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Advisory Group on the United Nations Code for Trade and Transport Locations

Advisory Group on the United Nations Code for Trade and Transport Locations Programme of Work 2024-2025

Submitted by the secretariat

Summary

This document presents the programme of work of the United Nations Code for Trade and Transport Locations (UN/LOCODE) Advisory Group for the period 2024-2025.

Document ECE/TRADE/C/CEFACT/2023/23 is submitted to the twenty-ninth session of the UN/CEFACT Plenary for decision.



I. Background

1. The United Nations Code for Trade and Transport Locations (UN/LOCODE) identifies locations related to international trade around the world. It is a five-character code where the first two characters represent the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) country code, followed by a three-character code unique within that country.
2. The basis of UN/LOCODE is United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) Recommendation No. 16. The first edition was published in 1980. The fourth edition was approved in 2020.
3. These codes have been maintained and published by the ECE. The first issue of the UN/LOCODE directory in 1981 had 8000 codes and today has over 100,000 from 249 countries, dependent territories and special areas.
4. In June 2017, the Advisory Group on the United Nations Code for Trade and Transport Locations (UN/LOCODE) was established to advise and support the ECE secretariat and the United Nations Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business (UN/CEFACT) in the maintenance of UN/LOCODE and the further expansion of its scope (decision ECE/EX/2017/L.10). Its mandate was renewed in June 2019 (decision ECE/EX/2019/L.6) and expired in June 2021.
5. Considering the valuable work of the UN/LOCODE Advisory Group, the UN/CEFACT Bureau decided, during its meeting on 17 November 2021, to request that the UN/CEFACT Plenary recreate the Advisory Group to support the secretariat for an additional two-year period.

II. Introduction

6. This document sets out the programme of work for the UN/LOCODE Advisory Group for the period of 2024-2025. It will be submitted to the UN/LOCODE Advisory Group for approval. Upon its approval, UN/CEFACT is invited to adopt this programme of work at its twenty-ninth session and recommend it to the ECE Executive Committee (EXCOM) for approval as well as to extend the mandate of the Advisory Group for an additional two-year term (2024-2025).

III. Scope, objective, activities and work areas

A. Scope

7. The scope of the programme of work covers all United Nations Member States as well as other organizations and private sector stakeholders involved in UN/LOCODE. The program of work encompasses activities in support of UN/LOCODE maintenance, expansion of its scope, and promotion.
8. It does so by improving, promoting, facilitating and supporting this international standard, including proposing necessary changes to and potential use of this standard.
9. The programme of work is linked to the mandate and terms of reference.

B. Objective

10. To “ensure the maintenance and expansion of UN/LOCODE in a sustainable way”, the Advisory Group is expected to achieve its objectives and implement the necessary activities based on the following assumptions:
 - (a) There is active participation in and contribution to expert group meetings and networks by experts from governments, academia and the private sector;

(b) Governments are willing to engage in support of UN/LOCODE, especially by nominating UN/LOCODE national focal points (NFPs) and by providing resources to allow NFPs to fulfil their duties; and

(c) Advisory services for the expansion of the scope, and for enhancement and maintenance of the electronic maintenance and publication system, will be under the UN/CEFACT intellectual property rights (IPR) policy.

C. Activities

11. To achieve this goal the UN/LOCODE Advisory Group will do the following:
- (a) Optimize the workflow of data maintenance requests (DMR) validation;
 - (b) Develop and share best practices;
 - (c) Advise and assist on UN/LOCODE issues;
 - (d) Support the enhancement of the UN/LOCODE Focal Point Network;
 - (e) Improve data quality;
 - (f) Support dialogue with key stakeholders; and
 - (g) Support capacity-building and training sessions.

D. Work areas

12. The programme of work is structured around the following work areas (WA):
- WA1: Policy dialogue and advice;
 - WA2: Technical monitoring, assessment and support;
 - WA3: Communication and outreach;
 - WA4: Capacity-building;
 - WA5: Data quality; and
 - WA6: Data exchange.

1. WA1: Policy dialogue and advice

13. This work area involves active promotion and support of the implementation of the standard on a policy level. This work area encompasses active engagement with policymakers on a global scale by enhancing the UN/LOCODE Focal Point Network and by contacting relevant authorities.

2. WA2: Technical monitoring, assessment and support

14. This work area is on technical monitoring, assessment and support of the UN/LOCODE maintenance and expansion. The objective is to meet the business needs with the latest approved technology.

3. WA3: Communication and outreach

15. Activities of the work area will include the following:
- Providing DMR validation procedure and policy;
 - Sharing information on the work of UN/LOCODE maintenance on the Collaborative UN/CEFACT Environment (CUE);
 - Supporting the publication of the UN/LOCODE directory biannually on the ECE website;

- Contributing to relevant events to disseminate the information and promote the standard; and
- Performing outreach to expand the use of UN/LOCODE.

4. WA4: Capacity-building

16. Technical training sessions will be organized by the secretariat, with the support of the Advisory Group, for UN/LOCODE focal points and other potential stakeholders.

17. By sharing knowledge and expertise through partnerships, this work area will reach out to the business community to expand UN/LOCODE in a sustainable way.

5. WA5: Data quality

18. The data quality of UN/LOCODE will be improved through the following:

- The implementation of the revised ECE Recommendation No. 16; and
- The activities of the UN/LOCODE Maintenance Team.

6. WA6: Data exchange

19. In this work area, the Advisory Group will explore the possibility of exchanging data in real time between the UN/LOCODE system and the governmental and business systems of UN/LOCODE stakeholders.

IV. Guiding principles

20. The work of the Advisory Group and the execution of this programme of work is guided by the following principles:

- Mutual respect;
- Volunteer work and contributions; and
- Expert advice.

21. The work of the Advisory Group will be fully aligned with the terms of reference and the programme of work.
