



European
Commission

Annual report 2020

TRACES

FOREWORD

The role of TRACES as a leading certification system of the European Commission has significantly expanded in 2020. This year, more than 3.5 million official documents and certificates have been issued in TRACES by economic operators and competent authorities, while the TRACES users' community increased significantly to about 90 000 users in total in both TRACES platforms.

2020 has been the first full year that the use of the new TRACES platform, TRACES NT, has been mandatory in application of the Official Controls Regulation (OCR) – Regulation (EU) 2017/625. The main challenge for the TRACES team during the course of 2020 has been to ensure the correct implementation of the provisions of the OCR and of the IMSOC Regulation – Implementing Regulation (EU) 2019/1715.

In this respect, the migration of the entry documents' modules to TRACES NT was completed progressively. The CED module for food and feed of non-animal origin was migrated on 28 January 2020, the CVEDA module for live animals on 5 March 2020, while the parallel use of the CVEDP module of TRACES Classic and of the CHED-P module of TRACES NT for the issuance of entry documents for products of animal origin was enabled during the whole year.

A remarkable progress has been achieved as regards the implementation of the electronic certification. By the end of 2020, more than one third of Member States authorities have been signing their entry documents for animals, products of animal origin and food and feed of non-animal origin electronically, corresponding to about 16% of the total entry documents issued for these goods. Regarding plant entry documents, more than half of Member States authorities have been signing their entry documents electronically.

With regard to the electronic health certificates issued in TRACES by third countries, by the end of 2020, several third countries have successfully enrolled for the electronic certification of TRACES enabling them to make the use of paper certificates obsolete.

In the plant health domain, one of the greatest accomplishments of the year is the connection of TRACES with the IPPC ePhyto Hub that was successfully established in May. It has enabled the retrieval of data from more than 83 000 phytosanitary certificates from 10 third countries also connected to the Hub. Significant work was performed to enable Member States to use the Phyto module for the issuance of phytosanitary certificates for export to third countries, and it is foreseen to be activated in the beginning of 2021.

The Plant Interceptions module was also activated in May in order to

enable the creation of plant interception notifications for consignments of plants and plant products intercepted upon entry into the Union or intercepted within the Union in line with the IMSOC Regulation.

In a year marked from an unprecedented health crisis due to the COVID-19 pandemic, TRACES played an essential role, thanks to the temporary measures waiving the requirement to present original paper certificates (Implementing Regulation (EU) 2020/466). During 2020, TRACES proved to be a valuable tool which helped facilitate the performance of official controls by the Border Control Posts, based on the data recorded therein.

In relation to the withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the European Union, the TRACES team has managed to implement in time the provisions of the Northern Ireland Protocol in order to enable the authorities of Northern Ireland to continue to use TRACES in the context of the performance of official controls and other official activities in accordance with the OCR.

With regard to legal developments, significant work was completed by the TRACES legal team for the preparation of the IMSOC Regulation amendment. Its main objective concerns rules on the functioning of ADIS, TRACES and EUROPHYT, and the issuance of electronic SPS certificates. Its finalisation and entry into application is foreseen in 2021.

Our excellent collaboration with our partner Directorate-Generals continued in 2020, so as to develop further the existing modules of TRACES which cover different certification schemes, whereas, progress was made in the discussions exploring the further expansion of TRACES with new modules.

As we look ahead, the main priorities for the next year revolve around the full-scale stabilization of the entry documents' modules in line with the relevant provisions of the OCR, as well as to ensure the full concentration and migration of all TRACES operations to the new TRACES NT platform. Lastly, in line with the European Commission's digital strategy, Shaping Europe's Digital Future, the further rollout of the electronic certification of TRACES will remain a high priority for the TRACES team.



Bernard Van Goethem
Directorate-General for Health and Food Safety
Director Unit G

WHAT IS TRACES?

TRACES is the European Commission's multilingual online sanitary and phytosanitary certification platform supporting the **importation of animals, animal products, food and feed** of non-animal origin and **plants into the European Union**, and the **intra-EU trade** and **EU exports of animals and certain animal products**.

Its main objective is to streamline the certification process and all linked entry procedures and to offer a fully digitised and paperless workflow in line with the European Commission's communication on Shaping Europe's digital future.

More than **90 000 users** from about **85 countries worldwide** are using TRACES. TRACES facilitates **the exchange of data, information and documents** between all involved trading parties and control authorities and therefore simplifies and speeds up the administrative procedures.

The possibility to **trace back and forth** all the movements of animals, animal products, food and feed of non-animal origin and plants contributes to the reduction of the impact of disease outbreaks and allows for a quick response to counter certain serious risks along the agri-food chain.

The TRACES platform enhances **cooperation and coordination** between the competent authorities of EU countries and non-EU countries, but also between the traders themselves and their competent authorities. When a decision is taken on a consignment, the involved parties are notified and have access to the relevant documents. TRACES allows for the quick detection of fake certificates, and therefore contributes to the enhancement of trust and better collaboration.

The **statistical tool** that is integrated in TRACES allows the extraction of valuable data in relation to imports into the EU, exports from the EU and intra-Union trade.

