



**Committee on Rules of Origin**

**ORIGIN RELATED MEASURES TAKEN DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC**

*Compilation of measures affecting certificates of origin and proofs of origin*

**NOTE BY THE SECRETARIAT<sup>1</sup>**

1. Several WTO members adopted trade easing or facilitating measures as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The purpose of some of these measures was to simplify the completion of administrative and documentary requirements – including related to rules of origin. This document presents a compilation of origin-related measures for Members' information and future reference.

2. In the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, the closure of government agencies and the application of restrictions on the movement of persons, resulted in difficulties to complete certain administrative procedures. Examples include requests or the presentation of printed documents, the use of official stamps and signatures, the requirement for the consularization of certificates, etc. Such difficulties impacted trade documents and administrative procedures in general, not only those related to origin. As a result, some governments sought to temporarily or permanently simplify these documentary requirements, including those related to origin, and alleviate such difficulties.

3. The table in the Annex contains a non-exhaustive list of measures taken by Members in relation to rules of origin as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The list may be revised and complemented to take into account any comments or updates received from Members. The measures listed in it were sourced from:

- The "Compendium of experiences related to the COVID-19 crisis" prepared for the Committee on Trade Facilitation ([G/TFA/W/40/Rev.4](#))
- The compilation of "Lessons learned from the experience-sharing sessions on trade in COVID-19 related goods" by the Committee on Market Access ([G/MA/409](#)) and
- The informal compilation prepared by the WTO Secretariat on measures taken during the COVID-19 pandemic and affecting trade in goods (available through the WTO website): [WTO | COVID-19: Measures affecting trade in goods](#)

In addition to a brief description and the source, it is also indicated for each measure:

- if the measure concerns specifically proofs of origin (certificates) or trade documents in general, and
- if the measure was adopted on a temporary or on a permanent basis (a question mark was added in case of doubt).

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<sup>1</sup> This document has been prepared under the Secretariat's own responsibility and is without prejudice to the positions of Members or to their rights and obligations under the WTO.

ANNEX<sup>1</sup>

Member	Description of Measure	Specific to Origin/ General to trade documents	Temporary/ Permanent	Source
Argentina	1. Temporary authorization to exceptionally accept documents of origin in electronic form for accreditation and to determine the origin of imported goods, and to access tariff preferences that are part of preferential agreements signed by Argentina (LAIA, Israel, Egypt and SACU). Presentation of original format to Customs not required, due to the COVID-19 pandemic.	Specific	Temporary	<a href="#">WTO   COVID-19: Measures affecting trade in goods</a> . Permanent Delegation of Argentina to the WTO and Circular No. 2/2020 Administración Federal de Ingresos Públicos (6 April 2020)
Canada	2. The Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) has recently implemented an e-Longroom initiative which created a new process for providing electronic copies of release documents to the CBSA, thereby further reducing the paper burden.	General	Permanent?	<a href="#">Trade Facilitation measures taken in response to COVID-19 (G/TFA/W/24)</a>
Chile	3. The implementation of electronic procedures (responses to requests from customs brokers, exchanges, or modifications of bills of lading by email and remote working of customs brokers), as well as the suspension of some deadlines deemed unmeetable due to COVID-19 outbreak.	General	Temporary?	<a href="#">Trade Facilitation measures taken in response to COVID-19 (G/TFA/W/24)</a>
Dominican Republic	4. Procedures involving digital signatures, support were provided through email and phone.	General	Temporary?	<a href="#">Notification under articles 1.4, 10.4.3, 10.6.2 and 12.2.2 of the Agreement on Trade Facilitation (G/TFA/N/DOM/3/Rev.1)</a>
Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU)	5. Temporary simplification of the country-of-origin confirmation procedure applied to goods imported from developing and LDCs, including through a possibility to provide electronic or paper copy of the certificate of origin.	Specific	Temporary	<a href="#">WTO   COVID-19: Measures affecting trade in goods</a> . Permanent Delegation of the Russian Federation to the WTO (23 April 2020) and Decision of the Council of the Eurasian Economic Commission No. 36 (3 April 2020)
European Union	6. To facilitate the trade during the COVID-19 pandemic, including measures concerning the submission of proof of preferential origin by accepting copies of certificates of origin, as well as optimally using approved exporter status as an alternative to official certificates.	Specific	Temporary	<a href="#">Trade Facilitation measures taken in response to COVID-19 (G/TFA/W/24)</a>
	7. Issuance of confirmation letters digitally signed to prove the authenticity of unstamped certificates.	General	Temporary?	<a href="#">G/TFA/W/40/Rev 4</a>
	8. Exchange of scanned certificates via e-mail between the economic operator and the customs office.	General	Temporary?	<a href="#">G/TFA/W/40/Rev 4</a>
	9. Exchange by post of certificates.	Specific	Temporary?	<a href="#">G/TFA/W/40/Rev 4</a>

<sup>1</sup> The measures with a question mark means that further clarification by concerned members is required.

