

PEN-CP Announcement - 12 June 2023, Geneva, Switzerland

CUSTOMS AND PHARMA SECTORS - A NEW INFORMATION SHARING PARTNERSHIP ABOUT USEFUL AND PROMISING INNOVATIONS

An 18-month pilot program begins between European Customs administrations and Pharmaceutical companies, aimed at sharing information and learning from each other on innovations particularly in material anomaly detection, anti-counterfeit measures, and risk assessment tools and databases

GENEVA, Switzerland - On June 12-13, 2023, and during the Pharmap 2023 Congress [<https://pharmap-congress.com/>], PEN-CP launches a reciprocal outreach action between European Customs Administrations and the pharmaceutical industry. This joint pilot program will continue with reciprocal site and field visits (to be completed by February 2024), during which participating Customs officers will visit two pharmaceutical companies and observe their technology and process innovations in a range of areas, including quality monitoring (in manufacturing and in laboratories), anti-counterfeiting measures (distribution and sourcing perspectives), and risk management (product integrity, business partner credibility etc.). Pharmaceutical experts will likewise visit a border crossing point and a Customs laboratory, to liaise with specialists in targeting, detection, inspections, seizures, and material analysis of potentially illicit pharmaceuticals (counterfeits, substandard medicines, parallel trade, smuggling, etc.)

After the site visits are completed, the pilot program will continue with a Customs/Pharma technical workshop (target date September-October, 2024). This workshop will focus on recent advances in anti-counterfeiting strategies and product authentication techniques (including producing, exploiting and maintaining Raman spectral and other possible reference libraries); as well as the latest trends in the illicit pharma trade. The pilot program's closing presentations and panel discussions will take place in January, 2025, to summarize the key findings across the 18 months - both actual innovation related ones as well as Customs/Pharma collaboration related ones - and to discuss options to continue further as a permanent partnership program.

This pilot project is being organized by the Pan-European Network of Customs Practitioners (PEN-CP [www.pen-cp.net]), a Customs innovation-boosting network funded by the EU under the Horizon 2020 program. PEN-CP fosters creative ideas and strengthens ties among innovation-oriented customs officers, Europe-wide and globally. One of PEN-CP's initiatives aims to create systematic interaction between Customs experts and specific industry sectors, including pharmaceuticals; company and logistics data platforms; material identification instruments; and the security and defense sectors. All in all, the project focuses on Customs innovations in (i) data and risk management, (ii) detection technologies and (iii) laboratory equipment. It employs a range of innovation and knowledge instruments, including technology grants, challenge competitions, innovation awards and prizes, annual studies, expert reports and industry outreach actions.

Interested? Please email us by 31 July 2023: pen-cp@cross-border.org or send a whatsapp message to: +41765890967

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