



The ICC Digital Standards Initiative: An Introduction

October 2023

The Realities of Trade for many businesses

In over 90% of the trading world, trade and supply chain data is embedded in paper forms (physical or pdf), multiplied each time that goods and services cross borders before reaching the end consumer.

This data must be manually extracted, validated and entered into IT systems, most of which are not connected to each other.

The process is:

- prone to errors, discrepancies and fraud
- time consuming and costly
- environmentally inefficient

Key obstacles to digitizing trade in businesses and supply chains*



Countries are at different stages of regulatory reforms that would legalize Electronic Transferable Records (ETRs), providing legal certainty and recognition.



Taxonomies, standards, and technologies vary widely across the trading system even where there is alignment on digitalization. Interconnection must be individually negotiated and accomplished.



While **Digital networks** have been created and enabled economic efficiencies, there are no established means to connect “digital islands” to one another.

**result of DSI's industry consultation in 2021*

Digital Standards Initiative - mission and principles

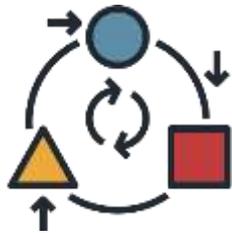
Mission

The ICC Digital Standards Initiative (DSI) aims to accelerate the development of a **globally harmonised, digitised trade environment**, as a key enabler of dynamic, sustainable, inclusive growth.

We engage the public sector to progress regulatory and institutional reform, and mobilise the private sector on adoption, implementation and capacity building.



Principles & Practices



Adapt & Apply

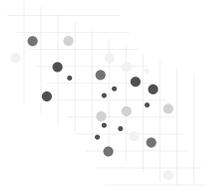


Convene & Collaborate



Transparency & Accessibility

Blueprint for action



STANDARDS

Enable the development of a **global baseline of digital standards for key trade documents and data** to facilitate interoperability across networks and trade platforms.



TECHNOLOGIES

Advocate for technological principles and security frameworks to **establish trust at digital level** based on Zero-trust architecture & verifiable credentials.



LEGAL

Facilitate the advocacy and **adoption of legal reforms** critical to digital trade at national levels.



CAPACITY

Build **business case**, design **training & education programmes** and drive **market engagement** to seed adoption.

We engage the public sector to progress legislative reform and build capacity to implement digital trade

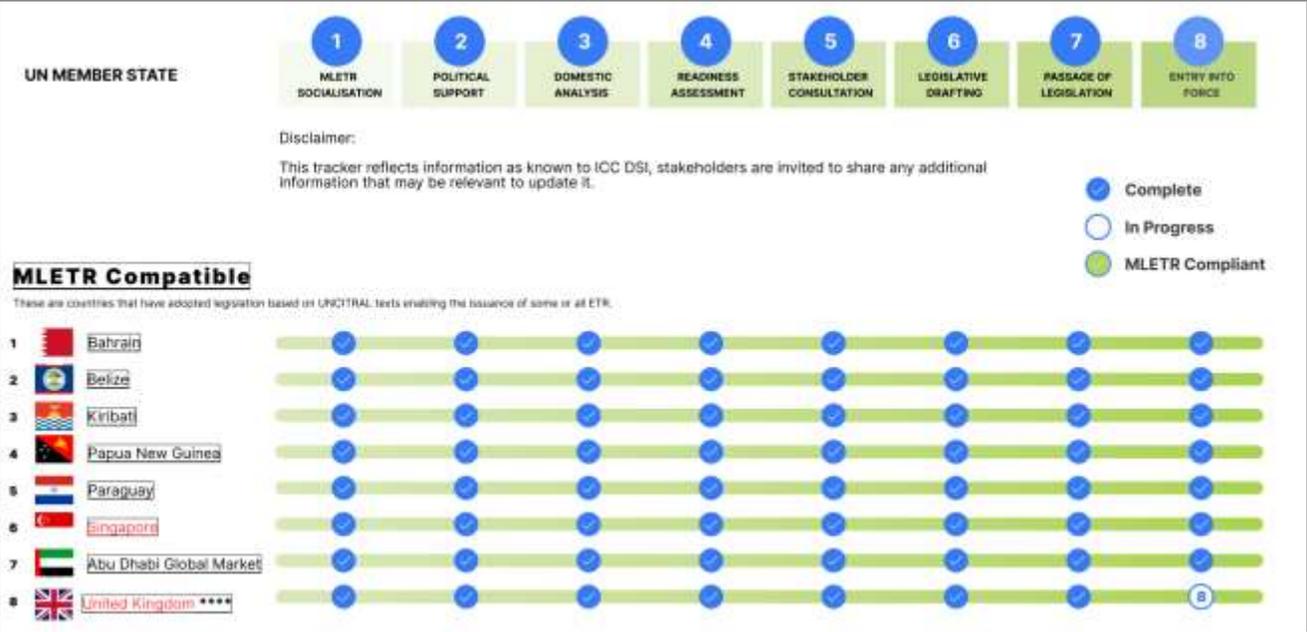
- The DSI Legal Reform Advisory Board (LRAB) helps DSI to spread the message about regulatory reform across government, industry associations, multilateral organizations and regional economic communities.
- DSI works with governments to build capacity to implement and benefit from digital trade.
- Our Monitoring Framework tracks the progress of jurisdictions in adopting the UNCITRAL Model Law on Electronic Transferable Records (MLETR).



