

Trade facilitation partners

- UN/CEFACT (The United Nations Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business).
- WTO (The World Trade Organisation)
- EU-institutions
- EUROPRO (The Association of European Committees of Simplified Procedures for International Trade).
- National authorities (primarily the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, but also the Swedish Customs, the Swedish Board of Agriculture, the Ministry of Industry, Employment and Communications and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency)
- WCO (The World Customs Organisation)
- OECD (The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development)
- Companies (Multinationals as well as small and medium sized enterprises)
- NGOs (Non-Governmental Organisations both from within and outside the business sector)
- Standardisation organisations (international organisations such as ISO/CEN and DISA)

SWEPRO

The SWEPRO Secretariat is administrated by the National Board of Trade, Sweden and is located in Stockholm.



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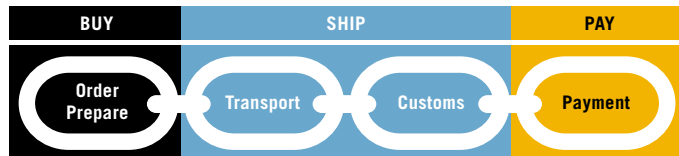


What are trade procedures?

Trade procedures are the flow of information that is necessary when companies export or import and include procedures from the time of ordering to payment. The term also includes auditing by necessary governmental bodies, customs and taxation. Information can be communicated by paper documents and digital technology.

Why facilitate?

The more international trade develops, the more important are international efforts to simplify and adapt trade procedures. Simple international trade procedures based on global standards are essential to the growth of world trade and are of particular importance for developing countries and for the further inclusion of small and medium sized companies in all countries. The costs of complicated procedures can amount to up to 10 percent of the value of goods.



Among the parties involved in an international trade transaction are importers and exporters, Customs and other authorities, transporters, forwarders, insurance companies, and banks. Documentation includes everything from freight bills and customs declarations to insurance and payment documents.

How to facilitate?

International cooperation is a fundamental condition for concrete results. Work is conducted within various international bodies, such as the UN, World Bank, WTO, and EU, and its aims include:

- international harmonisation of documents, for both content and format
- transparency in both procedures and documents
- simpler and fewer documents and messages
- reduced requirements for information and control
- extended use of standardised electronic systems for faster and more efficient procedures.

What is SWEPRO?

SWEPRO, the Swedish Trade Procedures Council, is Sweden's forum for discussion and information regarding international work on trade facilitation issues. SWEPRO includes representatives of business and public authorities and consists of the Swedish Bankers' Association, the Swedish Trade Council, the Swedish Alliance for Electronic Commerce (GEA), the National Board of Trade, the Swedish Federation of Trade, the Swedish International Chamber of Commerce (ICC), the Confederation of Swedish Enterprise, the Swedish International Freight Association, Swedish Customs, and the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

What does SWEPRO do?

The Swedish Government has set up SWEPRO to "promote simplification and efficiency in international trade procedures through active participation in central international fora, in which these matters are addressed." The Council monitors and discusses national and international work and thereby constitutes a platform for Swedish representation in international organisations. The SWEPRO secretariat coordinates and participates in work that is mainly conducted within the framework of the UN, the WTO, and the EU.

Who benefits from simpler trade procedures?

Every trade transaction involves an average of 27 parties and generates about 40 documents, with a large number of copies. The cost of unsimplified and cumbersome trade procedure are estimated to be substantial. Accordingly, all those involved – businesses and authorities – benefit from simplification. This also contributes to reduced costs for consumers.

What can companies and individuals do?

The companies that belong to one of the organisations in the Council can raise issues through their representative. It is also possible to call, e-mail or write to the SWEPRO secretariat about individual issues.



Volvo is increasingly becoming a global company. Today, our plants, suppliers and customers are located in many areas throughout the world, which means that we are dependent on efficient international business transactions.

The transactions are controlled by various trade procedures that affect our costs. In order to continue developing our operations in an optimum manner, it is therefore important that these procedures are harmonised and made efficient and that this is achieved in forms that are fair for competition.

LEIF JOHANSSON, CEO, VOLVO

To make e-commerce reality I believe that business and administrative processes must be made more effective and transparent. Through our work in UN/CEFACT we facilitate trade procedures and develop solutions for electronic business that provide substantial benefits to enterprises and governments as well as giving them an opportunity to participate in the international market place.

CAROL COSGROVE-SACKS,
DIRECTOR OF TRADE DIVISION, UN/ECE



We live in a global world. ICA trades in a multitude of goods from various parts of the world. We are increasingly using modern technology to ensure efficient administration of the trade flow. Electronic trading involves new forms of business that can only achieve full impact if trade procedures are simplified and become uniform. Simple trading procedures make administration efficient and less expensive in all areas of production.

ERIK WIRELL, MANAGER OVERSEAS TRADING, ICA AB