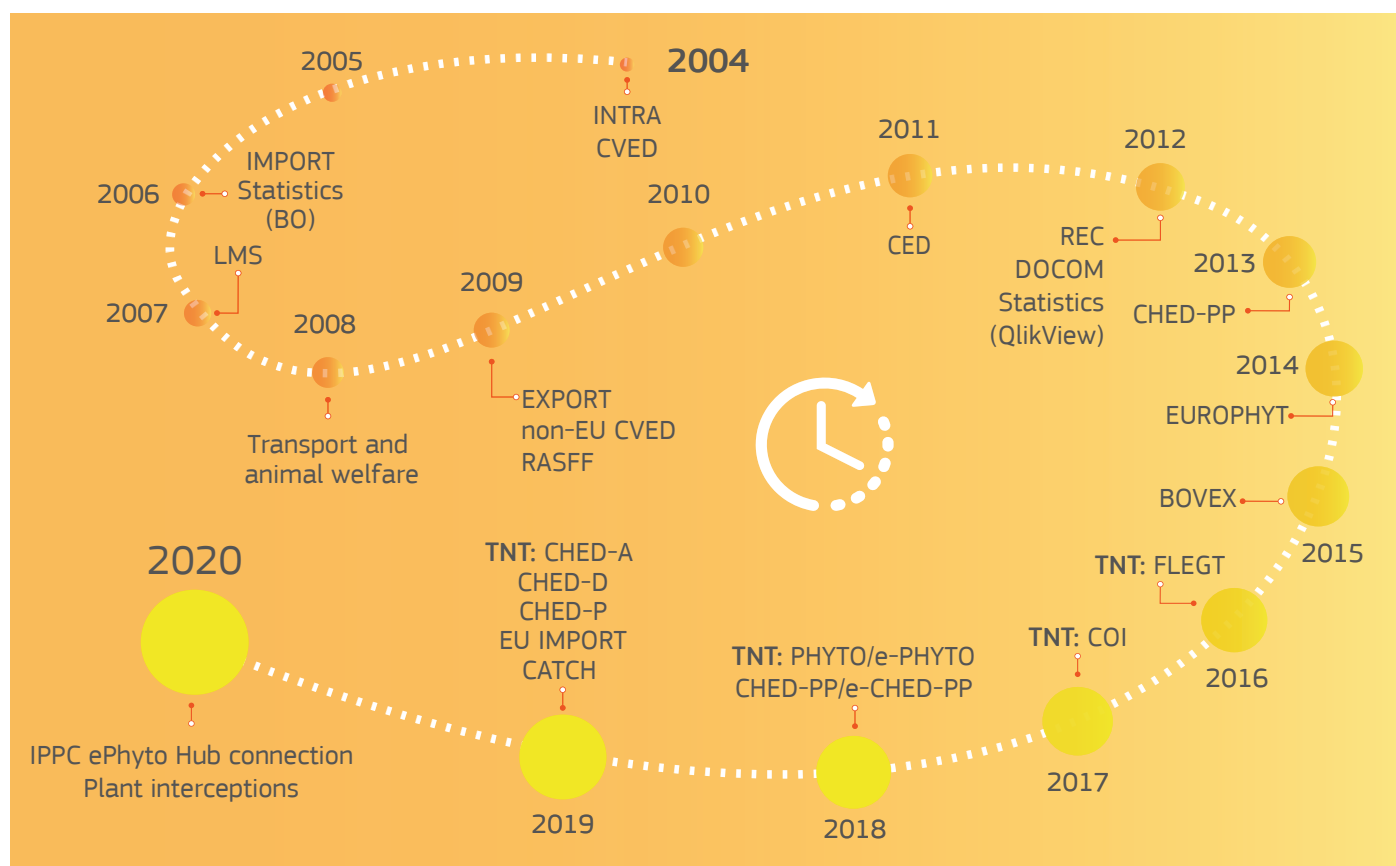
TRACES is available in all of the **24 official languages of the EU** and in **39 languages** in total; this facilitates the use of TRACES also for the non-EU countries competent authorities and trading partners. TRACES is accessible **24 hours** a day, **7 days** a week, **free** of charge. What is only needed in order to access, is to set up an account, and have an internet connection.

TRACES is an efficient tool to ensure:

- **Traceability** (monitoring movements, both within the EU and from non-EU countries);
- **Information exchange** (enabling trade partners and competent authorities to easily obtain information on the movements of their consignments, and speeding up administrative procedures);
- **Risk management** (reacting rapidly to health threats by tracing the movements of consignments and facilitating the risk management of rejected consignments).

Following the outbreak in Europe of classic swine fever in 1997, a report of the Court of Auditors (No 1/2000) prompted a resolution from the European Parliament (A5-396/2000) inviting the European Commission to improve the traceability of animal movements within the single market. Therefore, Commission Decision 2003/24/EC of 30 December 2002 concerning the development of an integrated computerised veterinary system anticipated the elaboration of a new ICT system, followed by Commission Decision 2003/623/EC of 19 August 2003 concerning the development of an integrated computerised veterinary system known as TRACES. Commission Decision 2004/292/EC on the introduction of the TRACES system and amending Decision 92/486/EEC made the system compulsory for all Member States from 1 January 2005.

