

**Welcome PEN-CP community and network: consortium partners; all customs administrations; innovators and researchers; and all other public and private sector stakeholders in Europe and globally. Boosting customs innovations is what we do, ever since the year 2018! Below is a brief summary of the key PEN-CP activities and initiatives, selected from the past few months.**

**From today, we'll be sending regular PEN-CP Monthly Digests, with updates and news items to our full community and network. We welcome all questions, comments and suggestions! Please contact Valentina Scioneri, CBRA Switzerland, [valentina@cross-border.org](mailto:valentina@cross-border.org), Tel & Whatsapp: +393341598179, [www.pen-cp.net](http://www.pen-cp.net)**

## **1. PEN-CP Innovation Grant (PING) calls announced**

Four exciting PING calls were announced in March 2024, targeting all innovative companies and research organisations out there, with a submission deadline of 1 June 2024:

- **PING-2024-1-Dark-Web:** Dark web monitoring to counter illicit trade in New Psychoactive Substances (NPSs), firearms and other contraband
- **PING-2024-2-Cannabinoids:** Enhanced handheld instruments for accurate measurement of cannabinoid levels in hemp and cannabis products
- **PING-2024-3-Biodegradable-Plastics:** A Software tool and database to help customs officers verify the declared biodegradability of plastics
- **PING-2024-4-Passenger-Drugs:** Fast non-intrusive screening of passenger flows to detect and deter body-worn drugs

For more information on each of the PING calls, click [here](#)

## **2. Pencasts aired**

Podcast conversations with Customs innovation trend-setters and forward thinkers that aired in the early part of 2024 include:

- **Dragoş Tudorache, Member of the European Parliament** and a key force in writing the EU's new AI Act. Mr. Tudorache shares fascinating insights on the future of AI in customs, warfare, migration, the essential importance of EU funding for innovation like Horizon programmes, and more. Click [here](#)
- **Kunio Mikuriya, former Secretary General of the World Customs Organization**, and high-level member of the Japanese Ministry of Finance. Earlier in his career, Dr. Mikuriya served as Counsellor in Japan's Mission to the WTO and as a negotiator for Japan during the GATT Uruguay Round negotiations. Part 1 of 3, click [here](#)
- **Ashley Bell, Assistant Secretary for Customs and Border Modernization at the Australian Border Force.** Prior to joining the ABF, Mr. Bell served in important roles in the Australian Treasury, including director and senior advisor in the markets group; and as

a senior Treasury representative and senior economic diplomat in New Delhi. Part 1 of 2, click [here](#)

- **Axel Kerep, an archaeologist** who's developing new technologies to detect and halt illicit trade in cultural property. Axel is the head of the Arti-Fact Project at PARCS Solutions, an organisation devoted to cultural property protection via multiple technologies. Click [here](#)

- **Playlist 2 on new studies:** Join the on-going Annual Study: "Enhancing Customs Operations through Artificial Intelligence", click [here](#)
- **Playlist 3 on faculty research agendas:** Veenstra (research\_agenda..2023): Future of Customs; Trade Management practices in companies, click [here](#)
- **Playlist 4 on past (bigger) research and innovation projects:** EU H2020 project PROFILE (2018-22), click [here](#)

### 3. Penblogs published

Blog posts provide additional materials, links and other viewpoints on some of the themes of our Pencasts, as well as on events PEN-CP experts have joined. Recent posts included:

- A report on the recent **CERIS event on Disaster-Resilient Societies meeting** in Brussels, click [here](#)
- A transcript of the **Pencast with MEP Dragoş Tudorache**, together with further materials on the vitally important EU AI Act, click [here](#)

### 4. PEN-CP Magazine published

The **Issue 18 of the PEN-CP Magazine** provides in-depth looks at the four recent PEN-CP Innovation Grant (PING) calls, as well as detailed instructions and information about the application process.

Download Issue 18 and all previous Magazines, click [here](#)

### 5. New 'Customs researchers' recordings in YouTube

Customs researchers four playlists in our YouTube channel have new submissions – please check them out:

- **Playlist 1 on past research:** Ardiansyah., & Suganda, A. (2020). Burden of Proof of Customs Valuation Disputes in Indonesian Tax Court, click [here](#)

***Are you personally working on Customs research?** Please send an email to [johan@cross-border.org](mailto:johan@cross-border.org) and discuss submitting your own recording to our YouTube channel - global Customs audience is eager to learn about your research ambitions and results!*

### 6. Follow us online

Please subscribe to our YouTube channel & join our LinkedIn group & follow us in X (Twitter), to broaden the reach and impact of PEN-CP and its network:

- Subscribe to our **YouTube channel**. Press the black "Subscribe" button, click [here](#)
- Send a request to join our **LinkedIn group** "Innovative Customs and Border Management", click [here](#)
- Follow us on **X (former Twitter)**, click [here](#)

### 7. Special announcements

Apply by 15 May 2024 for a **2-year FAPESP Postdoctoral Fellowship**: "Marketplaces and the internationalization of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs)", at Universidade Estadual de Campinas (Unicamp), City of Limeira, São Paulo state, Brazil. More information: Prof Cristiano Morini, [cmorini@unicamp.br](mailto:cmorini@unicamp.br)



EU H2020 project PEN-CP, [www.pen-cp.net](http://www.pen-cp.net)

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