

EU Customs single window

2020/0306(COD) - 28/10/2020 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE: to establish an EU Single Window environment for customs with a view to improving the application of EU regulatory requirements throughout the Union and facilitating international trade.

PROPOSED ACT: Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council.

ROLE OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT: the European Parliament decides in accordance with the ordinary legislative procedure and on an equal footing with the Council.

BACKGROUND: in an ever-changing international trade environment, 'Single Window' initiatives have gained importance in recent years as a means of streamlining the customs clearance process at borders, within and across the EU.

The Single Window concept is understood as a digital solution for the exchange of electronic information between public authorities and between public authorities and economic operators.

The Commission launched a pilot project, the 'EU Customs Single Window - Common Veterinary Entry Document' (EU CSW-CVED) in 2015 in which the customs administrations of five Member States participated on a voluntary basis. Its successor, the EU Single Window Certificate Exchange System for Customs (EU CSW-CERTEX), extended the scope of the regulatory requirements and introduced new functionalities, such as quantity management. The number of participating Member States has increased to nine, and an increasing number of policy areas are also covered.

The EU CSW-CERTEX pilot project has responded to the need to ensure a suitable digital environment for all parties involved in international trade by generating economies of scale. In the light of the COVID-19 pandemic, it is important to put in place a stronger framework for the Customs Union and to continue to facilitate the fulfilment of customs and EU non-customs formalities in order to support economic recovery.

This proposal is the first step towards the implementation of a broader action plan launched in September 2020, fully in line with the Commission's long-term vision of taking the Customs Union to the next level.

CONTENT: the legislative proposal aims to establish a harmonised and interoperable EU Single Window environment for customs. This system involves the provision of a fully integrated set of electronic services at EU and national level to exchange information between customs and partner competent authorities and to streamline goods clearance procedures for economic operators.

The Commission, together with the Member States, will continue to design, operate and maintain the central electronic system (EU CSW-CERTEX) to facilitate the exchange of data between all actors involved in the good clearance process.

The general aims of the proposal include:

- 1) creating a central EU system to interconnect the national single window environments for customs and EU non-customs systems, enabling digital cooperation between the regulatory authorities involved in the clearance of goods;
- 2) harmonising the national single window environments for customs and their functionalities and;

3) the establishment of specific rules for the purposes of digital administrative cooperation

The proposal pursues the following objectives:

- enhanced cooperation between customs and competent authorities in charge of enforcing non-customs regulatory formalities required for international trade to expand and improve the IT pilot solution;
- improved enforcement of cross-border regulatory formalities. The information exchanges between customs and non-customs authority systems would allow automated customs controls of supporting documents, electronic feedback of the customs clearance to the partner competent authorities and a better integration of the applicable customs and non-customs procedures;
- streamline goods clearance procedures for economic operators by defining a framework for data harmonisation and enabling the re-use of data provided by economic operators;
- improve EU-wide quantity management in non-customs formalities.

BUDGETARY IMPLICATION: the impact on operational appropriations is estimated at EUR 64.730 million for the period 2022-2028.