TRACES timeline

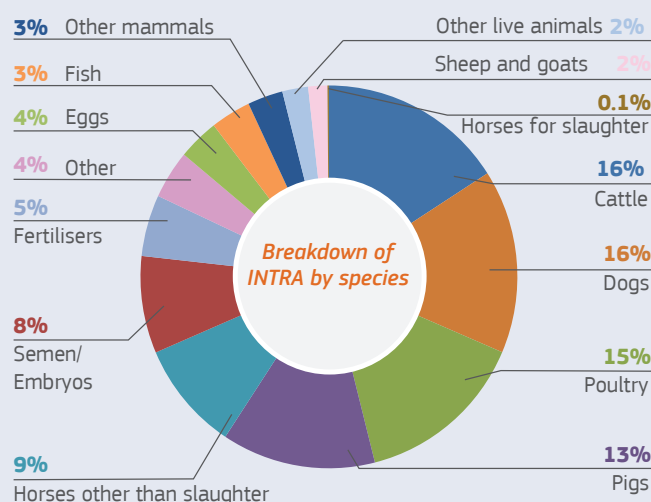


THE SINGLE MARKET

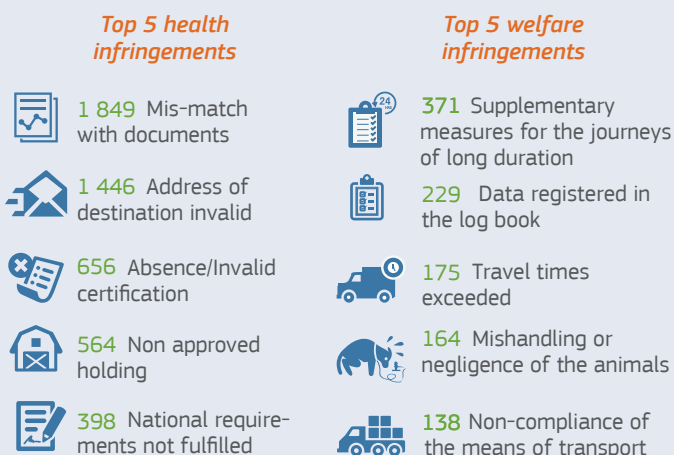
Intra-EU trade certificates (INTRAs)

Some 1 434 local competent authorities (51 of which were EFTA Members), issued 863 457 intra-EU trade health certificates: of these, 30 554 were issued for export purposes while transiting through a Member State. About 44% of INTRAs are issued for the trade of bovine, poultry and porcine species, each category representing roughly one third of the total. The number of INTRAs for registered horses is not comprehensive, because the issuance of an INTRA for this animal species is not compulsory. Trade of untreated manure represents 5% of all INTRAs. 149 740 consignments have been controlled. 7 607 consignments were discovered to have violations relating to animal health and 2 293 relating to welfare. About 4.6 million heads of cattle, 33 million pigs, 3.2 million sheep and 1.4 billion poultry were exchanged between the Member States of EU and EFTA, in more than 390 000 movements.

Breakdown of INTRA by species



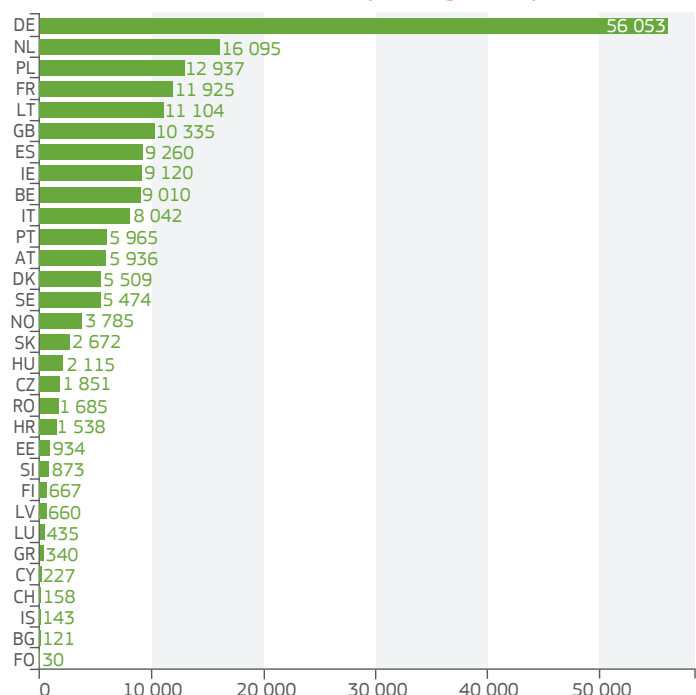
Number of rejections of INTRA issued and received/ Reason for refusal



Commercial document for intra-EU exchanges of animal by-products (DOCOM)

To fulfil the obligation of Article 4(3) of Regulation (EC) No 1069/2009 laying down health rules as regards animal by-products and derived products not intended for human consumption (regarding EU trade of animal by-products), the notification for the validation of a commercial document (DOCOM) was implemented in May 2012 in TRACES. The economic operator can prepare and validate this DOCOM directly; the competent authorities at the place of origin and destination are notified of the by-product movements. The competent authority at the place of destination must acknowledge receipt of the commodity. When necessary, as with untreated manure, a link is automatically implemented in TRACES between the DOCOM and the intra-EU trade health certificate. In 2020, 194 999 DOCOMs were issued by Member States of the EU and EFTA countries.

Number of DOCOM by issuing country



Bovine Exchange (BOVEX)

BOVEX is a specific interface linked to TRACES, so as to allow automatic exchange of bovine identification data across relevant national databases. The objective is to digitise bovine passports, save time and avoid errors while introducing passport data into national databases upon reception of cattle. In March 2015, the requirement to list, in the health certificate, all passport numbers of marketed cattle was introduced to improve the quality of exchanged data. In 2020, Belgium, Estonia, France, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Spain and the Netherlands have exchanged more than 2.2 million heads of cattle in more than 62 000 consignments and more than 1 784 000 passports were automatically integrated via BOVEX in national databases, which makes 94% of the shipments. Although these eight pilot countries account for 53% of all exchanged passports the challenge ahead is enormous, with approximately 4.2 million head of cattle exchanged over 128 000 consignments.

Customs Single Windows and digitisation

The interconnection of TRACES with customs systems is ongoing as part of the set-up of a Single Window for Customs Administrations. The objective is to automate the integration of health documents developed in TRACES into their customs systems in order to completely digitize the border control procedures. France (2009), Spain (2012), the United Kingdom and Italy (2014) have implemented their own system. Portugal joined Bulgaria, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Ireland, Latvia, Poland and Slovenia and implemented the generic interface CSW-CERTEX (Customs Single Windows-CERTificates EXchange; ex-SPEED 2) developed in collaboration with DG Taxation and Customs Union (DG TAXUD).

