

PRESS RELEASE by EU Horizon 2020 project 'Pan-European Network of Customs Practitioners (PEN-CP)' - For Immediate Release

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Australian and UK Border Forces win the PEN-CP Global Customs Innovation Award 2021

Data is the number one commodity of digital customs and a critical success factor of customs risk management and other operations worldwide. Today's customs are data-driven organizations that exploit information and data to target and control cross-border traffic.

In early 2021, the Pan-European Network of Customs Practitioners (PEN-CP), an EU Horizon 2020 funded customs security practitioner and innovator network, launched the Global Customs Innovation Award 2021 (GCIA-2021) to learn about and to promote innovations on Customs data quality management. Competition welcomed actions and ideas that demonstrate innovative approaches to improving data quality for the customs benefit, in the broad context of data accuracy, comparability, completeness, granularity and timeliness.

"Even if we anticipated highly innovative entries for the competition, the excellent quality of submissions surprised us at the end", says Mr. Ron Roelofs, the PEN-CP activity leader of the Customs Innovation Awards and Prizes and Senior Policy Advisor at the Customs Administration of the Netherlands. Submitted entries showcase new principles, techniques, tools, and cooperative arrangements that improve data quality for Customs, including cooperation with data suppliers and adoption of standards for data management. Two winners were selected by a panel of PEN-CP Customs experts.

One of the two winners is a solution of the UK Border Force for the identification of carriers that import goods into the UK without submitting mandated pre-arrival safety and security declarations. *"The automated dashboards combine commercial and government data to monitor and measure the submission of Safety and Security, Entry Summary declarations, to identify connectivity and timeliness,"* Mr. Chris Hodges, Senior Officer, Freight Engagement and Data Acquisition Team (UK Border Force), describes. *"The dashboards have enabled Border Force to drive up both connectivity and timeliness in the Air and Deep Sea Maritime sectors ensuring the ENS declarations are appropriately available to support targeting activities with subsequent benefits to both border security and the flow of legitimate traffic. This is the first phase of a development that seeks to address the full range of data quality issues from connectivity and timeliness through to completeness, comprehensiveness and accuracy."*

Another winner was Australian Border Force (ABF) with a project on the Authorised Economic Operator (AEO) bulk upload function. *"The innovation of the AEO has led to increased data accuracy, less manual handling and tangible efficiencies, saving 4 weeks of work for 2 full time officers. This saving allows them to now focus on ever increasing operational priorities",* Mr. Sean Sherlock, acting Superintendent of ABF Innovation, explains. *"The ABF places a high value on innovation and will continually look for ways to improve our work."* A video outlining the project is available at bit.ly/3N2BGKi.

The Global Customs Innovation Award shows how the 21st century Customs innovation culture is rapidly evolving. The traditional perception of Customs being mostly a conservative sector is replaced by a new culture of proactive, cooperative, and bottom-up approach to innovation. This evolution is well in line with the origins of the PEN-CP project, namely the EU Horizon 2020 Work Program on “Secure societies – Protecting freedom and security of Europe and its citizens”, and the 2016-17 calls for “Pan European Networks of practitioners and other actors in the field of security”.

For additional information about the PEN-CP project and the Customs innovation boosting activities and instruments, please feel free to contact Dr. Juha Hintsa at pen-cp@cross-border.org or +41765890967 (tel & WhatsApp).

ABOUT PEN-CP

The Pan-European Network of Customs Practitioners, PEN-CP (www.pen-cp.net), is a multi-year long EU Horizon 2020 funded security practitioner network -project (Grant Agreement No 786773), with 13 European Customs administrations, both EU and non-EU, as beneficiaries and active partners. In short, PEN-CP can be described as 'a Novel Customs Innovation Boosting Network and On-line Platform, offering Valuable Innovation Intermediary Services'. PEN-CP's endeavor is to establish a Customs practitioner network which facilitates translating Customs security research and innovation ideas and requirements into scalable, viable solutions, technologies, and process improvements that would help the Customs community to overcome the challenges of the contemporary Customs and border management security. The full PEN-CP consortium is working hard throughout years 2018-25 to reach our ultimate vision: 'Customs Administrations: from Innovation Observers to Innovation Drivers'

Consortium partnership:

- DIRECTORATE GENERAL OF CUSTOMS OF ALBANIA, Albania
- BUNDESMINISTERIUM FÜR FINANZEN, Austria
- SERVICE PUBLIC FEDERAL FINANCES, Belgium
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