



# Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General  
10 May 2011

English only

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## Economic Commission for Europe

### Inland Transport Committee

#### Working Party on Customs Questions affecting Transport

##### 128th session

Geneva, 7 – 10 June 2011

Item 4 (b) of the provisional agenda

**International Convention on the Harmonization of Frontier  
Controls of Goods, 1982 (“Harmonization Convention”) –  
Annex 8 on road transport**

### **Monitoring the implementation of Annex 8 at the national level**

#### **Note by the secretariat**

#### **I. Background**

1. At its 122nd session, the Working Party considered and approved, subject to minor modifications, a draft questionnaire concerning the application of Annex 8 at the national level as contained in document ECE/TRANS/WP.30/2009/8 (ECE/TRANS/WP.30/244, para. 15).

2. At its 127th session, the Working Party was informed about the final results of the above survey (ECE/TRANS/WP.30/2011/1). Having recalled that monitoring of the implementation of Annex 8 should be conducted on a regular basis, the Working Party was of the view that such monitoring should not necessarily be done by means of questionnaires distributed to competent authorities. Other ways were suggested, for example, surveys of the transport sector and country reports on the progress made in implementing Annex 8. The secretariat was requested to prepare proposals for the present session of WP.30 (ECE/TRANS/WP.30/254, para. 15).

#### **II. Considerations of the secretariat**

3. According to Article 7 "Reporting mechanism" of Annex 8 to the Harmonization Convention, "...the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Europe of the United Nations (UNECE) shall carry out, every second year, a survey among Contracting Parties on progress made to improve border crossing procedures in their countries". The

Convention does not stipulate in which form such surveys should be carried out, nor does it specify who should be the addressees.

4. The wording "a survey among Contracting Parties" seems to imply that the public sector (government agencies) should be surveyed, as was done by UNECE in the first survey in 2009–2010. It does not exclude, however, the possibility of surveying the private sector (transport and trade industry) which is the main beneficiary of the facilities provided for in the Harmonization Convention. By combining feedback from both public and private sector, a more objective and versatile picture of the implementation of Annex 8 at the national level could be obtained.

5. Regarding governmental agencies, the following ways of their surveying in the future may be proposed: (i) to regularly distribute the same questionnaire, as for the first survey, but to invite the respondents to report on 'progress made' and not to repeat the information already provided or (ii) to invite them to transmit, on a periodic basis, country reports outlining major achievements and setbacks in border crossing facilitation.

6. Surveying the private sector appears to be a more challenging task, given a high number of potential respondents and the current resource constraints in UNECE. However, several feasible options exist and may be considered, like surveying private companies through business associations (national or international), using the already available private monitoring tools (e.g. the Border Waiting Time Observatory of the International Road Transport Union – IRU's BWTO) or taking advantage of other surveys or studies conducted in the area of border crossing procedures, for example, the questionnaires developed in the framework of the Euro-Asian Transport Links (EATL) project ([http://live.unece.org/trans/main/wp5/wp5\\_ge2\\_04.html](http://live.unece.org/trans/main/wp5/wp5_ge2_04.html)).

7. Subject to availability of resources, surveys should be preferably conducted by means of on-line questionnaires.

### **III. Considerations of the Working Party**

8. The Working Party is invited to consider the above options and provide guidance to the secretariat in which way the implementation of Annex 8 should continue to be monitored.

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