Digital and Sustainable Trade Facilitation in Asia and the Pacific: Key findings from the UN Global Survey 2019
(with a focus on SPECA)

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UN Global Survey on Digital and Sustainable Trade Facilitation

INTERACTIVE MAP OF UN GLOBAL SURVEY RESULTS

RESULTS OF 2019    RESULTS OF 2017

Display data on map: Total score  Cross-Border Paperless Trade  Paperless Trade  Institutional Arrangement and Cooperation  Formalities  Transparency

Implementation of Paperless Trade Measures (2019)

Type here to search
UN Global TF Survey Scope: WTO TFA+

— WTO TFA related measures +
  • Institutional arrangement and cooperation
  • Transparency
  • Formalities
  • Transit

— Paperless trade / Digital TF measures +
  • Paperless trade
  • Cross-Border Paperless Trade

— Sustainable TF measures
  • Trade facilitation for SMEs
  • Agricultural trade facilitation
  • Women in trade facilitation

— Others (varies by UNRCs, e.g., Trade finance facilitation)

Data collected from 128 countries in 2019
Key finding #1: East Asia leading other developing world regions

Figure 1: Average implementation rates of Trade Facilitation measures around the world
Key finding #2: Implementation varies widely across countries and subregions
Digital and Sustainable Trade Facilitation in SPECA (2019)

- **Afghanistan**: 22.58%
- **Azerbaijan**: 81.72%
- **Kazakhstan**: 66.67%
- **Kyrgyzstan**: 37.63%
- **Tajikistan**: 52.69%
- **Uzbekistan**: 62.37%
Key finding #3: Implementation accelerated in all subregions, in North & Central Asia in particular.
Digital and Sustainable Trade Facilitation in SPECA Economies

Survey results of United Nations Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia (SPECA) Economies that were included in the 2019 Survey can be found below. Note that average scores are based on available data and the composition of Economies may change over time. To learn more about SPECA, please navigate to this external website.

2019: Average trade facilitation score of 53.94%
- Cross-Border Paperless Trade: 24.07%
- Paperless Trade: 54.94%
- Institutional Arrangement and Cooperation: 55.56%
- Formalities: 61.81%
- Transparency: 74.44%

2017: Average trade facilitation score of 41.40%
- Cross-Border Paperless Trade: 12.96%
- Paperless Trade: 41.98%
- Institutional Arrangement and Cooperation: 48.15%
- Formalities: 45.83%
- Transparency: 63.33%

2015: Average trade facilitation score of 33.33%
- Cross-Border Paperless Trade: 9.26%
- Paperless Trade: 33.33%
- Institutional Arrangement and Cooperation: 42.59%
- Formalities: 34.03%
- Transparency: 55.56%
Key finding #4: Implementation of cross-border paperless trade still a challenge

![Graph showing implementation of trade facilitation measures from 2017 to 2019.](source: ESCAP (2019a).)
Key finding #5: Limited attention to TF needs of special groups (SMEs, women)

Figure 21: State of implementation of ‘trade facilitation for SMEs’ measures in Asia-Pacific economies

- Trade-related information measures for SMEs
- SMEs in National Trade Facilitation Committee
- SMEs access Single Window
- SMEs in AEO scheme
- Other special measures for SMEs

Legend:
- Fully implemented
- Partially implemented
- Pilot stage of implementation
- Not implemented
- Don't know
Key finding #6: Lack of integration between trade facilitation & trade finance

Facilitation of access to finance through Single Window?

