

Q1: Respondent details:

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Q2: Country or customs territory: Togo

Q3: Organization: Public sector

Q4: Title of case story: Unofficial report on trade facilitation

Q5: Case story focus:

Implementation of the Trade Facilitation Agreement and/or trade facilitation measures more generally (e.g. trade and transport facilitation).

Q6: Case story abstract:

This unofficial report provides an overview of the national ratification process, of the national political context, and of the ongoing trade facilitation projects and programmes concerning Togo.

Q7: Who provided funding? Multilateral organization

Q8: Project/programme type: Single country

Q9: Your text case story:

UNOFFICIAL REPORT ON TRADE FACILITATION IN TOGO

I. OVERVIEW

This unofficial report provides an overview of the national ratification process, of the national political context, and of the ongoing trade facilitation projects and programmes concerning Togo.

II. TRADE FACILITATION AGREEMENT: RATIFICATION AND NOTIFICATION PROCESS

Under the Togolese Constitution, more specifically Article 137 thereof, the negotiation and ratification of international treaties and agreements fall within the prerogatives of the President of the Republic, who will often delegate this authority to the technical ministries. In the case of the Trade Facilitation Agreement, the Ministry of Trade and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation prepared the full text and the statement of reasons and submitted them to the Council of Ministers for approval. Having ruled on the matter, the Government drew up the instrument of ratification which it submitted for approval to the National Assembly via its General Secretariat. Once passed by the National Assembly and signed by the President of the Republic, the instrument was deposited at the WTO on 1 October 2016.

III. POLITICAL CONTEXT

A. National context

Located on the coast of West Africa, Togo has relied on its port and its corridors to develop significant import-export, transport and transit activities, serving its neighbours in the hinterland. Service costs are high owing to a number of factors and practices, including the plethora of services and taxes at the port, along the road and during import and export transit. This is why the introduction of a trade facilitation strategy to make the transport and transit system more efficient appears to be a priority. Trade facilitation features prominently in the Diagnostic Trade Integration Study (DTIS) carried out in 2010. The Study calls for a certain number of measures to reduce transit costs by about a half while boosting transport productivity through time savings that would improve the turnover rate by at least 50%, and hence lower costs even further. These measures include:

- eliminating illegal checkpoints and reducing the number of legal ones to a minimum, with one at departure (the port), one at the border (joint border posts), and one upon arrival, with the implementation of the single Interstate Road Transit (ISRT);
- speeding up the adaptation of trucks to security standards for the use of the single ISRT with GPS beacons for remote monitoring of the journey and the integrity of the merchandise;
- eliminating all causes of delay associated with port handling, the break-bulk point and delivery;
- reducing the waiting time for loading and unloading resulting from delays in preparing documentation, the control of manifests and customs declaration;
- eliminating customs clearance delays by facilitating the payment of duties (customs bond) and allowing goods to exit every day, including evenings and weekends.

Togo's Strategy for Boosting Growth and Promoting Employment (SCAPE 2013-2017) offers a roadmap for the Government, development partners, the private sector, civil society and trade unions, and sets out Togo's strategic direction, its needs in order to attain its strategic objectives, how they are to be achieved, the associated costs and how to finance them, as well as the instruments for monitoring and evaluating the strategy.

The SCAPE attaches particular importance to the trade facilitation component in its strategic pillars, specifically pillar (ii): strengthening of economic infrastructure, in which the development corridor concept will be implemented through the establishment of modern infrastructure for efficient multimodal transport, including: (i) maritime transportation infrastructure (autonomous Port of Lomé); (ii) road infrastructure; (iii) railway network; (iv) airports for air transport. To that end, Togo intends to adopt a strategic transport development plan for 2030 to serve as a key planning tool.

As regards customs, a number of important innovations have been introduced, such as ASYCUDA++, which enables customs brokers to submit declarations online. There is still considerable room for progress in reducing delays and associated costs. A simplified procedure is being introduced by customs and other services at the border to speed up the movement of perishable goods.

B. Regional context

Togo is a member of the West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU) as well as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). The Conference of Heads of State and Government of ECOWAS held in January 2003 in Dakar took the decision to set up the Regional Road Transport and Transit Facilitation Programme to help inter-community trade and border movements. This programme provides for:

- the setting up of joint border posts;
- the establishment of observation centres to identify irregular practices;
- the organization of an information campaign to ensure that the ISRT Convention is applied by all.

In this context, Togo intends to be an active promoter of economic and foreign trade integration by participating in the setting up of transnational infrastructure through the effective implementation of the strategic development corridor concept. This means building a north-south corridor and turning the regions concerned into dynamic, prosperous and attractive economic zones while narrowing the wealth divide with other areas of the country. Modernization of the Autonomous Port of Lomé (PAL), in particular the docking facilities for ore carriers and the construction of a modern railway line between Lomé and Cinkassé in order to transport iron ore to the PAL and goods from the PAL to the hinterland countries would serve to secure Togo's development corridor.

