



UN's Survey on Digital and Sustainable Trade Facilitation 2021

Why in News

Recently, **India has scored 90.32% in United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia Pacific's (UNESCAP) Global Survey on Digital and Sustainable Trade Facilitation.**

- This is a remarkable jump from **78.49% in 2019.**

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Key Points

- **About Survey:**
 - The survey is **conducted every two years by UNESCAP** and includes **an assessment of 58 trade facilitation measures covered by the [World Trade Organization's Trade Facilitation Agreement](#).**
 - **58 measures include** publications of existing import-export rules on the internet, risk management, advance ruling on tariff classification, pre-arrival processing, independent appeal mechanism, expedited shipments, automated customs system, among others.

- A **higher score** for a country **helps businesses in their investment decisions**.
- The **UN Regional Commissions jointly conduct the UN Global Survey on Digital and Sustainable Trade Facilitation**.
- The Survey **currently covers 143 economies around the globe**. For Asia Pacific, it is conducted by UNESCAP.
- **Assessment of India:**
 - It pointed out **India's improvement in the scores on all five key indicators**.
 - **Transparency:** 100% in 2021 (from 93.33% in 2019)
 - **Formalities:** 95.83% in 2021 (from 87.5% in 2019)
 - **Institutional Arrangement and Cooperation:** 88.89% in 2021 (from 66.67% in 2019)
 - **Paperless Trade:** 96.3% in 2021 (from 81.48% in 2019).
 - **Cross-Border Paperless Trade:** 66.67% in 2021 (from 55.56% in 2019).
 - **Comparison with Other Countries:**
 - India is the **best performing nation** as compared to the **South and South West Asia region (63.12%)** and **Asia Pacific region (65.85%)**.
 - The overall score of India is **also greater than many OECD (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development) countries** including France, UK, Canada, Norway, Finland etc. and the overall score is **greater than the average score of the EU (European Union)**.
 - **Cause of Improvement:**
 - The **CBIC** (Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs) has been at forefront of path breaking reforms under the umbrella of **'Turant'** Customs to usher in a Faceless, Paperless and Contactless Customs by way of a series of reforms.
 - During the **Covid-19 pandemic**, Customs formations worked to expedite imports such as oxygen-related equipment, life-saving medicines, vaccines etc.

United Nations' Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

- **About:** It is a regional development arm of the **United Nations** for the Asia-Pacific region.
- **Members:** It has **53 Member States** and **9 Associate Members** from Asia-Pacific Region. **India** is also a member.
- **Established:** 1947
- **Headquarters:** Bangkok, Thailand
- **Objective:** To overcome some of the region's greatest challenges by providing results-oriented projects, technical assistance and capacity building to member States.
- **Recent report:** ['Economic and Social Survey of Asia and the Pacific 2021: Towards post-Covid-19 resilient economies'](#).

Source: PIB