DSI LRAB Participating Organisations (as of Oct 2023)

Help countries move towards enabling legal environment

The UNCITRAL Model Law on Electronic Transferable Records (MLETR) creates an enabling legal environment for paperless trade. It provides an international framework to align national laws and enable the legal use of electronic documents of title (electronic transferable records or “ETRs”) both domestically and across borders.



[MLETR Progress Tracker](#)



MLETR Capacity Building events and workshops

The GTMI with assess economies' readiness for digital trade across both the public and private sectors, as well as labor force capability. The Index aims to improve awareness among policymakers, investors, and businesses about what it takes to create advantage through digital trade and to promote its rapid and equitable adoption.

[The Global Trade Modernization Index \(GTMI\)](#)

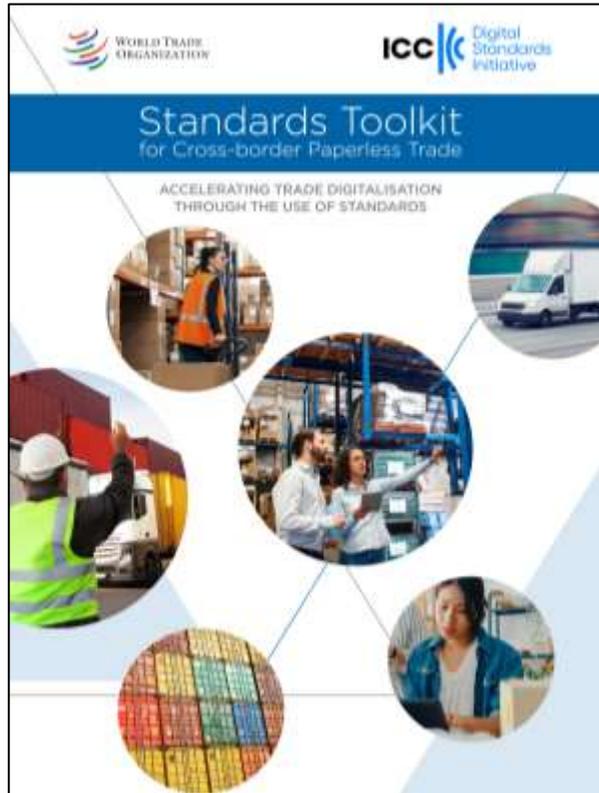
We mobilise the private sector to align on standards, data and interoperability across the entire supply chain and trade ecosystem

- The DSI Industry Advisory Board (IAB), formed in 2021, brings together key public and private sector players dedicated to advancing digital trade.
- The IAB is addressing two critical operational challenges facing digital trade:
 - (1) common data standards and taxonomies and
 - (2) the technology that manages trade data for trust, transparency, and interoperability.