Member	Description of Measure	Specific to Origin/ General to trade documents	Temporary/ Permanent	Source
India	10. Allowing provisional clearance of goods imported under free trade agreements without production of original certificate of origin. Customs Circular No. 18/2020-Cus dated 11.04.2020.	Specific	Temporary?	<a href="#">Intimation to the Committee on Trade Facilitation about India's COVID-19 trade facilitation measures (G/TFA/W/26)</a>
	11. Issuance of electronic certificates of origin for exports under India's trade agreements with ASEAN, Japan, South Asia, Sri Lanka and Asia Pacific Trade Agreement (APTA) on a digital platform (Trade Notice 1/2020-21 dated 7 April 2020).	Specific	Permanent?	<a href="#">Intimation to the Committee on Trade Facilitation about India's COVID-19 trade facilitation measures (G/TFA/W/26)</a>
Indonesia	12. Temporary elimination of import certification requirements on imports of certain products, e.g., masks and personal protective equipment, due to the COVID-19 pandemic.	General	Temporary	<a href="#">WTO   COVID-19: Measures affecting trade in goods</a> . Permanent Delegation of Indonesia to the WTO (1 April 2020) and Ministry of Trade Regulation No. 28
	13. Temporary elimination of import certification requirements on imports of onions and garlic (HS 0703).	General	Temporary	<a href="#">WTO   COVID-19: Measures affecting trade in goods</a> . Permanent Delegation of Indonesia to the WTO (1 April 2020 and 26 April 2022) and Ministry of Trade Regulation No. 27
Japan	14. Japan customs allowed submission of electronic copies of supporting document which include certificates of origin.	Specific	Temporary?	<a href="#">Japan Customs' Response to COVID-19</a>
Republic of Korea	15. Accept a copy instead of the original document of the certificate of origin to impose preferential tariffs.	Specific	Temporary	<a href="#">Trade Facilitation measures taken in response to COVID-19 (G/TFA/W/24)</a>
	16. Omit document screening and visit inspection in the process of issuing certificates of origin in case companies recognized by the Korea Customs Service as excellent companies in export safety management.	Specific	Temporary	<a href="#">Trade Facilitation measures taken in response to COVID-19 (G/TFA/W/24)</a>
Mexico	17. Certificates of origin which by their nature require to be printed, stamped, and signed, the form of delivery will be through the website designed by the Ministry of Economy.	Specific	Temporary	<a href="#">Trade Facilitation measures taken in response to COVID-19 (G/TFA/W/24)</a>
	18. Presentation of documents through electronic means.	General	Permanent?	<a href="#">Trade Facilitation measures taken in response to COVID-19 (G/TFA/W/24)</a>
	19. Transport services measures. Extended the validity of permits, licences, and certificates for technical personnel	General	Temporary	<a href="#">Trade Facilitation measures taken in response to COVID-19 (G/TFA/W/24)</a>
	20. Certificates of origin, certificates of eligibility for textile goods and clothing (TPL) and certificates of quota, which by their nature require to be printed, stamped, and signed, the form of delivery will be through the website designed by the Ministry of Economy.	Specific	Temporary	<a href="#">Trade Facilitation measures taken in response to COVID-19 (G/TFA/W/24)</a>
Norway	21. Norwegian Customs introduced an electronic version of the preferential Movement Certificate EUR.1. The launch was expedited as a corona measure, but the solution is a permanent trade facilitating measure.	General	Permanent	<a href="#">Trade Facilitation measures taken in response to COVID-19 (G/TFA/W/24)</a>

Member	Description of Measure	Specific to Origin/ General to trade documents	Temporary/ Permanent	Source
Paraguay	22. System of certification of origin in digital form without the use of paper. It assumes that both the filling of the data as well as the two signature instances shipments and validation of the Certificate of Origin are made digitally.	Specific	Temporary	<a href="#">Ventanilla única del exportador - medidas en época de pandemia</a>
	23. Issuance of digital certificates of origin and in other cases, exchange of scanned documents.	Specific	Temporary?	<a href="#">Ventanilla única del exportador - medidas en época de pandemia</a>
	24. Adjustment of fees related to the importation of goods, resulting in a 30-40% reduction in import costs.	General	Temporary	<a href="#">WTO   COVID-19: Measures affecting trade in goods</a> . WTO document G/AG/GEN/162, 28 July 2020
Saint Lucia on behalf of OECS	25. ICT to support trade (e.g., single windows and trade information portals).	General	Permanent?	<a href="#">OECS report</a>
Switzerland	26. The "Libero Export" procedure, which simplifies export procedures at border customs offices, has recently been introduced across Switzerland (as far as is logistically possible). The customs declarant selects the export customs declaration and may export consignments selected as "free" without carrying out additional Swiss customs formalities. The submission of customs documents to Swiss windows, as well as the resulting waiting times, will thus gradually be eliminated.	General	Permanent?	<a href="#">Notification under articles 1.4, 10.4.3, 10.6.2 and 12.2.2 of the Agreement on Trade Facilitation (G/TFA/N/CHE/2/Rev.1)</a>