to present preliminary results to WP.30 at its February 2019 session and the final results at the 30th session of the Expert Group.

¹ This document was reissued for technical reasons on 20 August 2019 and replaces the version published on 31 July 2019.

3. The secretariat sent out the survey on 5 December 2018 and, at its 151st session, the Working Party on Customs Questions affecting Transport (WP.30) took note of the preliminary results of the GE.1 survey on the connection to the eTIR international system and the “opting out” of Annex 11 and urged all contracting parties to respond to the survey no later than by 28 February 2019. On 1 March 2019, the secretariat sent out a last reminder kindly asking TIR and eTIR focal points to respond to the survey.

II. Survey questions

4. The following two questions were sent in English, French and Russian:

Question 1 / Вопрос 1

How long would your customs administration require to connect to the eTIR international system once the eTIR specification have been finalized and Annex 11 will be adopted?

Combien de temps votre administration des douanes aura-t-elle besoin pour se connecter au système international eTIR une fois que les spécifications eTIR auront été finalisées et que l'annexe 11 sera adoptée?

Сколько времени потребуется Вашей таможенной администрации для подключения к международной системе eTIR после того, как спецификация eTIR будет завершена, и Приложение 11 будет принято?

Question 2 / Вопрос 2

The provisions introducing new Annex 11 of the TIR Convention provide the possibility for TIR Contracting parties not to accept the annex, i.e. allowing countries not (yet) interested in eTIR not to be bound by the provisions of Annex 11. Does your administration intend to use this so-called “opt out” clause, and if so, why?

Les dispositions introduisant la nouvelle annexe 11 de la Convention TIR offrent aux parties contractantes TIR la possibilité de ne pas accepter l'annexe, ce qui permet aux pays qui ne sont pas (encore) intéressés par eTIR de ne pas être liés par les dispositions de l'annexe 11. Votre administration a-t-elle l'intention d'utiliser cette «clause de retrait», et si oui, pourquoi?

Положения, включенные в новое Приложение 11 Конвенции МДП, дают возможность Договаривающимся сторонам МДП не принимать Приложение, то есть позволяют странам, которые (пока) не заинтересованы в eTIR, не быть связанными положениями Приложения 11. Будет ли Ваша администрация использовать это в качестве так называемого «отказа» от применения, и если да, то почему?

III. Summary responses

5. Twelve responses were received, one of which was sent on behalf of European Commission and of the Member States of the European Union (28). Consequently, the opinion of 39 contracting parties is reflected in this document.

6. Three contracting parties (North Macedonia, Serbia and Turkey) indicated the time it would take to connect to the eTIR international system once the eTIR specification have been finalized and Annex 11 will be adopted (respectively 1, 2 and 1.5 years). The European Union and Switzerland, reported that there might be an opportunity to integrate

eTIR in already planned project which are planned to be deployed in 2025, respectively 2026. Other contracting parties were not in a position to assess the time required or did not indicated it in their response.

7. Only three countries (Montenegro, Norway and Switzerland) indicated that they might use the “opt out” clause provided by Annex 11. The main reason provided being that the low number of TIR Carnets used in those countries does not the justify the investments required by eTIR.

IV. Detailed responses

8. The following responses² were received by the secretariat:

Belarus

1. The question related to timeframe required by the Republic of Belarus to connect to the eTIR international system is premature for now.

2. The State Customs Committee of the Republic of Belarus (SCC) is interested in the computerization of the TIR procedure. However, the adoption of Annex 11 of the TIR Convention should be considered once issues identified by SCC are resolved, inter alia, those raised in Informal document WP.30 (2018) No. 1.

Bosnia and Herzegovina

Pending answer from relevant ministry

European Union

1. In the EU, a common approach is envisaged which is to continue to use the NCTS to follow the TIR movements. In order to facilitate eTIR, an interconnection would be needed, which requires changes in the NCTS. Considering the advanced stage of the current development of the NCTS Phase 5, these changes are only possible in the next phase. The work on the Phase 6 is planned to start in Q4 2019. If the eTIR specifications will be adopted before that, the eTIR interconnection can be considered for that phase. The Phase 6 is planned to be deployed during a deployment window in Q2 2024 – Q2 2025.

2. The European Union is at this stage not intending to use the “opt out” clause and, given the fact that the European Union for the purposes of the TIR Convention is regarded as one territory, also individual Member States cannot decide to use the “opt out” clause. At the moment, ALL Member States and the European Commission are involved in the implementation of numerous IT Systems (new ones or substantial upgrades of existing IT Systems) in the application of the Union Customs Code (UCC) and its Work Programme. This limits the resources available for other projects of new IT Systems. However, if there are Member States interested in implementing eTIR before the implementation of an EU-wide solution on a pilot basis, they are welcome to study the possibility.

Kirghizstan

1. The timing of connection to the international eTIR system depends on many factors, including the modernization of the information system of the Customs Service of the Kyrgyz Republic. In this connection, at the present time it is definitely not possible to answer in terms of connection.

² unofficial translations by the secretariat when required

2. No

Moldova

The Republic of Moldova supports the adoption of Annex 11 of the TIR Convention, concerning the digitization of the TIR Carnet (eTIR), and we hereby announce that we are positively exposed to its adoption.

