



Economic Commission for Europe**Inland Transport Committee****Working Party on Customs Questions affecting Transport****Group of Experts on Conceptual and
Technical Aspects of Computerization of the TIR Procedure****First session**

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Item 7 (b) of the provisional agenda

eTIR conceptual, functional and technical documentation version 4.3:**eTIR Concepts****eTIR declaration mechanism****Note by the secretariat****I. Introduction - Mandate**

The Inland Transport Committee during its eighty-second session (23–28 February 2020) approved (ECE/TRANS/294, para. 84¹) the establishment of the Group of Experts on Conceptual and Technical Aspects of Computerization of the TIR Procedure (WP.30/GE.1) and endorsed its ToR² (ECE/TRANS/WP30/2019/9 and ECE/TRANS/WP.30/2019/9/Corr.1) pending approval by UNECE Executive Committee (EXCOM). EXCOM during its Remote informal meeting of members of the Executive Committee (20 May 2020) approved the establishment of the Group of Experts on Conceptual and Technical Aspects of Computerization of the TIR Procedure (WP.30/GE.1) until 2022, based on the terms of reference included in document ECE/TRANS/WP.30/2019/9 and Corr.1, as contained in document ECE/TRANS/294 (ECE/EX/2020/L.2, para. 5(b)).³

The terms of reference of the Group stipulate that the Group should focus its work on preparing a new version of the eTIR specifications, pending the formal establishment of TIB. More specifically the Group should (a) prepare a new version of the technical specifications

¹ Decision of the Inland Transport Committee para. 84 / ECE/TRANS/294
www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/trans/doc/2020/itc/ECE-TRANS-294e.pdf

² Terms of reference of the newly established Group approved by the Inland Transport Committee and the Executive Committee (EXCOM) of UNECE
www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/trans/bcf/wp30/documents/2019/ECE-TRANS-WP30-2019-09e.pdf
and corrigendum www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/trans/bcf/wp30/documents/2019/ECE-TRANS-WP30-2019-09c1e.pdf

³ Decision of EXCOM, ECE/EX/2020/L.2 / para. 5(b)
www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/commission/EXCOM/Agenda/2020/Remote_informal_mtg_20_05_2020/Item_4_ECE_EX_2020_L.2_ITC_Sub_bodies_E.pdf

of the eTIR procedure, and amendments thereto, ensuring their alignment with the functional specifications of the eTIR procedure; (b) prepare a new version of the functional specifications of the eTIR procedure, and amendments thereto, ensuring their alignment with the conceptual specifications of the eTIR procedure; (c) prepare amendments to the conceptual specifications of the eTIR procedure, upon requests by WP.30.

This document presents the eTIR declaration mechanism.

II. Annex I - eTIR declaration mechanism

Chapter 1.2.4.2, stipulates that “the holder submits the advance TIR data by electronic means to the customs office of departure, making reference to a guarantee issued by a guarantee chain, using authentication mechanisms. The advance TIR data shall be submitted prior to the presentation of the goods at the customs office of departure. Alternatively, the holder can make use of declaration mechanisms provided by the eTIR international system, the customs system of his country of residence (if available) or third-party solutions provided by the private sector (including by the guarantee chains). National customs systems and authorized international private sector declaration systems can use the declaration web service of the eTIR international system to forward the declaration to the country of departure. Customs authorities shall, if satisfied, validate and accept the declaration and transmit the declaration data to the eTIR international system. The eTIR international system forwards this information to the following customs authorities involved in the transport.”

The declaration mechanism envisages that the holder sends his advance TIR data only to the customs office of departure of the TIR transport. The customs office of departure uses this information when the holder lodges his customs declaration. The holder actually lodges the customs declaration by presenting customs with the reference to the guarantee which he has obtained from the guarantee chain and which he has included in the advance TIR data. The customs office of departure after having accepted the customs declaration, registers the information contained in the declaration together with other TIR transport information (e.g. the information on seals) as advance TIR data in the eTIR international system. The eTIR international system forwards the advance TIR data to all customs authorities declared by the holder as part of his itinerary. This mechanism is devised to facilitate the submission procedure by the holder, without further complicating the procedure for customs authorities that would in any case have to exchange information concerning TIR transports. This mechanism is similar to the current paper based procedure, where the TIR Carnet becomes a customs document from the moment the first customs office of departure stamps each and every page of the TIR carnet. The difference lies in the transportation of the information, which is performed by the truck driver today and will be performed by the eTIR international system tomorrow.

The fact that the holder is obliged to provide customs with advance TIR data does not relieve him from his responsibility to lodge his declaration by presenting himself, together with the goods vehicle and the reference to the guarantee, in accordance with Article 21 of the TIR Convention. It is then the responsibility of customs to accept the declaration.