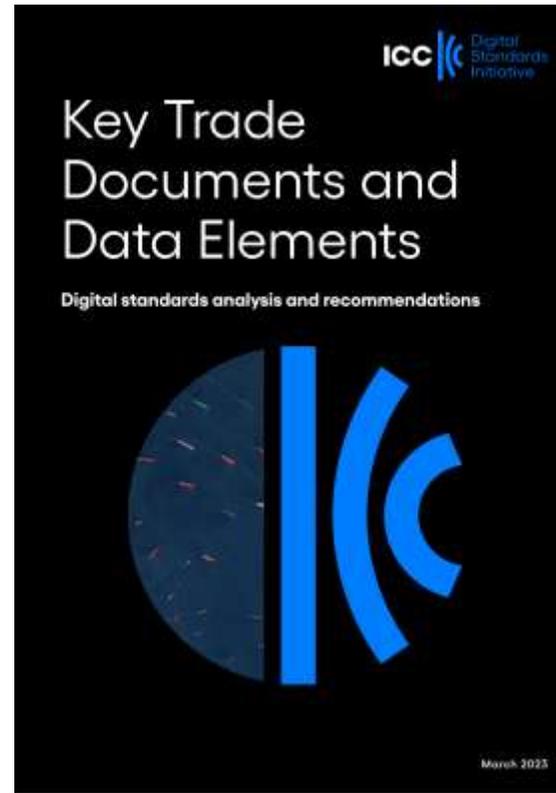


DSI IAB Participating Organisations (as of Oct 2023)

Standards and trusted tech for end-to-end supply chain



[WTO-ICC Standards Toolkit for Cross-border Paperless Trade](#)



[Digital standards and data elements analysis for key trade documents](#)



[A vision for the trade ecosystem based on verifiable, transitive trust](#)

Digital transformation for everyone, everywhere

Certificate in Digital Trade Strategy (CDTS)

Make informed business decisions and create coherent policies for digital trade

Jointly produced by the ICC Digital Standards Initiative and ICC Academy, this unique online course brings together insights from a well curated panel of more than 20 industry champions, legal experts, innovative trailblazers and public policy officials.

Since Nov 2022

300
enrolled

50
countries

Sample of Learner profiles

- Trade Consultant/Advisor
- Trade Finance professionals
- Strategic development director
- Commercial / maritime lawyers
- Head of market development
- Chief procurement officer
- Enterprise Architect

What our recent Graduates say...

*“You’ll gain an understanding of all the major standard-setting bodies, digital identifiers (you’ll even learn to recognize different barcodes and their history...), digital signatures and relevant legislation, and how this data is exchanged in a trusted matter. **This is important knowledge for anyone working on digitalizing trade.**”*

“Content creators are top notch, highly regarded practitioners who are experts in the respective chapter”

“The only course I could find dedicated to digitalization of trade processes.”

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**The London Institute
of Banking & Finance**

Vision of 70-80% of global trade digitalised within 5 years

All key supply chain and trade documents digitalised to consensus data sets, with clearance on trade platforms that facilitate data exchange and sharing of aggregate data.

For Supply Chains

- **Speed, traceability & flexibility** with real time data flows and decisions
- **Sustainability** data tracked digitally for consumer choice and preferential financing
- **Lower overall transport and logistics costs** due to automated clearing, reduced errors and lower admin on shipments

For Governments

- **Traceability & security of customs and trade** *without* the additional manpower demands
- **Decreased fraud** and tax non-compliance
- **Real time actions** on supply of key goods and services

For SMEs

- **Growth through global markets** with easier, more transparent trade standards and border procedures
- Access to **more finance** with data-driven credit scoring
- Compete on **level playing field** with more established corporates

Trade as a growth driver : sustainable, secure, open and inclusive

Digital trade is a global movement, a new way of doing business. Every company will be affected. Get ready!



“We believe that the widespread adoption of paperless trade will drive productivity gains and economic growth by reducing trade costs and lowering barriers to entry for MSMEs, including women-owned or women-led MSMEs.

Recognition of electronic trade documents as equivalent to their paper counterparts will support such a transition. We thus endorse non-binding, “High-Level Principles on Digitalization of Trade Documents” (Annex C). We, as G20 members, will make efforts to implement them and encourage other countries to consider these principles.”





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