

International seminar on trade and transport facilitation through digitalization

Co-organized by IRU, BSEC-URTA, UNECE

Hosted by the State Customs Committee of Azerbaijan

Baku, 5 September 2018

Summary of the results of the seminar

The seminar was attended by 65 participants from customs authorities, associations and donors. Through the active contributions of all participants it was clear that:

- The digital revolution is here. It is imperative that, at all levels, the road transport industry and customs administrations leverage the digital revolution and promote digitalization.
- Iran (Islamic Republic of), Turkey and Georgia have been pioneers in digitalizing the TIR procedure. They have demonstrated that eTIR is feasible to the benefits of all stakeholders.
- So far, the use of TIR for the intermodal transport of containers has been hampered by the use of paper TIR Carnets. A digital TIR procedure will seriously facilitate intermodal TIR, as stipulated by the TIR Convention, 1975.
- Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan and Ukraine are preparing an eTIR intermodal project that will allow to further improve eTIR and its intermodal use.
- Azerbaijan, India and Iran (Islamic Republic of) are discussing the launch of a North-South eTIR project, which, by leveraging India's recent accession to the TIR convention, will dramatically facilitate trade and transport between Central Asia and South Asia.
- The rapid adoption of Annex 11 to the TIR Convention is of high priority. It is important that all governments and associations in favour of eTIR express their support for Annex 11 at the forthcoming meetings of WP.30 and AC.2.
- In parallel to the adoption of Annex 11, more eTIR projects should be launched to continuously improve the practical application of eTIR and finetune the eTIR specifications.
- eTIR and e-CMR projects are excellent contributions towards fully digitalized transport worldwide. However, more efforts are still needed to digitalize all trade and transport facilitation tools.
- There is no good reason to delay the digitalization of TIR. UNECE, IRU and donors can provide assistance to those who need it.