I.1. The eTIR declaration at the first customs office of departure

Figure I.1 describes all steps related to the declaration submission process at the first customs office of departure. Steps are numbered and described in the text following the figure.

customs check the vehicle and goods against the customs declaration in accordance with the appropriate risk assessment information;

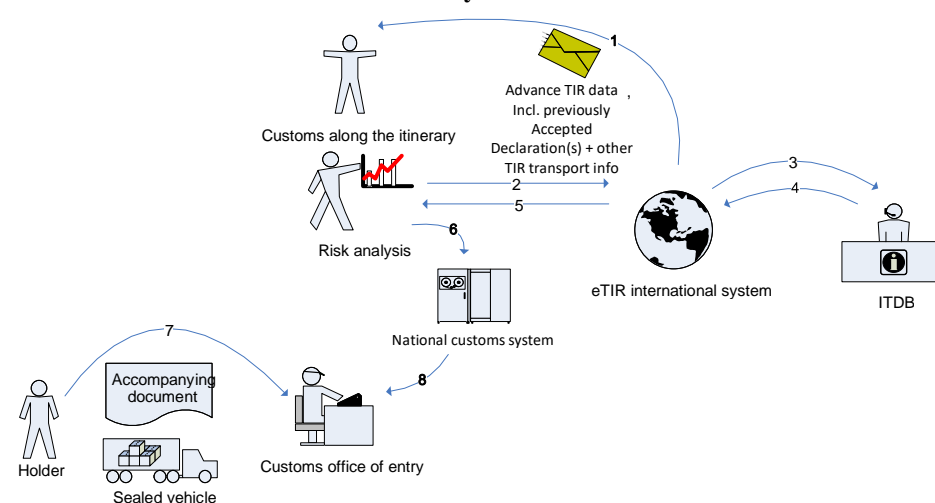
14. The customs office of departure inspects and seals the vehicle;
15. The results of the checks and the seals numbers are stored in the customs system;
16. The customs office of departure (national system) informs the eTIR international system that it accepts the guarantee;
17. The eTIR international system queries the ITDB on the status⁴ of the holder to whom the guarantee has been issued;
18. The ITDB returns the status of the holder to the eTIR international system;
19. The eTIR international system confirms the acceptance of the guarantee to the national customs system;
20. After having accepted the declaration, the national system forwards the declaration data to the eTIR international system by means of the “Record declaration data” message;⁵
21. The eTIR international system confirms the reception of the information;
22. The eTIR international system provides all customs administrations involved in the TIR transport with the declaration data. This information, exchanged in a customs secure environment, will serve as the declaration data for the subsequent customs authorities;
23. The customs officer sees the results on his/her screen and prints the accompanying document;
24. The customs officer hands out the paper accompanying document to the holder.

I.2. The eTIR declaration at the customs office of entry

Figure I.2 describes all steps related to the declaration submission process at the customs office of entry. Steps are numbered and described in the text following the figure.

Figure I.2

Declaration at the customs office of entry



⁴ The status of the holder refers to his status as contained in the ITDB, i.e. authorized, withdrawn, excluded (art. 38), end of activity.

⁵ Customs perform other activities in line with national or international requirements, such as sending a “Start TIR operation” message (which triggers a checking of the guarantee before the TIR operation can be started). However, as this is not part of the declaration submission mechanism but rather follows the acceptance of the declaration by Customs, it is not further described in this document.

1. Customs authorities along the itinerary receive the advance TIR data from the eTIR international system, indicating that a holder is performing a TIR transport which will enter their territory (see step 22 of the customs office of departure; such information might be just a message, inviting customs to query the eTIR international system or the TIR transport information);
2. As part of their risk analysis, customs authorities check the validity of the guarantee with the eTIR international system;
3. The eTIR international system queries the ITDB to check that the holder is authorized;
4. The ITDB provides information on the holder to the eTIR international system;
5. The eTIR international system provides the information on holder and guarantee to customs;
6. Customs store the advance TIR data in their national system, possibly together with the results of their risk assessment;
7. The holder presents the sealed vehicle (containing the goods) together with the accompanying document and the guarantee reference at the customs office of entry en route;
8. The customs office of entry en route retrieves from the national customs system the data contained in the advance TIR data message to become the customs declaration.⁶

In case the geographical distance between the customs office of departure and the customs office of entry en route is too close to meet deadlines⁷ for the submission of advance TIR data, customs authorities at the customs office of entry en route should accept the advance TIR data forwarded through the eTIR international system. In a computerized environment, even short time lags are sufficient to perform automatic risk assessment and should allow for adequate channelling of the holder upon his arrival at the border.

