

MAIN DIRECTIONS OF THE TRADE FACILITATION IN THE EUROPEAN UNION

ОСНОВНЫЕ НАПРАВЛЕНИЯ УПРОЩЕНИЯ ТОРГОВЛИ В ЕВРОПЕЙСКОМ СОЮЗЕ

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The Customs Union is a foundation of the European Union and an essential element in the functioning of the single market. The single market can only function properly when there is a common application of common rules at its external borders. To achieve that, the 28 national customs administrations of the EU act as though they were one.

These common rules they apply go beyond the Customs Union as such - with its common tariff - and extend to all aspects of trade policy, such as preferential trade, health and environmental controls, the common agricultural and fisheries policies, the protection of our economic interests by non-tariff instruments and external relations policy measures.

The Union Customs Code puts emphasis on fully electronic communication between the customs administrations and with trade. As a result, a number of EU-wide IT systems will have to be developed and deployed.

Single window today is one of the most effective instruments, which allows trade stakeholders to interface electronically, submitting and distributing documents, including customs declarations, import/export permit applications, trading invoices and certificates of origin to accelerate and secure the supply chain.

The electronic customs project initiated by the European Commission aims at replacing paper format customs procedures with EU-wide electronic ones, thus creating a more efficient and modern customs environment. The project's dual objective is to enhance security at the EU's external borders and to facilitate trade. It should therefore benefit both businesses and citizens.

The first step to the EU-wide electronic exchange of customs declarations was established with New Computerized Transit System started in 1997. As a contribution to the "e-government" programme, in July 2003, the Commission published its communication on a paperless environment for customs and trade which provided a vision of modern customs service communicating electronically with trade. This vision was endorsed by the Council Resolution of December 5, 2003 which called for a Multi-Annual Strategic Plan for the creation of a European electronic environment, consistent with the operational

and legislative projects and developments already scheduled or underway in the areas of customs and indirect taxation.

Subsequently, the Commission drafted a plan which sets down the vision, objectives, the strategic framework and the milestones to implement the electronic customs initiative. The MASP is also intended to provide interested parties with a short overview and background information on projects and key issues related to the evolution of the electronic customs initiative and the present state of play.

Dynamic development of transport and logistics operations affects the increase in the number of economic activities related to the ports, and changes the rules and ways of competition between them. Particularly convenient instrument in this area is the „single-window service”, that allows providing the requested information only once to a single point. The most popular solutions of this kind are „Port Community Systems” (PCS).

PCSs, in general, provide a huge range of services and key features which can be summarized as follows:

- Easy, fast and efficient EDI information exchange, re-use and centralization, available 24/7/365
- Customs declarations
- Electronic handling of all information regarding import and export of containerized, general and bulk cargo
- Status information and control, tracking and tracing through the whole logistics chain
- Processing of dangerous goods
- Processing of maritime and other statistics

The problems in this area are connected with the balance between trade facilitation and the effectiveness of controls, the rise of the interest of all business entities in the use of information technologies and their proper application.

The main areas of further trade facilitation are further advance the liberalization of professional services, adopting instruments for early-stage consultation, ensuring competitive neutrality, streamlining and better co-ordinating the exercise of ownership.

Литература

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