

EVALUATION AND FITNESS CHECK (FC) ROADMAP			
TITLE OF THE EVALUATION/FC	Evaluation of the European Customs Inventory of Chemical Substances (ECICS)		
LEAD DG RESPONSIBLE UNIT	– DG TAXUD.A.4	DATE OF THIS ROADMAP	19 January 2017
TYPE OF EVALUATION	External retrospective evaluation	PLANNED START DATE	1 st quarter 2017
		PLANNED COMPLETION DATE	4 th quarter 2017
		PLANNING CALENDAR	(tbd)
This indicative roadmap is provided for information purposes only and is subject to change.			

A. Purpose
(A.1) Purpose
The purpose of the evaluation is to assess the effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, (achieved) EU added-value and sustainability of the European Customs Inventory of Chemical Substances (ECICS), and its coherence vis-à-vis other existing databases.
(A.2) Justification
Since its first publication in 1974, the ECICS has been constantly extended. Despite its long life-span and its important effect on the EC resources, no evaluation of ECICS has been carried out during this period. Therefore, it is useful to assess how well this database has performed since its creation and whether its existence continues to be justified in terms of effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, coherence and (achieved) EU added-value.

B. Content and subject of the evaluation
(B.1) Subject area
<p>ECICS is an information tool managed by the European Commission's Directorate General for Taxation and Customs Union (DG TAXUD). ECICS was first published in 1974 and became an activity of the Group of European Customs Laboratories in 2009. It is available freely as part of DG TAXUD's Data Dissemination System (DDS). http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/dds2/ecics/chemicalsubstance_consultation.jsp?Lang=en</p> <p>ECICS lists chemical names in a number of EU languages (currently mainly eleven) along with their tariff classification in the European Community's Combined Nomenclature (CN; eight-digit codes). As the CN codes are based on the "Harmonized Commodity Description and Coding System" (HS) emanating from World Customs Organization (WCO), the ECICS tariff classifications are used throughout the world.</p> <p>Each product listed in ECICS is identified by the Customs Union and Statistics (CUS) number, assigned by DG TAXUD, which is an identifier to search the database and to communicate with Customs. Products are also identified by the Chemical Abstracts Service Registry Number (CAS RN), a system used to identify chemical products over the world.</p> <p>Names are usually denominations recognised internationally, like International Nonproprietary Names (INN) for pharmaceuticals, International Organization for Standardization (ISO) names for pesticides and chemical names constructed according to the International Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry (IUPAC) nomenclatures.</p> <p>Since its first publication, the ECICS database has been constantly extended and contains currently more than 43 000 records.</p>
(B.2) Original objectives of the intervention
<p>The objective of ECICS is to assist Commission services, economic operators, customs officers and other administrations dealing with external trade of chemicals. ECICS permits to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> clearly and easily identify chemicals;

- classify them correctly and easily in the Combined Nomenclature;
- name them in a number of EU languages for regulation purposes.

In particular, economic operators can find in ECICS the correct name and the correct classification to fill in their customs declarations and their submissions for e.g. autonomous suspensions and Binding Tariff Information (BTI). Customs officers can check more easily the correctness of customs declarations and other requests from economic operators. By the various names and identifiers in ECICS, customs officers can also make the risk analysis and ensure that the operation is valid and legal. ECICS gives the correct name and the correct classification to Commission services in charge of the preparation of customs, customs related or trade regulations. ECICS supports also the classification activities of the WCO Scientific Sub-Committee. It will soon provide the safety data to the customs officers in charge of the customs control and sampling. Finally, due to the difficulty to translate correctly chemical names, ECICS has developed since the beginning a translation module to permit the preparation of customs and related legislation in all EU languages and the understanding of chemical names in customs documents.

(B.3) How the objectives were to be achieved

See Annex I.

C. Scope of the evaluation/FC

(C.1) Topics covered

Article 12.3 of Council Regulation (EEC) No 2658/87 of 23 July 1987 on the tariff and statistical nomenclature and on the Common Customs Tariff provides that “In order to ensure the uniform application of the Common Customs Tariff and the integrated tariff of the European Communities (Taric), the Commission shall promote coordination and harmonisation of practices in Member States’ customs laboratories, using wherever possible, computerised means.” The tariff classification is usually done by experts of the customs laboratories. By the regular discussions between these experts, the harmonized classification of the chemicals is ensured and the divergences concerning these products are therefore limited. Since the beginning, an electronic inventory has been considered as the most efficient way to share this work with the various stakeholders.

Since 2013, ECICS is also listed in the Regulation (EU) No 1294/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2013 establishing an action programme for customs in the European Union for the period 2014-2020 (Customs 2020) as one of the European Information Systems that the programme must support (see Annex II, A.7 of the Regulation).

The scope of this evaluation is to assess the usefulness and the relevance of ECICS for the various actors dealing with the external trade of chemicals, particularly in supporting the harmonisation of the classification of chemicals in the Member States and the facilitation of customs procedures.