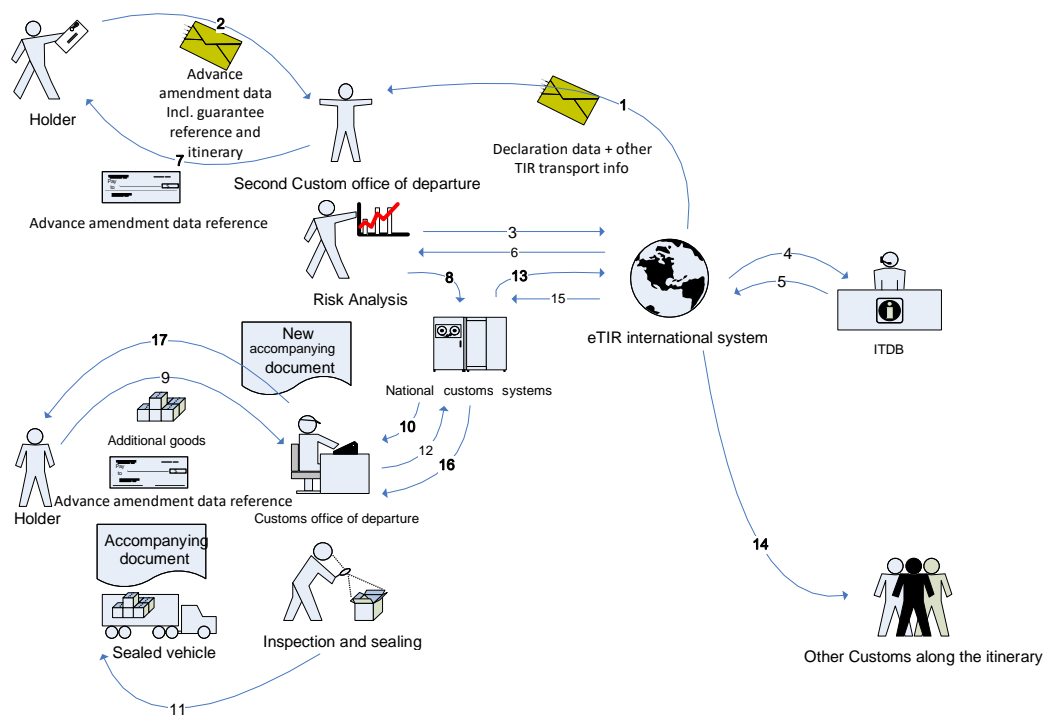
I.3. The eTIR declaration at the following customs offices of departure

Figure I.3 describes all steps related to of the declaration submission process at a customs office of departure, other than the first customs office of departure, in case of multiple loading places. Steps are numbered and described in the text following the figure.

⁶ After accepting the declaration, Customs perform other activities in line with national or international requirements, such as sending a “Start TIR operation” message (which triggers a checking of the guarantee before the TIR operation can be started). However, as this is not part of the declaration submission mechanism but rather follows the acceptance of the declaration by Customs, it is not further described in this annex.

⁷ Specific deadlines regarding the arrival of advance information will be defined in the legal provisions allowing for the implementation of the eTIR system.

Figure I.3
Declaration at the following customs offices of departure



1. The eTIR international system sends the advance TIR data to the customs authorities along the itinerary (see step 22 at the first customs office of departure);
2. The holder sends the advance amendment data, regarding the totality of the goods, to the central customs system in the country of departure, using a national declaration mechanism of the country of departure (if he has the required credentials), the declaration mechanism of his country of residence (if available for declarations made in other countries), the web service made available in the eTIR international system or a declaration mechanism provided by the private sector;
3. As part of their risk analysis, customs authorities check the validity of the guarantee with the eTIR international system;
4. The eTIR international system queries the ITDB to check that the holder is authorized;
5. The ITDB provides information on the holder to the eTIR international system;
6. The eTIR international system provides the information on holder and guarantee to customs;
7. Customs confirm the reception and the validity⁸ of the advance amendment data regarding the additional goods to be loaded to the holder and provide him with a unique reference;
8. Customs store the advance amendment data in their internal system, possibly together with the results of their risk assessment;
9. The holder presents the sealed vehicle (containing goods loaded at previous loading points), together with the accompanying document. Moreover, he presents the additional goods to be loaded, together with the reference to the guarantee (or the reference provided by customs) to the customs office of departure to lodge the declaration;

⁸ As part of the verification procedure, Customs also verify that the information provided at the first loading point (received through the eTIR international system) is contained in the advance amendment data.