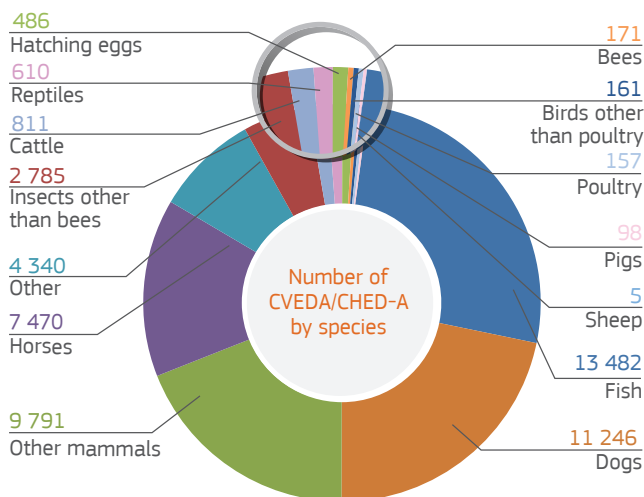
Common Veterinary Entry Document for Animals (CVEDA) / Common Health Entry Document for Animals (CHED-A)

Of the 50 274 CVEDA/CHED-A issued, 381 were rejected. This represented less than 1% of the total number of consignments. The principal reason for rejection was an invalid certificate or the absence of a certificate. In December 2016, the control of invasive alien species was integrated in accordance with Regulation (EU) No 1143/2014 for both animal and plants.

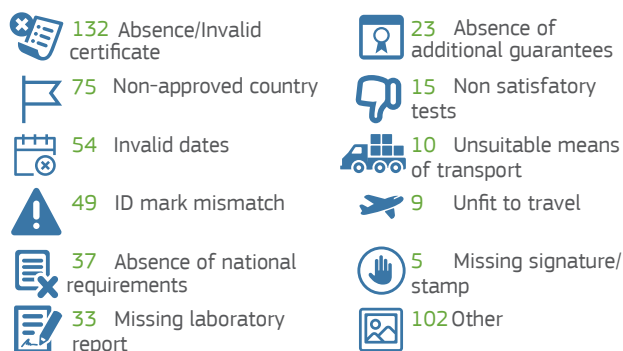
50 274
381 rejected

Top entry countries:

1. Germany (17 120)
2. United Kingdom (7 167)
3. The Netherlands (4 908)
4. Belgium (4 599)
5. France (2 763)



Number of rejection/Reason for refusal



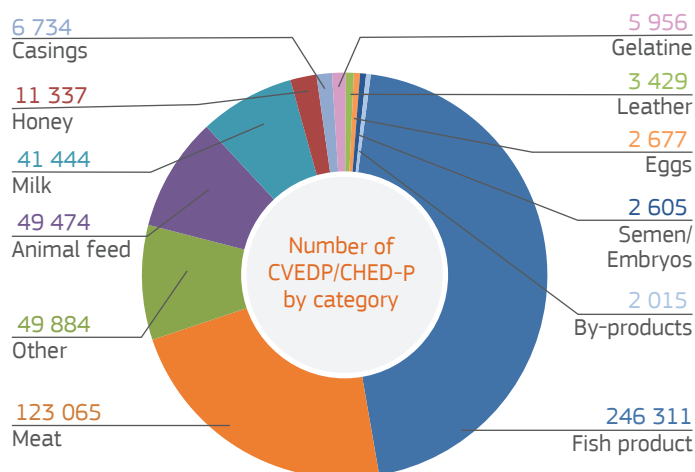
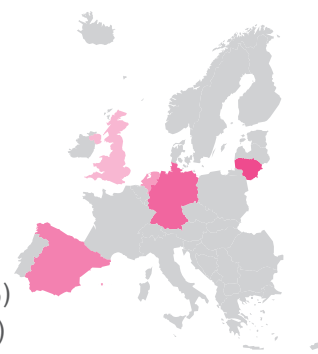
Common Veterinary Entry Document for products of animal origin (CVEDP) / Common Health Entry Document for products (CHED-P)

Of the 539 018 CVEDP/CHED-P issued, 7 373 were rejected, approximately 1.4%. More than half of rejected certificates were rejected due to the absence of a certificate. About 22% of the total were issued for transiting purposes. These 119 826 consignments include transits to American military bases in the EU.

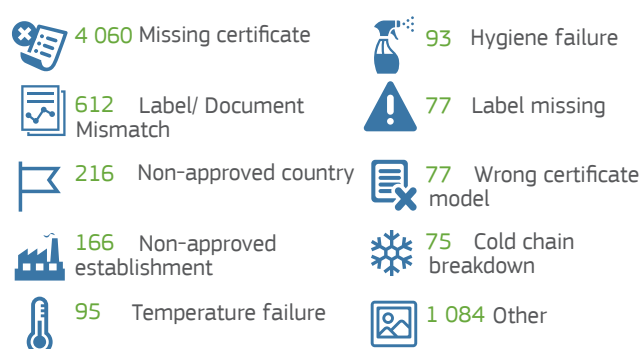
539 018
7 373 rejected

Top entry countries:

1. Lithuania (90 712)
2. Germany (68 351)
3. Spain (54 524)
4. The Netherlands (51 903)
5. United Kingdom (47 787)



Number of rejection/Reason for refusal



BORDER CONTROL

Rejected CVEDA: top 10 origin countries



Rejected CVEDP: top 10 origin countries

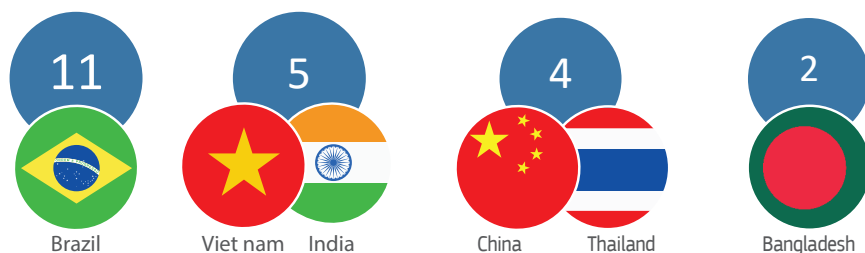


Re-enforced checks (REC) and link to Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF)

