

PARTNER  
COUNTRY QUESTIONNAIRE



PAGE 4: B.1) ABOUT YOU

<b>Q1: COUNTRY</b>	COSTA RICA
<b>Q2: ABOUT YOU</b>	
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<b>Q3: CONSULTATION (Other ministries/agencies consulted in preparing this questionnaire reply) :</b>	Promoter of Foreign Trade (PROCOMER), Ministry of Economy, Industry and Trade (MEIC), Ministry of Planning (MIDEPLAN)

PAGE 6: C.2.) YOUR GOVERNMENT'S AID-FOR-TRADE PRIORITIES

<b>Q4: Do you have Aid-for-Trade priorities?</b>	Yes
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PAGE 7: C.2.) YOUR GOVERNMENT'S AID-FOR-TRADE PRIORITIES

**Q5: Please indicate your Aid-for-Trade priorities** Below are listed the most common priority areas grouped according to broad Aid-for-Trade categories. Please rank the top 5 priority areas among the 12 listed .(1 being the most important)

Trade policy analysis, negotiations and implementation	3
Trade facilitation	1
Transport infrastructure (airport, roads, rail, port)	4
Competitiveness	5
Regional integration	2

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**Q6: Additional information.**

Translation DB: Border infrastructure is also a priority area in Aid for Trade and, for the purposes of the selection of the above priorities, can be counted under Trade Facilitation.

Regarding the selection of "Trade policy analysis, negotiations and implementation", it is important to highlight Costa Rica's interest in developing a balanced and computerized way of conducting analyses and simulations of the impact of trade policies.

Costa Rica also considers that an improvement in its competitiveness and production sectors, helps increase access to value chains and to promote new production sectors.

**PAGE 8: C.2) YOUR GOVERNMENT'S AID FOR TRADE PRIORITIES**

**Q7: Have your Aid-for-Trade priorities changed since 2012?** Yes

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**Q8: What are the top 3 drivers of these changes? (Please choose no more than 3 options)** New development priorities,  
New trade capacity needs,  
Poverty reduction objectives

**Q9: Additional information.**

Translation DB: Trade and foreign investment are a fundamental part of Costa Rica's development strategy. Over the past 25 years, Costa Rica has made considerable effort to consolidate a robust platform for foreign trade. Through trade facilitation, infrastructure investment and programmes to increase production chains, Costa Rica seeks to promote the benefits of trade and investment in all regions of the country.

**Q10: Have these changes been reflected in your national development strategy?** Yes

**Q11: Have these changes been reflected in your dialogue with development partners?** Unsure

**Q12: Is trade facilitation reflected as a priority in your national or regional development policy?** Yes

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**Q13: In which existing policy document(s) can trade facilitation be found as a priority? (You may tick more than one box)**

National development strategy,  
National trade strategy,  
Other (please specify)  
Translation DB: In 2012, the work of Central American Viceministers in charge of trade was published in a document titled "Regional Coordination in Trade Facilitation" which set out the priorities of the region.

**Q14: Additional information.**

Translation DB: The Central American countries are currently developing a regional trade facilitation and competitiveness strategy which sets out short-, medium-, and long-term actions. The aim is to implement short-term measures in the first quarter of 2015.

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**Q15: Is trade facilitation included in new draft policy documents currently being updated and formulated?** Yes

PAGE 12: C.2.) YOUR GOVERNMENT'S AID-FOR-TRADE PRIORITIES

**Q16: Please indicate in which new draft policy documents, currently being updated or formulated, trade facilitation is included:**

National trade strategy,  
Other (please specify)  
Translation DB: Central American Trade Facilitation and Competitiveness Strategy

