

Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities

Transport and customs



Why transport and trade matters

Well-functioning international, multi-modal transport systems are necessary preconditions for trade and have a favourable impact on the business and investment climate of countries and their economic development. Trade is a major factor for prosperity and stability. Over the years, the OSCE has addressed issues related to transport facilitation and security.

Procedural impediments at border crossings hinder international trade and foreign investments, creating high costs for trade transactions

and delays in the cross-border movement of goods. Additionally, lack of integrity at borders and in customs services further deters trade

and investment opportunities. Transport facilitation implies simplifying and harmonizing international transport procedures and information flows associated with them. It includes addressing the specific transit transportation challenges facing landlocked countries and promoting the ratification and implementation of relevant international legal instruments.

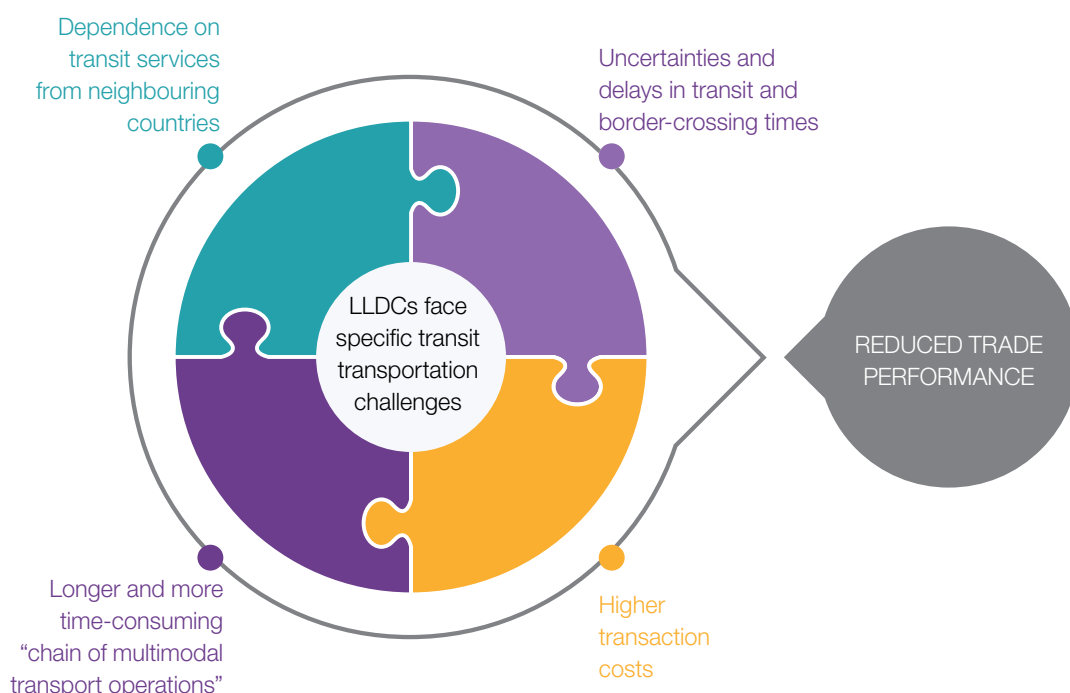
At the same time, international terrorism and transnational organized crime are serious threats to the transport sector, as well as stability and security. Inland transport systems particularly face a complex range of security challenges related to the thefts of vehicles and high-value goods, trafficking of all kinds, cyber threats and illegal border crossings.

Challenges

Of the 32 Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs) globally, ten are OSCE participating States and one is a Partner for Co-operation:

- Armenia
- Azerbaijan
- Kazakhstan
- Kyrgyzstan
- Moldova
- Mongolia
- Tajikistan
- the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia
- Turkmenistan
- Uzbekistan
- Afghanistan (OSCE Partner for Co-operation)

The landlocked countries of Belarus and Serbia are not members of this special UN group.



Assisting LLDCs to more effectively tackle their specific transit transport-related challenges is among the priorities of the OSCE. While the international donor community, including financial and development institutions and donor countries, plays a major role in providing financial and technical support for the construction of transport infrastructure, the OSCE has focused on tackling non-physical obstacles to trade and transport.

What we do

In this area, the Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities (OCEEA) supports the adoption and implementation of legal instruments, provides political support for the development of international transport and logistics networks, promotes best practices and standards, assists participating States in combating corruption in customs and border services, and facilitates public-private dialogue.



International trade and transport play a vital role in the economic development of the OSCE participating States. The OSCE works across a variety of areas to facilitate international trade and foreign investment, and to minimise delays and risks to the cross-border movement of goods. (iStock)

Our mandate

- OSCE Maastricht Strategy Document for the Economic and Environmental Dimension, 2003
- Brussels Ministerial Council Decision on Future Transport Dialogue in the OSCE, 2006
- Helsinki Ministerial Council Decision on the Follow-Up to the Sixteenth Economic and Environmental Forum on Maritime and Inland Waterways Co-operation, 2008
- Vilnius Ministerial Council Decision on Strengthening Transport Dialogue in the OSCE, 2011

Capacity-building

The OCEEA offers participating States national and regional tailor-made technical assistance seminars on topics related to border crossing facilitation and good governance in customs; trade facilitation; and detecting and preventing illegal cross-border waste transport. It provides guidance on adopting a risk-based approach in customs processes based on selectivity and profiling of cargo and developing and implementing Authorized Economic Operators (or trusted trader) programmes enabling countries to simultaneously pursue increased trade security and facilitation.

Numerous training activities on these topics for senior customs, trade and transport officials have been held at the OSCE Border Management Staff College in Dushanbe.

A platform for dialogue

The OSCE provides continuous political and practical support to the UNECE's Euro-Asian Transport Links (EATL) Project (Phases I, II and III) for the benefit of LLDCs in Central Asia, the South Caucasus, as well as Mongolia and Afghanistan. As part of this project, countries have, among other things, evaluated and prioritized a large number of infrastructure projects in the Euro-Asian region and

conducted a preliminary analysis of transport obstacles and recommendations for overcoming them. Outcomes of the project include a number of OSCE-supported national capacity-building workshops on transport facilitation across the Central Asia region.

What we do

(continued)

Disseminating best practices

The OCEEA promotes the wide dissemination and implementation of best practices and standards developed by relevant organizations in the area of transport, and by promoting better co-ordination in this field among participating States and partner organizations.



OSCE-UNECE Handbook of Best Practices at Border Crossings – A Trade and Transport Facilitation Perspective

The handbook aims to assist OSCE participating States, particularly those which are landlocked developing countries with limited access to world markets and global supply chains, in developing more efficient border, transport and customs policies. It is designed to serve as a reference document for officials in transport, trade and finance ministries, customs agencies, transport, freight and logistics business communities, civil society and researchers.



2012 Inland Transport Security Discussion Forum Proceedings

This publication contains academic-style papers on transport security issues in the road, rail and inland waterways sectors. It offers an overview of current weaknesses and threats, and ways to improve co-ordination and the effectiveness of national and international efforts in making the inland transport sector more secure.

These publications are available on the OSCE website at <http://www.osce.org/publications/transport-and-trade>

Who we work with

The OCEEA co-operates and co-ordinates efforts with various stakeholders, including national governments as the main decision-makers; the private sector and industry associations as the main users of transport infrastructure and services and the main drivers of international trade, as well as international organizations and financial institutions.

The OCEEA assists governments in addressing challenges related to transport, customs and trade and implements its activities in close co-operation with the network of OSCE field operations and specialized partner organizations, such as the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) and the World Customs Organization (WCO).

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