- Fully implemented
- Partially implemented
- Pilot stage of implementation
- Not implemented
- Don't know
Key finding #7: Significant room to cut trade costs through trade digitalization

**Table 6: Changes in International Trade Costs of Asia and the Pacific as a Result of World Trade Organization Trade Facilitation Agreement Implementation (%)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Asia and the Pacific: Trade Costs Model</th>
<th>WTO TFA (binding only)</th>
<th>WTO TFA (binding + non binding)</th>
<th>WTO TFA+ (binding + non binding + other paperless and cross-border paperless trade)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Partially implemented</td>
<td>Fully implemented</td>
<td>Partially implemented</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Model 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall trade facilitation</td>
<td>-2.84</td>
<td>-5.79</td>
<td>-4.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Model 2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General trade facilitation measures</td>
<td>-1.52</td>
<td>-3.05</td>
<td>-1.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digital trade facilitation measures</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-1.97</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

WTO TFA = World Trade Organization Trade Facilitation Agreement.
Source: Authors’ calculations.
Table 4: Changes in trade costs in SPECA resulting from implementation of trade facilitation and paperless trade

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trade costs reduction for TF improvement: SPECA</th>
<th>WTO TFA (binding only)</th>
<th>WTO TFA (binding + non binding)</th>
<th>WTO TFA+ (binding + non binding + other paperless and cross-border paperless trade)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Partially implemented</td>
<td>Fully implemented</td>
<td>Partially implemented</td>
<td>Fully implemented</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Model 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall TFI</td>
<td>-5.87%</td>
<td>-9.94%</td>
<td>-8.51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Model 2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General TFI</td>
<td>-3.37%</td>
<td>-5.43%</td>
<td>-4.22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paperless and cross-border paperless</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: UN Global Survey on Digital and Sustainable Trade Facilitation, untfsurvey.org, 2019
Way forward

• Trade facilitation & digitalization more important than ever, as e-commerce grows and Non-tariff Measures (NTMs) continue to raise

• Further develop inter-agency collaboration and human resource capacity

• Take a TFA+ approach to trade facilitation, encompassing infrastructure and B to B trade procedure facilitation

• Be ambitious and plan on digitalization, including by acceding to the Framework Agreement on Facilitation of Cross-Border Paperless Trade in Asia and the Pacific as soon as possible
Readiness assessment for cross-border paperless trade

- Technical + Legal assessments
  - Based on checklist developed by intergovernmental steering group
- Conducted in Armenia, Mongolia, Myanmar and Uzbekistan in 2018-19

https://www.unescap.org/resources/readiness-assessments-cross-border-paperless-trade
Framework Agreement on Facilitation of Cross-Border Paperless Trade in Asia and the Pacific

A UN treaty to facilitate trade digitalization


www.unescap.org/publications/APTIR2019
THANK YOU

WWW.UNESCAP.ORG
UN Global TF Survey: Background

Objective

• To monitor progress on trade facilitation (TF), including paperless trade and other forward looking measures, towards SDGs
• To enable evidence-based policy making, and capacity building and tech. assistance

2012-14: Regional (Asia-Pacific) surveys conducted since 2012

2015: 1st global survey on trade facilitation implementation; presented at the 5th Global Review of Aid for Trade. [partnerships with UNCTAD, ITC, OECD, Subregional org…]

2017: 2nd global survey; presented at the 6th Global AfT Review. [new partnerships: ADB, Rep. of Korea…]

2018: Launch of interactive website (now UNTFSURVEY.ORG)

2019: 3rd global survey — Digital and Sustainable Trade Facilitation [new partnerships: ICC (Banking Commission)]
Moving up the Trade Facilitation Ladder: Towards Seamless International Supply Chains

**Source:** UN Global Survey on Digital and Sustainable Trade Facilitation (2019)

**Note:** UNRCs are still receiving feedback from some member countries on data validation. Therefore, the results may be further – probably slightly – revised in the final report to be issued in the coming months.
A Three-step Approach for Data Collection

**Step 1**
Open data collection
- Experts and other interested parties invited to fill the questionnaire or update the pre-filled questionnaire.

**Step 2**
Cross-checking and verification
- UNRCs internally verified the data by cross-checking answers from the experts, desk research, further interviews with respondents and informants.

Key outcome of step 2:
A set of national dataset for each country surveyed

**Step 3**
Final validation by countries
- UNRCs sent the preliminary results to countries for final validation.