**Q17: Additional information.**

*Respondent skipped this question*

PAGE 14: D.1) TRADE COSTS

**Q18: How important are trade costs for the competitiveness of your exports?**

Very important

**Q19: Additional information.**

*Respondent skipped this question*

**Q20: Do your national policies address the issue of trade costs for exports?**

Yes

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PAGE 15: D.1) TRADE COSTS

<b>Q21: Which document(s) address(es) the issue of trade costs for exports ?</b>	National development strategy, National trade strategy
<b>Q22: Additional information.</b>	
Translation DB: The implementation of projects to modernize the trade and investment platform to reduce costs and improve quality is highlighted in Section 5.10 - "Foreign Trade" - of the 2015-2018 National Development Plan. The Strategic Plan of the Ministry of Foreign Trade also covers trade costs of exports. One of the strategic actions of the Plan is "to reduce the cost and expedite the process and time for movement of goods and services between countries, by simplifying and harmonizing the rules and disciplines related to trade and customs procedures".	

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<b>Q23: How important are trade costs for access to imports?</b>	Very important
<b>Q24: Additional information.</b>	<i>Respondent skipped this question</i>

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<b>Q25: Do national policies address the issue of trade costs for imports?</b>	Yes
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PAGE 18: D.1) TRADE COSTS

<b>Q26: Which document(s) address(es) the issue of trade costs for imports?</b>	National development strategy, National trade strategy
<b>Q27: Additional information.</b>	<i>Respondent skipped this question</i>

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**Q28: What are the most important sources of trade costs for the export of merchandise goods? (You may choose more than 1 option)**

Border procedures (trade facilitation),  
Transport infrastructure,  
Network infrastructure (ICT, power, telecoms)

**Q29: Additional information.**

*Respondent skipped this question*

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**Q30: What are the most important sources of trade costs for the export of services? (You may choose more than 1 option)**

Transport infrastructure (e.g. for tourism),  
Non-recognition of professional qualifications

**Q31: Additional information.**

Translation DB: Shortcomings in transport infrastructure affect the tourist sector, which is Costa Rica's largest export service sector.  
Costa Rican professionals face trade costs by not being able to exercise in other countries because of restrictions related to recognition of qualifications.

PAGE 21: D.1) TRADE COSTS

**Q32: In which regional markets to which you export merchandise goods and services do you face the highest trade costs? (Please select no more than 5 regions)**

The Caribbean, Central and Eastern Europe,  
North Africa and the Middle East, West Africa,  
Other,  
(please specify)  
Translation DB: The cost of transport of goods to the Caribbean, Central Europe and Africa are very high. In respect to services, high costs have been identified in South America, Central and Eastern Europe.

**Q33: Indicate your home region.**

Central America

PAGE 22: D.1) TRADE COSTS

**Q34: FOR MERCHANDISE GOODS: For the markets which you have identified as the highest cost, why are trade costs high? (You may choose more than 1 option)**

Border procedures (trade facilitation),  
Transport infrastructure

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**Q35: Additional information.**

Translation DB: In the case of Central Europe, Africa and the Caribbean, the high costs are due to the minimal transport available to reach these markets. As for the Caribbean, high costs can also be attributed

**Q36: FOR SERVICES: For the markets which you have identified as the highest costs, why are trade costs high? (You may choose more than 1 options)**

Poor transport infrastructure (e.g. for tourism),  
Recognition of professional qualifications,  
Restrictions on movement of natural persons

**Q37: Additional information.**

Translation DB: Costa Rica's main services export sectors are: tourism services, computer and information services, and other business services.

PAGE 23: D.1) TRADE COSTS

**Q38: How have your trade costs evolved over the past 5 years ?**

No Change

**Q39: Additional information.**

*Respondent skipped this question*

PAGE 24: D.1) TRADE COSTS

**Q40: Does your Government use any of the following sources to address the issue of trade costs? (You may choose more than 1 option)**

Research with private sector,  
Research by government,  
Research by donor funded project,  
World Bank Doing Business Index,  
World Bank Logistic Performance Index,  
World Economic Forum Global Competitiveness Report

**Q41: Additional information.**

*Respondent skipped this question*

**Q42: Do you validate the results? (You may tick more than 1 box)**

Yes, dialogue with private sector,  
Yes, dialogue with government

**Q43: Additional information.**

*Respondent skipped this question*

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PAGE 26: E.1) REDUCING TRADE COSTS