10. The customs office of departure retrieves from the national customs system the data contained in the advance amendment data message to become the customs declaration. Then, customs check the vehicle and goods against the customs declaration in accordance with the appropriate risk assessment information;
11. Customs retrieves the advance amendment data from the customs system, possibly together with the results of their risk assessment;
12. Customs remove the seals, inspect the goods and the vehicle according to the results of the risk analysis and, after the additional goods are loaded, seal the vehicle;
13. The results of the checks and the seals numbers are stored in the customs system;
14. After having accepted the declaration, the national system forwards the declaration data to the eTIR international system by means of the “Record declaration data” message;⁹
15. The eTIR international system confirms the reception of the information;
16. The eTIR international system provides all customs administrations involved in the TIR transport with the declaration data. This information, exchanged in a customs secure environment, will serve as the declaration data for the subsequent customs authorities;
17. The customs officer sees the results on his/her screen and prints the accompanying document;
18. The customs officer hands out the paper accompanying document to the holder.

In case the geographical distance between the first and the second customs office of departure is too close to meet deadlines¹⁰ for the submission of advance data, customs authorities at the second customs office of departure should accept the declaration data forwarded through the eTIR international system. In a computerized environment, even short time lags are sufficient to perform automatic risk assessment and should allow for adequate channelling of the holder upon his arrival at the border.

I.4. Remarks

I.4.1. Submission of the declaration in foreign countries

A major issue with regard to the declaration submission procedure as contained in the eTIR Project seems to be the requirement for the holder to send advance TIR data or advance amendment data to customs administrations in other countries than the holder’s country of residence. The responsibility to provide an adequate submission procedure lies at the national level and is a matter between the holder and the customs authorities, falling outside the scope of the eTIR Project. Nevertheless, further to defining a standard set of elements to be contained in the advance TIR data and advance amendment data messages, the eTIR international system will also provide a declaration web service that will be made available to authorized holders, third party service providers and customs.

There is a general agreement that the requirement of a national electronic declaration system does not pose a problem in the relationship between holder and customs authorities of the country in which he is established or resident. However, there seems to be a potential problem with regard to how the holder can establish secure electronic communications with customs authorities in other countries where the beginning of the TIR transport could take place, without having to call upon the paid services of a customs broker or any other third party. In order to achieve this, customs administrations will have to ensure not only that their national declaration submission system is accessible by all holders (in particular when considering authentication requirements), but also that it is available in, at least, one of the three official

⁹ Customs perform other activities in line with national or international requirements, such as sending a “Start TIR operation” message (which triggers a checking of the guarantee before the TIR operation can be started). However, as this is not part of the declaration submission mechanism but rather follows the acceptance of the declaration by Customs, it is not further described in this annex.

¹⁰ Specific deadlines regarding the arrival of advance information will be defined in the legal provisions allowing for the implementation of the eTIR system.

languages of the TIR Convention (English, French or Russian). A generalized use of standard codes will also further simplify this issue. In order to provide holders with additional options to submit their declaration to customs, a declaration web service is also available in the eTIR international system and made available to authorized holders, customs systems and authorized third party declaration mechanisms. This web service allows to forward advance TIR data and advance amendment data to the customs system of the country of departure. Furthermore, customs administrations may wish to extend the scope of their national declaration mechanism to allow their national holders to send advance TIR data and advance amendment data to other customs systems when the TIR transport starts abroad (making use of the eTIR international system declaration web service). Finally, third party solutions (like TIR-EPD or customs brokers services) may also be used to transmit the advance TIR data and advance amendment data directly to customs or via the eTIR international system declaration web service.

I.4.2. Comparison with the current paper environment

The declaration mechanism contained in the eTIR Project only differs slightly from the current paper-based procedure. The declaration continues to be formally lodged by the holder at the time he presents himself at the customs office of departure or entry en route, together with the vehicle and the goods. However, the eTIR system introduces, as new requirement, that customs should receive advance TIR data, advance amendment data or declaration data prior to the physical presentation of the vehicle and goods at the customs office of departure or entry en route. In line with the objectives of the eTIR Project, the purpose of this is to allow customs to perform certain checks (including the validity of the guarantee) and to determine the risk profile of the TIR transport prior to its arrival at the customs office concerned. In continuation, the eTIR system is designed in such a way that the holder only needs to submit his advance TIR data and advance amendment data once, thus avoiding the multiple, unsolicited and, possibly even erroneous, submission to various national customs systems. The customs office of departure, by registering all relevant TIR transport information in the eTIR international system, ensures that the data required for lodging the declaration, as well as other TIR transport information (e.g. seals), are provided to all consecutive countries involved in the TIR transport prior to the arrival of the vehicle so that customs can perform advance risk assessment. As it is the case today, the holder remains responsible for the presentation of the vehicle, load and guarantee reference in accordance with the principles set out in Article 21 of the TIR Convention at each customs office. The change in the procedure regards only the information required to lodge the declaration, which is currently provided by means of the TIR Carnet and which will be provided electronically in the future by means of the mechanisms described above.