At this stage, we are in a continuous process of relaunching the TIR-EPD electronic pre-declaration for Moldova, a part of the implementation of the transit procedure under the coverage of eTIR.

Montenegro

1. Customs administration of Montenegro did not attend and was not involved in project of eTIR international system. Also, Customs administration of Montenegro did not participate at the meetings which were organized related to eTIR project. We are not familiarized with the specific issues covered by this project.

It is important to note that the Customs administration of Montenegro, from November 2018 to November 2021, is implementing one of the most important and the biggest projects, related to implementation of NCTS phase 5 and preparation to accession to Common Transit Convention and Convention on Facilitation of trade in goods.

In this moment of providing answers, we cannot answer with certainty how long our customs administration will take to connect to the eTIR international system once the eTIR specification has been finalized and Annex 11 has been adopted.

2. Customs administration of Montenegro, as a candidate country for EU accession, has launched one of the most important and largest projects related to the NCTS implementation. In addition to the development of the NCTS, our organisation has plan to develop guarantee management system, risk analysis system, system of managing authorizations, system of electronic submission of declarations, help desk communicating with the NCTS etc.

During this project, our administration has planned to implement TIR in NCTS such as in the EU countries.

Due to the significance of the project itself, all of our capacities are involving of this project.

According to analyse of the TIR carnet statistics in Montenegro, there are only 2 holders who are using TIR carnets. There are 50 to 100 TIR carnets at annual level.

On the import side, considering the period from 2008 to 2018, we have a constant decrease in TIR carnets, so in 2018 we have only 504.

For these reasons, Montenegro as a contracting party will use the possibilities not to accept the Annex 11 and to remain using the existing system of TIR Carnets.

North Macedonia

1. Customs administration of North Macedonia will require two year to connect to the eTIR international system once the eTIR specification have been finalized and Annex 11 will be adopted if there will be a need to develop new application. If there will be a need only to translate the application that will be used by other countries also we will require 6 months for translation, testing and training.

2. Customs administration of North Macedonia doesn't intend to use so-called "opt out" clause.

Norway

1. Norway is, as you know, a very small TIR-country with limited number of TIR-carnet issued every year and has pr. 1. January 2019 only four authorised holders. We have unfortunately not had resources to prioritize the TIR meeting and for that reason our knowledge about the connection to eTIR is very incomplete. It's therefore very difficult to estimate how much financial and human resources which will be needed to connect to the eTIR once the specifications have been finalized.

2. We will need more time and knowledge about the eTIR before being able to inform you when and if we are going to connect, and therefore we wish not to be bound by the provisions of Annex 1. Our administration must hence use the so-called "opt-out" clause.

Serbia

1. After the procurement procedure is completed, development of the national component of eTIR system could take approximately one year.

2. The Ministry of Finance and the Customs Administration of the Republic of Serbia consider that the adoption of Annex 11 TIR Convention would improve TIR system and will speedup TIR operations by improving the efficiency and security of customs procedures.

Switzerland

1. AFD is currently in a broad transformation program called DaziT, which will end by 2026. We will examine within this program whether the eTIR can be integrated. Where appropriate, planning for implementation will take place under this program.

2. Presumably, AFD will activate this "opt-out clause" for the moment and will not commit to using the eTIR solution for the following reasons:

- As mentioned in the answer to question 1, we will examine within the DaziT program if the eTIR will be implemented and if so, when.

- Switzerland issues few TIR Carnets. That's why the question of the relationship between costs and benefits is particularly important for us. In the case of implementation, the temporal aspect should also be taken into consideration for the same reason.

- ASTAG, the issuing association responsible in Switzerland, had questions about the TIR guarantee chain (Articles 8 and 11 of the TIR Convention). These issues should be clarified in the context of eTIR.

Turkey

1. As you may be well aware, UNECE is continuing the development work for the e-TIR International System and the software / hardware infrastructure has not been established for the time being. Since the system requirements for the purpose of harmonization with our customs system are not determined yet, Turkish Customs Administration needs at least 18 months to connect to the e-TIR International System.

2. On the other hand, since Turkey is a pioneering country as regards the implementation of e-TIR Pilot Projects with Iran and Georgia respectively, we attach great importance of the e-TIR System to be in use for all the Contracting Parties asap. Hence, we are supporting all the administrative, legal and technical work for the contribution to the e-TIR System. Therefore, we will adopt Annex 11 and launch e-TIR transactions, in this regard.

Ukraine

1. In 2018, Ukraine expressed its intention to participate in the eTIR Pilot Project (Ukraine-Georgia-Azerbaijan-Kazakhstan transport corridor). In this regard, in Ukraine, already now, legal and IT solutions are being applied for the implementation of this Pilot project.

We are planning to carry out the first transport using the electronic guarantee (as part of the eTIR Pilot Project) approximately after first quarter 2019.

2.Ukraine is interested in the adoption and application of Annex 11 of the TIR Convention.

Additionally, we would like to inform that as of December 26, 2018 State Fiscal Service of Ukraine agreed upon carriers proposed by the ASMAP of Ukraine, and customs authorities which are going to participate in the eTIR Pilot Project were determined.

V. Further considerations

9. The Expert Group may wish to consider the results of the survey and, possibly, request the secretariat to submit the results to the Working Party on Customs Questions affecting Transport (WP.30) or to the TIR Administrative Committee (AC.2).