Since September 2008, a link has been created between RASFF and TRACES, to obviate the need to resubmit data in RASFF which has already been logged in TRACES. This link makes it possible, wherever necessary, to supplement the pre-completed RASFF declaration form, to notify the national contact point and to inform the European Commission. In January 2012 the module of REC, defined in Article 24 of Directive 97/78/EC laying down the principles governing the organization of veterinary checks on products entering the Community from non-EU countries was implemented in TRACES. This module enables the control on EU level 10 consecutive consignments originating from the same targeted establishment, instead of country or border inspection post level.

A total of 197 RASFF notifications were made through TRACES, 43 of which were notifications for REC procedures. Fish products represent 63% of the REC, followed by animal feed 7% and meat preparations representing 16%. Chemical (42%) and Microbiological (42%) contaminants are the main reasons for REC procedures. A total of 19 non-EU countries had to manage RECs, predominantly Brazil (26%), India (12%), Vietnam (12%) and China (9%).

Countries with more than 1 REC



Electronic certificate of inspection for imported organic products (COI)

This module, launched on 19 April 2016, in accordance with Regulation (EC) No 1235/2008 on imports of organic products, and Implementing Regulation (EU) 2016/1842 that appoints TRACES as electronic certification system of inspection, is integrated in the action plan for future organic production in the EU. The mandatory use of TRACES came into effect from 19 October 2017. Approximately 112 387 COI certificates were issued in 2020.

FLEGT licensing (Forest Law Enforcement Governance and Trade)

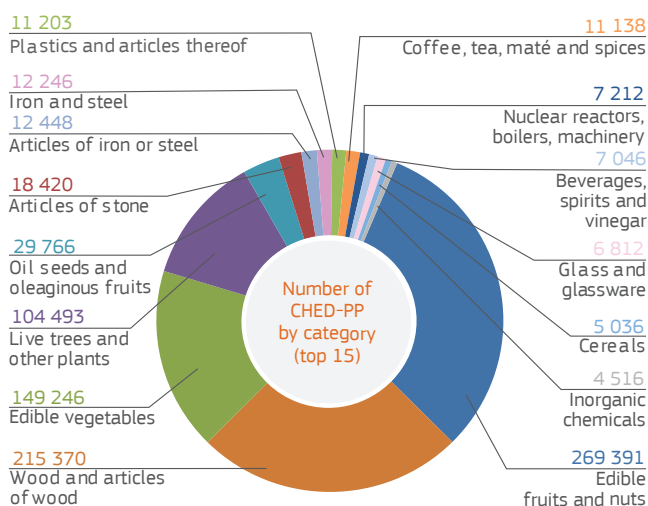
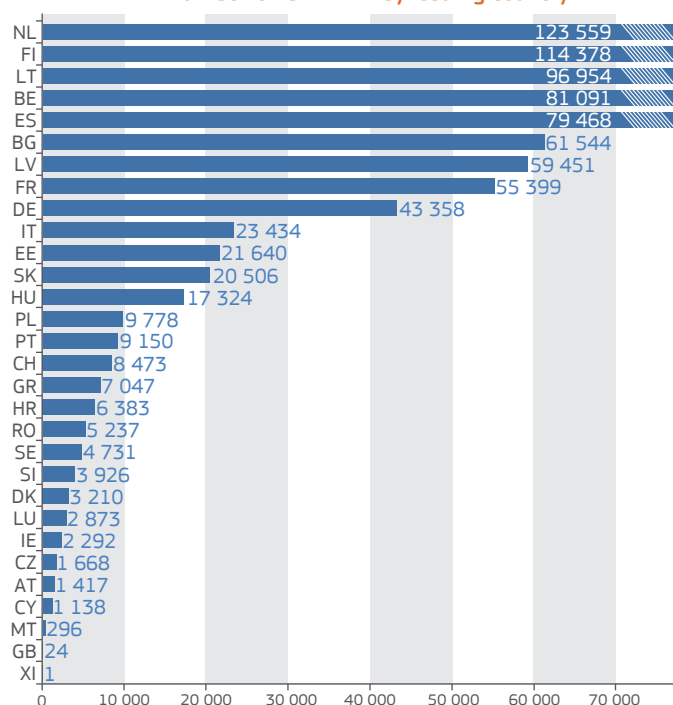
This module was launched on 15 November 2016 for the implementation of Regulation (EC) No 1024/2008 on imports of timber into the EU, under the EU environmental policy for forest protection. 22 849 licences were recorded in TRACES and checked by customs. It covers timber only from Indonesia, the sole country meeting the requirements to issue licences.

BORDER CONTROL

Common Health Entry Document for Plants and Plant products (CHED-PP)

This module launched on 22 April 2013 and connected to EUROPHYT on 21 October 2014 has been installed in November 2017 on the new TNT platform together with the import certification module in the EU. In December 2016, the control of invasive alien species was integrated in accordance with Regulation (EU) No 1143/2014 for both animals and plants. There is a total of 27 Member States and Switzerland who have used this module in 2020 to produce 865 750 CHED-PP.