IV. OVERVIEW OF ONGOING TRADE FACILITATION SUPPORT

A. National

Togo carried out its first WTO trade facilitation national self-assessment of needs and priorities in July 2009. The second took place in September 2013. In December 2014, Togo updated its trade facilitation needs and priorities. The Ministry of Trade is currently preparing a Council of Ministers communication to inform policymakers of the category A commitments and the next steps to be taken in the framework of the Trade Facilitation Agreement, in particular notification and ratification. Togo deposited its instrument of acceptance of the Protocol with the WTO on 1 October 2015. The order creating the national trade facilitation committee will be signed shortly. Since 2010, the World Bank has been financing the Abidjan–Lagos Trade and Transport Facilitation Project (ALTTFP) to the tune of US\$6 million. This project is part of the ECOWAS and WAEMU Regional Road Transport and Transit Facilitation Programme. Its aim is to reduce trade and transport barriers in the ports and on the roads along the Abidjan–Lagos corridor in Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Togo, Benin and Nigeria. In October 2013, the consortium Bureau Veritas BIVAC BV/Soget signed an agreement with the Republic of Togo for the implementation and operation of a single window for foreign trade in Togo. This single window is operated by SEGUCE Togo (*Société d'Exploitation du Guichet Unique pour le Commerce Extérieur du Togo*), a Togolese company whose main shareholders are Bureau Veritas BIVAC BV and Soget, one of the leaders in single window solutions. The single window is an electronic platform for all operators and users of the foreign trade community (import, export, transit and transshipment) in Togo. It provides a single entry point for all customs and collection procedures and formalities at all of the country's entry and exit points (Port of Lomé, border crossings and airport). It interacts with computer systems of private and public entities, for instance ASYCUDA. It also includes a single invoicing document service that enables payment at selected banks of all foreign trade formalities. In order to speed up the road transport facilitation process, the ECOWAS and WAEMU Commissions have set up a West Africa Regional Road Transport and Transit Facilitation Programme by harmonizing their transit facilitation programmes. This programme involves, *inter alia*:

1. simplification and harmonization of rules, procedures and documents relating to road transport;
2. introduction of joint border controls along the interstate corridors;
3. updating of the road transit information system.

In view of the importance of these efforts, the EU allocated to the ECOWAS Commission €63.8 million taken from the 9th EDF Regional Indicative Programme Fund in order to finance the technical assistance activities of a "transport facilitation team" as well as programmes to reduce barriers affecting the movement of people, goods and vehicles, and to speed up the integration process and reduce poverty in West Africa.

Table 1 provides an overview of ongoing national trade facilitation programmes.

B. Regional

In 2005 WAEMU decided, within the framework of the interstate road transit facilitation programme, to implement a programme for the construction of joint border posts in certain corridors within the Community. This programme involves eight posts, located at the borders between Benin and Burkina Faso, Benin and Togo (Hillacondji), Burkina Faso and Mali (Hérémankono), Burkina Faso and Niger, Côte d'Ivoire and Mali, Mali and Niger (Labizanga), Senegal and Guinea Bissau (Mpack), and Senegal and Mali (Diboli). The Cinkansé control post at the Burkina Faso–Togo border has already been inaugurated, while the Hillacondji post at the border between Benin and Togo is being built. This programme is financed by the African Development Fund (ADF).

Table 2 provides an overview of ongoing regional trade facilitation programmes:

1. Table 1: Ongoing national trade facilitation projects and programmes

1. Donors:
 - World Bank

2. Programme:

- ECOWAS and WAEMU Regional Road Transport and Transit Facilitation Programme
- Community Action Programme for Road Transport Infrastructure (PACITR)

3. Period:

- 2010-2016

4. Trade Facilitation Pillar:

- Trade facilitation, improvement of the corridor's road infrastructure.

5. Ongoing Projects:

- The World Bank is providing US\$6 million worth of funding for the Abidjan-Lagos Trade and Transport Facilitation Project (ALTTFP). Implementation of the single window for the autonomous Port of Lomé.

- Togo/Burkina Faso multimodal project: Rehabilitation of roads and facilitation of transport along the Lomé-Cinkassé-Ouagadougou CU9 Corridor. Dualization of the Lomé-Tsévié line.

Table 2: Ongoing Regional Trade Facilitation Support

1. Donors:

African Development Fund (ADF)

2. Programme:

- Programme for the construction of joint border posts (JBP)
- ECOWAS and WAEMU Regional Road Transport and Transit Facilitation Programme

3. Period:

- 2010-2016

4. Trade Facilitation Pillar:

- Trade facilitation, improvement of the corridor's road infrastructure.

5. Ongoing Projects:

- Construction of a joint border post at Hilacondji, on the border between Benin and Togo.
- The World Bank is providing US\$6 million worth of funding for the Abidjan-Lagos Trade and Transport Facilitation Project (ALTTFP).

Q10: Lessons Learnt:

In accordance with the Bali recommendations concerning the Trade Facilitation Agreement, Togo, having ratified the Agreement, intends to proceed with the categorization of the measures provided for. To do so, it will need financial and technical support from its partners.