(C.2) Issues to be examined

The evaluation should assess how well this database has performed since its creation and whether its existence continues to be justified in terms of effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, coherence and EU added-value. More specifically:

1. Effectiveness of ECICS: The extent to which the expectations, set by the immediate stakeholders (customs authorities, economic operators, Commission services, etc.), have been met by ECICS content and design. Whether improvements or changes are needed regarding the design and the structure of the database and why changes would or would not be needed.
2. Efficiency of ECICS: The extent to which the resources (human and financial) devoted to the evolution of the database are proportionate to the benefits of the EU trading community, customs administrations and EU agencies and departments.
3. Coherence: The complementarity and the value added of ECICS vis-à-vis other chemical substances databases, for example:
 - a. REACH/CLP
 - b. EDND – European Database on New Drugs
 - c. EDQM – European Pharmacopeia
 - d. CAS REGISTRY
 - e. Chemical catalogs (e.g. Sigma)

Also the extent to which ECICS is used to assist in the design and implementation of other EU policies.

4. Sustainability: In an environment of decreasing resources, the extent to which stakeholders would be prepared to finance (via subscriptions or other means) the maintenance, development and evolution of the database.
5. Relevance and achieved EU added-value: To what extent is ECICS still justified and why? To what extent is it permitted to avoid extra classification regulations at EU level and extra BTI at national level?
6. Unintended and unexpected effects should also be evaluated, if any, in relation to effectiveness, efficiency, coherence, sustainability, relevance and EU added-value.

D. Evidence base

(D.1) Evidence from monitoring

Available information about the ECICS system from 1/1/2004 onwards:

- i. Reports of the Project Groups meetings concerning the chemical chapters of HS/CN
- ii. Extracts of the Minutes of the Customs Code Committees, relevant for ECICS
- iii. Periodical and final reports of the specific contracts concerning the "Update and Enrichment of ECICS database"
- iv. Periodical and final reports of the specific contracts concerning the "Revision and translation of chemical names in ECICS database"
- v. Working documents concerning ECICS presented to the Project Groups concerning the chemical chapters of HS/CN
- vi. Working documents concerning ECICS presented to the Customs Code Committee
- vii. Documents and reports from Workshops where ECICS was presented/discussed
- viii. Customs Laboratories European Network (CLEN) Working documents and reports of meetings relevant to ECICS
- ix. Communication papers and any other relevant document produced by DG TAXUD.

(D.2) Previous evaluations and other reports

None

(D.3) Evidence from assessing the implementation and application of legislation (complaints, infringement procedures)

None

(D.4) Consultation

The evaluation will be carried out by the contractor Economisti Associati.

The evaluation will use targeted consultations (interviews and surveys), taking into account the specificities of the various stakeholders, to collect (qualitative) information and (quantitative) data. Initially, the following stakeholder groups are considered most relevant for the evaluation:

- Economic operators: To ensure participation, the consultation should involve the Trade Contact Group (TCG) and relevant Associations (European Chemical Industry Council (CEFIC), International Committee to Eliminate Pharmaceutical Tariffs (INTERCEPT), European Association for Forwarding, Transport, Logistics and Customs Services (CLECAT), European Small Business Alliance (ESBA), European Association of Chemical Distributors (Fecc), European Alliance of customs-related service providers (EurTradeNet), FuelEurope, International Association of Ports and Harbors (IAPH), International Air Transport Association (IATA), International Road Transport Union (IRU), Minor Metals Trade Association (MMTA), International Air Cargo Association (TIACA), Union of the European Lubricants Industry (UEIL), World Shipping Council (WSC)...) which could for instance be informed about the study and would be invited to encourage their members to actively participate.
- Competent national authorities: customs administrations, customs laboratories, national economy and statistic administrations. The delegates of the Customs Laboratories European Network and of the Tariff and Statistical Nomenclature Section of the Customs Code Committee (agricultural/chemical sub-section), will act as first contact for the contractor within their administrations and will facilitate the collection of the relevant information from the operational level. The consultation could be extended to some non-European Union national

authorities (e.g. Norway, Switzerland, Pakistan, United States).

- International Organisations: This includes among others World Customs Organization (WCO), International Organization for Standardization (ISO), World Health Organization (WHO), International Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry (IUPAC), Chemical Abstracts Service (CAS).

Commission services and EU agencies (Directorate-Generals Taxation and Customs Union (TAXUD), Translation (DGT), Joint Research Centre (JRC), Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs (GROW), Eurostat (ESTAT), Environment (ENV), Climate Action (CLIMA), Health and Food Safety (SANTE), Migration and Home Affairs (HOME), European Chemicals Agency (ECHA), European Medicines Agency (EMA), European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA)).

An open public consultation with inputs from the end users of ECICS (not experts in customs) is also foreseen. It will ensure the collection of the opinions of an average user on the usefulness of the database and on the relevance of the information found. These users are those who are accessing ECICS simply for consultation. This open consultation will have the scope to understand if the database is user friendly and of easy consultation and if the information are easily gathered and relevant for the scope.

Finally, desk research will be done on other databases managing chemicals and on legislations dealing with chemicals and implemented or to be soon or later implemented by customs.

Annex I

Evaluation of the European Customs Inventory of Chemical Substances (ECICS)