Number of CHED-PP by issuing country



Top 5 entry countries for CHED-PP

865 750

6 345 rejected

- Top entry countries:
1. Netherlands (123 559)
 2. Finland (114 378)
 3. Lithuania (96 954)
 4. Belgium (81 091)
 5. Spain (79 468)



Common Entry Document for products of non-animal origin (CED) / Common Health Entry Document for feed and food of non-animal origin (CHED-D)

The CED module was used on a voluntary basis by 11 EU Member States plus Norway, Iceland and Moldova. 49 989 documents were issued in TRACES Classic, of which 55 were rejected. The module was introduced in TRACES in June 2011 to give Member States the option to implement Commission Regulation (CE) No 669/2009 as regards the increased level of official controls on imports of certain feed and food of non-animal origin, and Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 884/2014 imposing special conditions governing the import of certain feed and food from certain non-EU countries due to contamination risk by aflatoxins. Some Member States are using this module to declare other commodities not related to the above regulations, for example food contact material. The CHED-D module was activated in TRACES-NT in February 2019 and became mandatory on December 14, 2019. In 2020, 579 606 documents were issued of which 2 162 were rejected.

Top 5 entry countries for CED/CHED-D

579 606

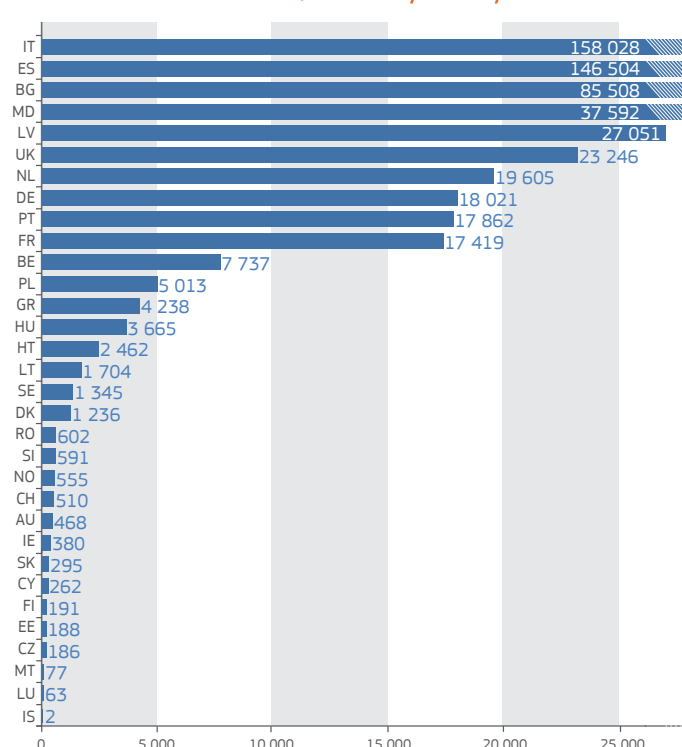
2 162 rejected

Top entry countries:

1. Italy (158 028)
2. Spain (146 504)
3. Bulgaria (82 508)
4. Moldova (37 592)
5. Latvia (27 051)



Number of CED/CHED-D by country

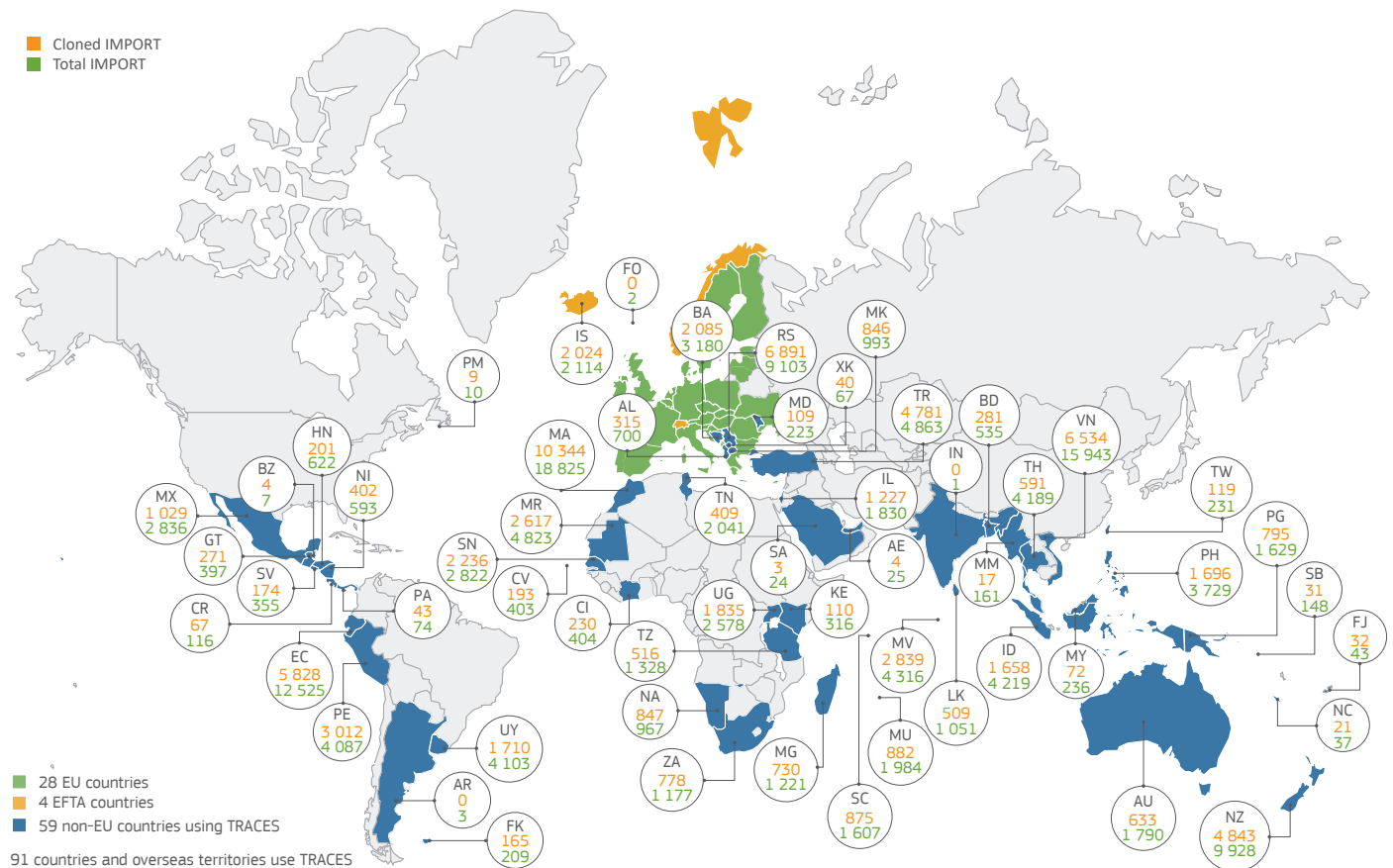


COOPERATION WITH NON-EU COUNTRIES

Certificates for importation into EU (IMPORT)

Created in 2006, this module came in to use in 2008 to facilitate trade with non-EU countries by providing them with all the updated and consolidated export certificates to the EU, translated into all the EU official languages, and giving them access to the feedback of decisions taken by the border inspection posts. In 2020, 57 non-EU countries and overseas territories issued 136 753 certificates. About 80% of the IMPORT certificates are used by border inspection posts to automatically generate the first part of a CVED, speeding up the administrative process at the border.

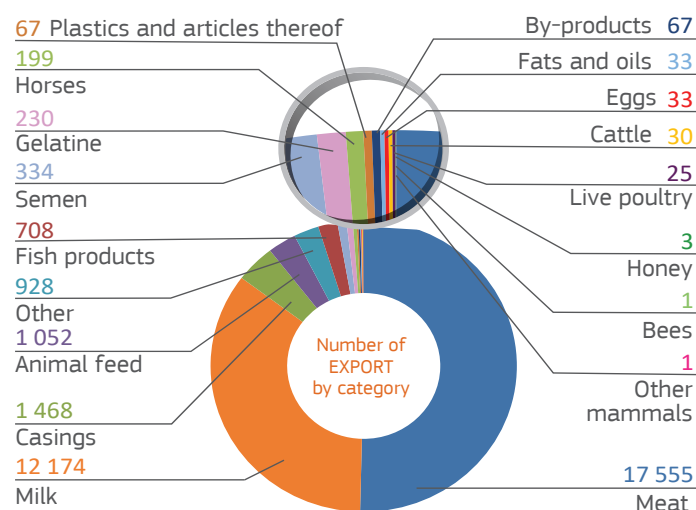
Worldwide presence



COOPERATION WITH NON-EU COUNTRIES

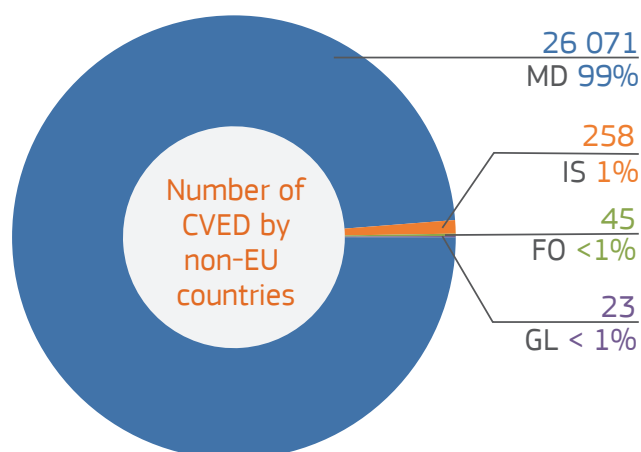
Certificates for exportation from EU (EXPORT)

Created in 2009, this module was put to use in 2011. In 2020, 24 EU-Member States issued 34 372 export certificates with one of the harmonised certificates negotiated. Of all these certificates, the main products concerned are meat 50%, milk 35%, casings 4%, animal feed 3% and fishery products 2%.

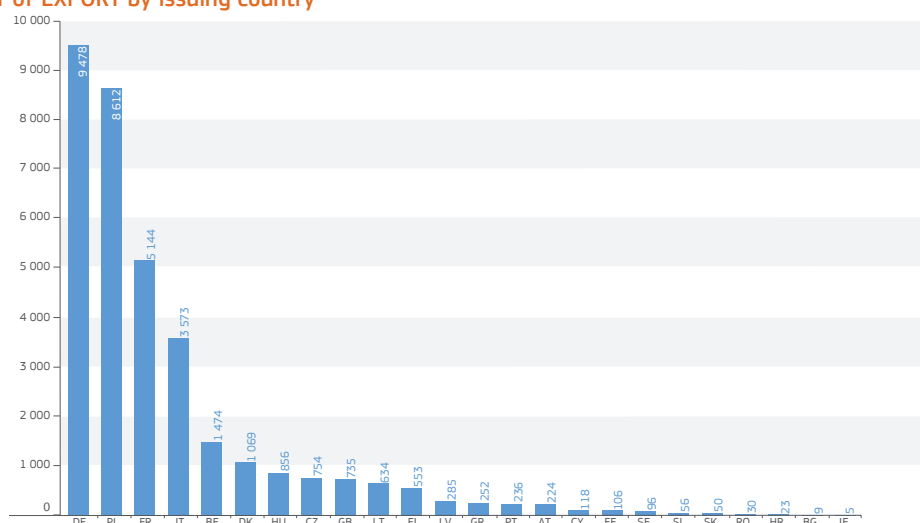


Common Veterinary Entry Document (CVED)

This module concerns the use by a non-EU country of the border control certification module for its own imports, with the candidate countries gaining experience in the real-life environment of TRACES in view to their EU accession. The mechanism of the CVED module is identical to that foreseen for Member States, without a business check upon countries or establishments authorised to export. In total, 26 397 CVEDs were issued by 3 countries (Faroe Islands, Iceland and Moldova) and one overseas territory (Greenland under Council Decision 2011/408/EU).



