

United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)

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UNCTAD's Transport and Trade Logistics Branch (TLB) within the Division on Technology and Logistics (DTL) partners with developing countries to address challenges and capitalize on opportunities in the areas of transport infrastructure, trade facilitation and logistics, related administrative, procedural and legal frameworks, and customs automation.

UNCTAD's work in the field of transport and trade logistics includes:

- Research and analysis
- Dissemination of information on recent developments
- Providing advice to developing countries when formulating and implementing policies and programmes
- Assisting in the development and implementation of national legal frameworks in line with international legal instruments and standards, and providing support to developing countries in the context of multilateral negotiations
- Providing technical assistance in the field of transport and trade facilitation
- Supporting consensus building through intergovernmental Expert Meetings
- Providing technical assistance, training and advanced software solutions for modernisation of Customs Administrations' clearance procedures and systems, in line with international standards and best practice

The Transport and Trade Logistics Branch is comprised of three sections: "[Transport Infrastructure and Services](#)", "[Transport Policy and Legislation](#)", and "[Trade Facilitation](#)", as well as the [Asycuda \(Automated System for Customs Data\) Programme](#).

[Click here](#) to learn more about UNCTAD's technical assistance.

[Click here](#) to learn more about UNCTAD related activities.

Transport Infrastructure and Services

Visit UNCTAD's Transport Infrastructure and Services website [here](#).

Transport infrastructure and services, including shipping, ports, roads and railways are essential for global merchandise trade and related supply chains.

In accordance with its mandate, UNCTAD is carrying out work to help developing countries improve their transport systems and ensure better access to worldwide markets.

In its intervention, UNCTAD is increasingly adopting a wider and multifaceted perspective that crosses modes and dimensions to better reflect the fast evolving trends that shape trade patterns and define the operating landscape of the transportation sector.

When undertaking research and analytical work, consensus building activities as well as technical assistance and capacity building initiatives, particular focus is put on building the regulatory and institutional capacities, developing and strengthening policies and promoting technical skills and expertise.

Key issues addressed and areas of intervention include:

- Freight transport economics with particular coverage of maritime transport, including trends and developments in inter alia, world merchandise trade, shipping, seaborne trade, port-related issues, transport costs, freight rates, as well as maritime transport connectivity and access
- Promoting efficient transport networks and transport corridor development
- Transport and logistics of the landlocked developing countries (LLDCs) and the small island developing states (SIDS), multimodal and transit transport
- Enabling sustainable freight transport systems, including through carbon emission reduction in freight transport, improved transport connectivity and transition towards energy efficient, clean, and environmentally friendly freight transport systems
- Financing sustainable freight transport systems

Select relevant outputs include:

- [Review of Maritime Transport](#)
- Technical reports on the transport and logistics of landlocked developing countries (LLDCs) and the small island developing states (SIDS)
- Consensus-building activities, including in particular Expert Meetings on Transport, Trade Logistics and Trade Facilitation on relevant themes such as LLDCs, transit transport, SIDS and Sustainable Freight Transport
- Technical assistance programmes and partnerships
- Advisory services as well as capacity-building and training activities

Contact the Transport Section: transport.section@unctad.org

Transport Policy and Legislation

Visit UNCTAD's Transport Policy and Legislation website [here](#).

As part of its mandate on trade logistics, UNCTAD carries out substantive research and analysis on a wide range of legal and policy issues affecting transport and trade.

Where appropriate, formal and informal meetings convened by UNCTAD also provide an important forum for discussion of relevant issues by member States, public and private sector stakeholders and other experts.

Advice and guidance on legal and policy issues is provided upon request.

For further information, see also the Division on Technology and Logistics Activity reports: [2012](#), [2011](#) and [2010](#).

For an historical overview of UNCTAD's activities in the field of shipping, see [Beyond Conventional Wisdom in Development Policy: An intellectual history of UNCTAD 1964-2004](#) (at pp.73-80).

Feedback and Contact: policy.legislation@unctad.org

Trade Facilitation

Visit UNCTAD's Trade Facilitation website [here](#).

Long waiting times at borders, inappropriate fees, cumbersome formalities, and inadequate or unclear rules and regulations, can all become serious obstacles to trade, and as a consequence adversely affect investment, employment and trade-led development.

UNCTAD assists developing countries in identifying their particular trade and transport facilitation needs and priorities, and helps them program the implementation of specific trade and transport facilitation measures.

UNCTAD organizes workshops and seminars at the regional and national levels, publishes relevant information and training material, and provides technical assistance through numerous projects.