**Q44: Is your government taking national action to reduce trade costs?** Yes

PAGE 27: E.1) REDUCING TRADE COSTS

**Q45: What national action is your government is taking ?(You may tick more than 1 box)** National government initiatives,  
Joint public-private sector initiatives,  
Initiatives supported by non-governmental organizations

**Q46: Additional information.** *Respondent skipped this question*

**Q47: In which areas have national actions been undertaken or are on-going? (You may tick more than one box)** Border procedures (trade facilitation),  
Non-Tariff Measures (including standards),  
Transport infrastructure,  
Network infrastructure (ICT, power, telecoms),  
Transport infrastructure (e.g. for tourism),  
Negotiations with trading partners on access for service suppliers  
,  
Tariffs on product inputs (e.g. on computers for ICT services)

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**Q48: Is your government engaged in regional actions to reduce trade costs?** Yes

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**Q49: Please specify (You may tick more than 1 box)** Regional economic community,  
Initiatives supported by non-governmental organizations

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**Q50: In which areas have regional actions been undertaken or are on-going? (You may tick more than 1 box)**

Border procedures (trade facilitation),  
Tariffs, fees and other charges,  
Non-Tariff Measures (including standards),  
Network infrastructure (ICT, power, telecoms),  
Network infrastructure (ICT, power, telecoms),  
Negotiations with trading partners on access for service suppliers

**Q51: Additional information.**

Translation DB: In the context of Central American economic integration, the common external tariff is periodically revised and work is done to address barriers to trade and to simplify customs procedures. In 2014 work began on the development and implementation of a Central American Trade Facilitation and Competitiveness Strategy.

PAGE 30: E.1) REDUCING TRADE COSTS

**Q52: Is external support aligned with your national and regional needs to reduce trade costs ?** Yes

**Q53: Additional information.**

Translation DB: If however, this is adjusted to middle-income countries such as Costa Rica, access to Aid-for-Trade programmes remains a challenge. In most cases, programmes are limited to technical cooperation in the form of evaluation studies and workshops. While these are useful, a duplication of efforts in the same area of work and a lack of mechanisms for monitoring the initiatives have been identified. Costa Rica has insisted with donors on the importance of investing in programmes that involve concrete actions for improvement of procedures and reducing trade costs.

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**Q54: How is external support aligned with your needs?(You may tick more than 1 box)**

External support is aligned with national priorities to reduce trade costs  
,  
Dialogue with donors has resulted in attention to the issue of trade costs  
,  
Improved dialogue with regional partners has resulted in this being prioritized

**Q55: Additional information.**

*Respondent skipped this question*



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PAGE 32: E.1) REDUCING TRADE COSTS

<b>Q56: Why is external support not aligned with your needs?(You may tick more than 1 box)</b>	<i>Respondent skipped this question</i>
<b>Q57: Additional information.</b>	<i>Respondent skipped this question</i>

PAGE 34: F.1) TRADE FACILITATION AGREEMENT

<b>Q58: What impact would implementation of the Trade Facilitation Agreement, when adopted, have on the evolution of your trade costs?</b>	Unsure
<b>Q59: Additional information.</b>	
Translation DB: According to estimates by the OECD, the implementation of the Trade Facilitation Agreement in Costa Rica could represent a reduction in trade costs of up to 12.9%. However, this estimate does not take into account the modernization of border crossings and construction of a new container terminal on Costa Rica's Atlantic coast; two projects it is currently promoting. (Moisés, E. and S. Sorescu (2013)), "Trade Facilitation Indicators: The Potential Impact of Trade Facilitation on Developing Countries' Trade", OECD Trade Policy Papers, No. 144, OECD Publishing and addendum by Trade and Agriculture Directorate, February 2014).	