Number of EXPORT by issuing country



FACTS AND FIGURES

Multilingualism

TRACES is a multilingual online management tool with a user interface translated into 39 languages: 24 EU official languages plus Albanian, Bengali, Bosnian, Chinese, Georgian, Icelandic, Indonesian, Korean, Macedonian, Norwegian, Russian, Serbian, Turkish, Vietnamese, Farsi, Montenegrin and Ukrainian. The multilingual aspect of TRACES reduces the risk of error when issuing certificates in your native language, while complying with the obligation to produce certificates in the relevant languages, following Annex VI of Regulation (EC) No 854/2004 laying down specific rules for the organisation of official controls on products of animal origin intended for human consumption.

Users

In 2020, 35 187 active users were registered in TRACES Classic: of these, 76% are originating from competent authorities and 24% from the private sector. In TRACES-NT 63 378 users were registered, of these 63% are from the private sector, 35% are from competent authorities and 2% from organic control bodies.

TRAINING

Member States

Under the 'Better Training for Safer Food' (BTSF) programme, two sessions were organised for the Member States in 2020 (CHED-PP).

Non-EU countries

Under the BTSF World programme, two training sessions were organised in 2020. One in Kigali for participants from Ethiopia, Kenya, Madagascar, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Rwanda, Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda and another Casablanca for participants from Algeria, Benin, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Cote d'Ivoire, Egypt, Mauritania, Morocco, Senegal and Tunisia.

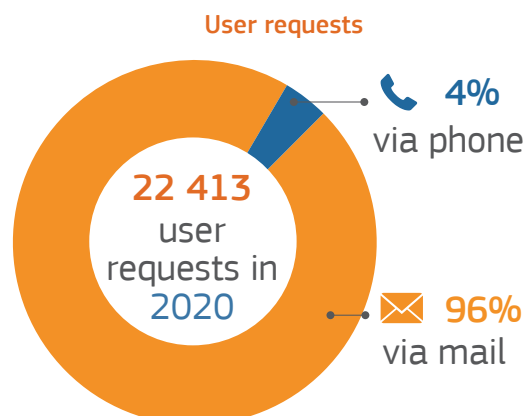
Three Sustained Training Missions have been implemented in 2020. One in Senegal on 15 and 16 January; another in Vietnam from 25 to 27 February; and a third in Turkey from 4 to 6 March.



USER SUPPORT

TRACES Helpdesk

The TRACES Helpdesk has grown up in 2020. In addition to the trainings that have been given to the EU Member States, the TRACES Helpdesk has received more than 22 000 requests in 2020. Most of the requests were received from Germany, the United Kingdom, France, Spain and Belgium.



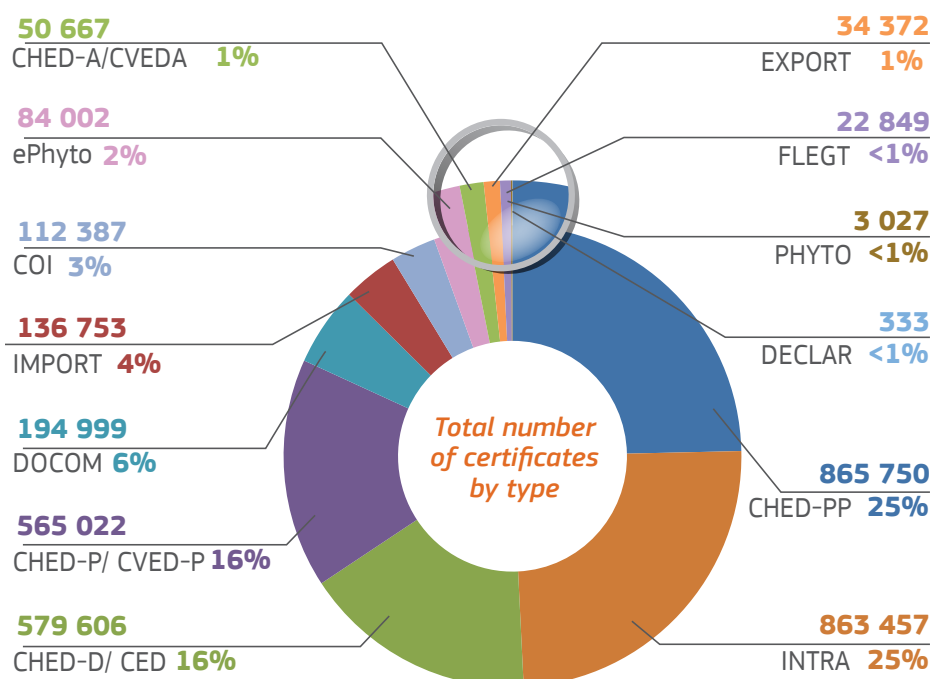
Most frequently asked questions by:

1. Germany
2. United Kingdom
3. France
4. Spain
5. Belgium



TRACES OVERVIEW IN FIGURES

Total number of certificates in TRACES: **3 513 224**



TRACES users by type



35 187 active TRACES users

TNT users by type



63 378 active TNT users

CONTACT AND FURTHER INFORMATION

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