

Country: Lebanon

Background:

Type of body: National Trade and Transport Facilitation Committee (NTTFC).

Official name: National Trade and Transport Facilitation Committee (NTTFC).

Motivation for its establishment: The establishment was a result of an ESCWA Committee on Transport initiative.

Year of establishment: October 2006

Other national bodies dealing with WTO issues and/or with Trade Facilitation: No

Former multi-agency group/committee: No

Current status of the working group (running, pilot phase, not functioning, etc): Not functioning

Institutional Framework:

Degree of institutionalisation: The National Transport and Trade Facilitation Committee of Lebanon was formally established under the Council of Ministers' Decision No. 58 in October 2006. Structure has changed overtime. Although in 2006 the Director General of Land and Maritime Transport was appointed as the chairman, in 2007 was officially removed, however, a 2015 Decision 11/2015 mentions that he is still being the chairman of the NTTFB.

Type of organisation (ad hoc group, legal entity/organisation, etc): Legal entity that meets on an ad hoc basis

Scope/mandate: Deal with day to day Trade Facilitation issues but is not clear yet

Terms of reference: No

Coordinating agency: The Ministry of Economy and Trade

Permanent technical secretariat: The DG for Land and Maritime Transport acts as the Secretariat to the NTTFC. However, at some point it is not functioning

Funding:

Budget: It does not currently have a formal budget.

Sources of funding: There is no funding

Objectives / Focus:

Objectives: The three main objectives are to deepen integration, further strengthen trade logistics, and streamline administration.

Working plan: No

Monitoring and evaluation: No

Membership / Composition:

Public or quasi-public agencies:

Ministry of Economy And Trade
Ministry of public works And transport
Directorate General of Land And Maritime transport
Directorate General of Civil Aviation
Ministry of Interior And Municipalities
Customs
Ministry of Telecommunications
Ministry of public Health
Ministry of Agriculture

Private associations or entities:

Federation of Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture
Association of Lebanese Bankers
Association of Insurance Companies of Lebanon (ACAL)
International Chamber of Commerce
Lebanese Association of Information Technology Professionals (LAITP)
Travel And Tourist Agencies
Shippers Association

Level of seniority of participants: Meetings do not happen anymore since 2008. When these were organized, decision makers used to attend. To the current ad hoc meetings stakeholders have, only senior and decision makers attended

Participation:

Frequency of meetings: Since 2008 the National Trade and Transport Facilitation Body stopped its meetings

Level of participation: When the meetings were organized, stakeholders attended and participated enthusiastically

Meetings format: Ad hoc since 2008 meetings haven't happened

Promotion / Communication:

Communication channels to keep stakeholders informed of TF meetings: Emails and letters

Interface with other working groups/committees on similar issues: There is no interaction with other working groups, although they exist, such as the ASYCUDA has a program in Customs and coordinates with the relevant stakeholders that are at the borders

Benefits:

Impact: The Creation of Trade Point Beirut, a trade promotion entity funded by the Ministry of Economy and Trade.

Benefits for the country's responsiveness to the WTO negotiation process: Lebanon it is not a WTO Member yet but is in the process of accession.

Lessons learned:

Greatest obstacles:

Lack of regularity in their meetings.

Lack of awareness of the importance and the role that a NTTFB has.

There is no clarity, neither legal nor factual of which Ministry plays the role of the Permanent Secretariat of the NTTFB's. Thus, official meetings of NTTFB's are not organized and gatherings between Public sectors are organized reactively rather than proactively.

Future plans:

Plans for further development: Accede to the WTO and Relaunch the activities of the NTTFBs. Members are eager to resume the meetings.

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