PAGE 35: F.1) TRADE FACILITATION AGREEMENT

<b>Q60: In which regions would the implementation of the Trade Facilitation Agreement, when adopted, have the biggest impact on the trade costs you face ? (Please choose no more than 5 options)</b>	Central America, The Caribbean
<b>Q61: Additional information.</b>	<i>Respondent skipped this question</i>

PAGE 36: F.1) TRADE FACILITATION AGREEMENT

<b>Q62: Do you plan to seek Aid-for-Trade support to help implement the Trade Facilitation Agreement, when adopted ?</b>	Yes, support already being sought
<b>Q63: Have you undertaken a Trade Facilitation Needs Assessment?</b>	Yes

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PAGE 37: F.1) TRADE FACILITATION AGREEMENT

**Q64: Please specify the organization(s) involved in and year(s) of each needs assessment.**

WTO 2009

Other 2014

(please specify)

Translation DB: An analysis of the Agreement's obligations and a needs assessment was done in early 2014 by the Ministry of Foreign Trade, with the support of the Directorate General of Customs, the State Phytosanitary Service and the National Animal Health Service.

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**Q65: Do you plan to request a new Trade Facilitation Needs Assessment or an update of an existing assessment?** No

**Q66: Please specify why.** *Respondent skipped this question*

PAGE 39: F.1) TRADE FACILITATION AGREEMENT

**Q67: Where might you need support to implement the Trade Facilitation Agreement, when adopted? (You may tick more than 1 box)**

To support implementation of specific TFA provisions  
,

To align support with on-going national reform programmes  
,

To align commitments with on-going regional programmes

PAGE 40: F.1) TRADE FACILITATION AGREEMENT

**Q68: What difficulties do you face, or do you expect to face, in securing Aid-for-Trade support to help implement the Trade Facilitation Agreement, when adopted ? (You may tick more than 1 box)**

Differing priorities of in-country donors ,  
National coordination and demonstration of political will for TFA reform

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**Q69: Which disciplines of the Trade Facilitation Agreement, when adopted, will prove the hardest to implement and where Aid-for-Trade support should be focused?(You may tick more than 1 box)**

Release and clearance of goods,  
Border agency cooperation,  
Formalities connected with importation,  
exportation and transit

**Q70: Additional information.**

*Respondent skipped this question*

**PAGE 43: G.1) IMPACT: REDUCING TRADE COSTS AND INCLUSIVE, SUSTAINABLE GROWTH**

**Q71: What have been the key factors in achieving successful reductions in trade costs? (Please choose no more than 5 options)**

Alignment of donor support with national priorities  
,  
Sustained political engagement and commitment by national authorities

**Q72: Additional information.**

*Respondent skipped this question*

**PAGE 44: G.1) IMPACT: REDUCING TRADE COSTS AND INCLUSIVE, SUSTAINABLE GROWTH**

**Q73: What outputs have been achieved by actions taken to reduce trade costs? (Please choose no more than 5 options)**

Updated customs working practices,  
Improved cooperation between border agencies,  
Creation of electronic single windows,  
Creation of dialogue with private sector,  
Improved border infrastructure

**Q74: Additional information.**

Translation DB: Between 2012 and 2014, in order to reduce costs and improve transit times of goods, Costa Rica invested in infrastructure at the border post of Peñas Blancas (northern border with Nicaragua) which included the construction of a toll checkpoint to expedite the processing of exports. A Board of Land Border Posts was also created as a permanent coordination point between entities exercising control posts. Additionally, the second version of Costa Rica's Single Window for Foreign Trade (VUCE 2.0) was implemented which modernized the IT platform and centralized all foreign trade permits.

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**Q75: What outcomes have been achieved by actions taken to reduce trade costs? (Please choose no more than 5 options)**

Reduction in border clearance times,  
Other (please specify)  
Translation DB: Reduction in costs associated with the processing of export and import permits (whitepaper).

**Q76: Additional information.**

Translation DB: During this period, the cost of formalities relating to fumigation at borders was also eliminated.

