



WORKING GROUP ON THE

# **DIGITALIZATION OF TRADE DOCUMENTS**

1 APRIL 2025



# Promoting Paperless Trade

ICC Germany  
April 2025

# Paperless Trade in Germany

## Legal Environment

- In 2013 **introduction of a digital opening clause** in the commercial code back allowing the use of electronic bills of lading, e-consignment notes, e-warehouse receipts, e-waybills and e-sea waybills
- Prerequisite for equal treatment of paper and electronic documents: **authenticity and integrity** of an electronic bill of lading
  - Direct reference to the UNCITRAL MLETR
- **Authorization** of the Federal Ministry of Justice **to regulate the details** of the issuance, presentation, return and transfer of an electronic bill of lading.

# Paperless Trade Initiative Germany

## ICC Germany as leading voice of trade digitalisation Part 1

- Mid 2021: Launch of a **working group** with Federation of German Industries, the Association of German Chambers of Industry and Commerce, the Association of German Banks and Insurance Companies, transport and logistics associations
- Mid 2022: Presentation of a **proposal to the Federal Ministry of Justice** for a "regulation on the details of electronic freight and warehouse documents and a legal framework for electronic transport insurance certificates"
- Jan. 2023: **Amendment** to HGB and VVG for electronic transport insurance policies

➤ Germany is 99% MLETR compliant, missing: **e-bill of exchange**

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# Paperless Trade Initiative Germany

## ICC Germany as leading voice of trade digitalisation Part 2

- Mid-2024: **Joint statement** with other business associations: no downgrading of the form of consignment notes and other freight and storage documents to text form.
- Feb. 2025: **Exchange with German Judges** on the handling of electronic records in court proceedings
- Renaissance of the (electronic) bill of exchange

# Paperless Trade Initiative Germany

## Private Sector Involvement

- Support of and advise to the German private sector in going (trade) digital
- Support of IT service partners to gain access to the German market
- Coordination of pilots of digital cross-industry, cross-country trade transactions
- Helping companies develop strategies to reduce costs and increase paperless trade: pain point analysis, digitization potential, quick wins

# Contact



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