PAGE 46: G.1) IMPACT: REDUCING TRADE COSTS AND INCLUSIVE, SUSTAINABLE GROWTH

**Q77: What impacts have been achieved by actions taken to reduce trade costs? (Please choose no more than 5 options)**

Unsure

**Q78: Additional information.**

*Respondent skipped this question*

PAGE 47: G.1) IMPACT: REDUCING TRADE COSTS AND INCLUSIVE, SUSTAINABLE GROWTH

**Q79: Which types of actions have achieved the most positive results in reducing trade costs for goods and services? (Please choose no more than 7 options)**

Removing domestic restrictions on commercial presence  
,  
Improving the regulatory environment for services  
,  
Other (please specify)  
Translation DB: Simplification of formalities, automatization of customs procedures and other bodies, opening-up of telecommunications and insurance.

**Q80: Additional information.**

*Respondent skipped this question*

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**Q81: What contribution can reducing trade costs make to the target of inclusive, sustainable growth? (Please choose no more than 7 options)**

Increase in exports, Rise in employment,  
Entry into new value chains,  
Diversification in export products,  
Foreign direct investment,  
Domestic private sector investment,  
Consumer welfare effects

**Q82: Additional information.**

*Respondent skipped this question*

PAGE 50: H.1) IMPACT OF THE AID FOR TRADE INITIATIVE

**Q83: Has the alignment of Aid-for-Trade support to your national needs and priorities changed since the launch of the Aid-for-Trade Initiative in 2005?**

Improved

PAGE 51: H.1) IMPACT OF THE AID FOR TRADE INITIATIVE

**Q84: If it has improved, please specify why.(You may tick more than one box)**

Better dialogue with donors

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**Q85: Why has the alignment declined?(You may tick more than 1 box)**

No opinion

**Q86: Additional information.**

*Respondent skipped this question*

PAGE 53: H.1) IMPACT OF THE AID FOR TRADE INITIATIVE

**Q87: What impact has the Aid-for-Trade Initiative had since it was launched in 2005?(You may tick more than 1 box)**

More attention to trade issues in development

**Q88: Additional information.**

*Respondent skipped this question*

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PAGE 54: H.1) IMPACT OF THE AID FOR TRADE INITIATIVE

<b>Q89: What potential future contribution could the Enhanced Integrated Framework for LDCs make to the post-2015 development agenda? (Please choose no more than 5 options)</b>	Unsure
<b>Q90: Additional information.</b>	<i>Respondent skipped this question</i>
<b>Q91: What potential future contribution could the Aid-for-Trade Initiative make to the post-2015 development agenda? (Please choose a maximum of 5 options)</b>	Ensuring continued attention to trade issues in development , Making a contribution to economic growth and poverty eradication through inclusive, sustainable development , Contribution to green growth through the creation of green value chains
<b>Q92: Additional information.</b>	<i>Respondent skipped this question</i>
<b>Q93: How in your view could the Aid-for-Trade Initiative be improved?</b>	
Translation DB: From consultations carried out, the following areas where the AfT Initiative could be improved have been identified: 1. In order to avoid duplication, donors need more effective communication and coordination channels between themselves. 2. In the joint exercise to identify priority areas, donors need to be more receptive to the needs identified by countries. Many evaluation and diagnostic assistance programmes have been carried out but not many to implement measures or generate the required changes. 3. Subsequent monitoring of programmes continues to be weak, as do impact evaluation tools. 4. For middle-income countries, access to assistance continues to be a challenge in spite of good performance. An increase assistance contributions to these countries would have a very positive multiplier effect.	

PAGE 55: H.1) IMPACT OF THE AID FOR TRADE INITIATIVE

<b>Q94: Additional information on "Reducing trade costs and inclusive, sustainable growth". If there is anything you would like to add on the topic of "Reducing trade costs for inclusive, sustainable growth", which you feel has not been covered in this questionnaire, please use this box.</b>
Translation DB: In Question 62, Costa Rica indicated that it had already begun to gather support to facilitate the implementation of the TFA. This does not mean that Costa Rica will not request further assistance in either TFA implementation or in complementary areas.