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THE GUIDANCE, INTEGRITY, AND TRAINING IN CUSTOMS

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Abstract

The author in this article analyzes the issues of development and implementation of educational standards in Customs, discusses the role of The Framework of the Guidance in this process. The recommendations to the methodology for setting standards and approaches to their assessment are given. One of the strategic Human Resource Management principles Integrity is described as a question of professional responsibility. The training system concepts in Customs are analyzed. Training package Development in Customs is presented by the example of the Ukrainian Academy of Customs.

Key words: Customs, Educational Standards, Framework of the Guidance, Integrity, Training.

Introduction

All the processes worldwide can be described in a few words: Globalization, Coordination, Harmonization, Unification, Certification, Standardization, Modernization, Regionalization.

The role of Customs in the 21st century, as it faces the challenges posed by globalization, trade facilitation initiatives, and security concerns necessitates a renewed professional approach to the management and operations of Customs administrations across the globe¹.

Some Customs administrations and academic institutions have recognized that there is a distinct set of knowledge, skills and behaviours that are needed to serve Customs its unique role.

¹ Customs in the 21st century, www.wcoomd.org

Specialized curricula have been developed in several countries, but until recently, there has been no coordination or standardization of these individual efforts.

The research objective: to present the position of The Ukrainian Academy of Customs as to the contributions of the Academy for updating and improving the WCO Instruments.

Background. In 2005, the World Customs Organization (WCO) began to marshal the many individual interests and developments in the field of Capacity Building, to create a set of common, internationally recognized standards for the professional development of Customs managers. An initial proposal was drafted with the support of the University network in 2006 at the launch of the WCO PICARD Programme and further developed at the second PICARD conference held in March 2007.

The WCO has provided the Customs administrations of the member-countries with the Professional Standards for the strategic and operational managers, mechanisms for their implementation. At the EU level there is a parallel process. Certain tools to facilitate international trade such as Trade Facilitation Implementation Guide² (<http://www.unece.org>) were offered by the UN Economic Commission (UNECE), WTO Trade Facilitation Implementation Guide³ (http://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/tradfa_e/tradfa_e.htm). That is, international organizations offer us their professional standards as quality criteria.

Academic institutions can now introduce internationally agreed standards into their Customs curricula, while at the same time meet national accreditation criteria. In fact, there are several institutions world-wide, among which there is the Ukrainian Academy of Customs, that have already initiated pilot programmes based on these new standards. The next step was PICARD certification of universities and academic programs.

Further we can describe which next steps should be at different levels:

At the global level – the development of the *WCO Professional Standards for inspectors*, the development of the *WCO basic curricula* (with a focus on the WCO Professional Standards).

The WCO will further collect practical experiences of Customs Administrations and academic institutions in this area and analyze and discuss them. Based on these findings the WCO will develop a *practical guidance tool*.

At the regional and national levels – the development of *strategies* (regional, national, departmental) and designing the *policy* and *plan of actions* as to adaptation to national needs, as well as the implementation of the WCO Professional Standards, the development of *national Guidelines* on the implementation of standards; the development and strengthening of capacity building, including Customs academic institutions; updating the national professional and

² Trade Facilitation Implementation Guide // UNECE, <http://www.unece.org>

³ Trade Facilitation Implementation Guide³ // WTO, http://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/tradfa_e/tradfa_e.htm

educational standards in the field of Customs, *training programs* and *methodical and training materials* on the basis of the WCO Professional Standards; *national certification* of the updated training and professional development programs for Customs officers.

We know that phase two of the WCO and customs administrations Capacity Building began in January 2009, more specifically: the phase HOW TO IMPLEMENT international standards. According to the WCO the process of developing the practical tools of their implementation was to last for 2-3 years.

Organizationally it can be demonstrated in 3 clusters of activities:

- Reform and Modernization Support,
- Training and Technical Assistance,
- Regionalization,

and in several Programmes: Columbus Programme, Integrity, Standards Development, Experts Accreditation, Fund Managers, Management Development, PICARD Programme, Learning and Education⁴.

The WCO has also designed *The WCO Regional Training Delivery Standards and Procedure* and presented the Framework of Guidance for: professional service culture, results-based organizational model, human capital development, learning continuity, Integrity.

And the role of Customs universities & schools is: to be key players in such processes as:

- Regional synergies;
- Testing, adaptation and implementation of international professional standards at the national levels;
- Development, legalization and implementation of national educational standards, curricula focusing on professional standards;
- They can develop content and performance standards as well as create the opportunity to learn standards.

It is regarded as the standard itself.

Ukraine supports the unification of customs professional standards. Herewith we are convinced that this process may be brought into effect only through the unification of educational standards.

Today when considerable attention is paid to the capacity building of the customs administrations, modernization and unification are connected to two definitions: activity standards (that is customs professional standards) and educational standards.

To make modernization of the customs administrations more effective the Academic institutions have to implement both types of standards. It means: among the institutions's tasks

⁴ www.wcoomd.org

the accent is made both on promotion and support of the implementation of the WCO aims in training and training materials and on establishing a base for working out managerial and logistic technologies, supply chain security; for conduction studying on the base of scientific elaboration of advanced trends of improvement these technologies.

Intended aim and tasks identify also the main trends of activity in the sphere of training; in the maintenance of the methodological support of this higher education, as well to train the trainers.

At this stage of development of the customs administrations not vocational training standards but academic level, modernization of higher education in the sphere of customs domain should be on the basis of standardization.

There are actually two possibilities to obtain customs education: in customs centers (schools) and in customs universities, that can structurally be represented as faculty or department of customs business in the Classic University or departmental customs higher educational institution.

Tasks of customs schools are re-training for service in customs authorities, training of the inspectorial personnel, and vocational training of operational managers.

The Universities provide the education of the Bachelor's and Master's levels and also customs specialization within the framework of specialties.

The coordination of customs universities is carried out with a help of three mechanisms: the International Network of Customs Universities, WCO recognition of the universities, and WCO RTCs.

The Academic Institutions and the Regional Training Centers can and ought to become the mechanism of coordination these customs and educational standards. RTCs should become a link between these two directions of obtaining the customs education: *first*) basic higher education that provide customs universities and *second*) professional training (customs specialization) that is obtained in customs schools and training centers.

The Academic Institutions have to play an essential role in the reform of customs officers' training unification system. Both time and quantity, level of implementation of the Standards depend on their initiative and activeness, therefore the process of customs administrations modernization process. For example, Ukrainian Academy of Customs: We have the understanding of the strategy and tactics, certain experience, opportunities and responsibility. We have a good infrastructure. Our experience confirms that the WCO is interested to attract us – Customs universities & schools – to the process of development and implementation of standards and tools. The Ukrainian Academy of Customs as well as RTS created on its basis is an active participant in many programs of the WCO.

The training activity in the sphere of WCO Integrity Programme is based on three principles:

1. Customs holds a monopoly position and should maintain a high standard of integrity.
2. Integrity plays a part in promoting compliance.
3. Integrity is question of professional responsibility.

CONCLUSIONS

1. In the era of globalization The Framework of Guidance is the basis for the implementation of professional and educational standards at the regional and national levels, which makes it possible, on the one hand, to comply with unified requirements to the competence of Customs officers in all the member-countries, on the other hand, to harmonize and simplify processes and procedures.

2. The national educational standards in the field of Customs function as an instrument of modernization of education, in particular, they enable the creation of a unified educational space; they strengthen a regulatory role of Customs academic institutions in continuing education; they ensure equivalence in getting Customs education in different forms; they adapt the contents of education to the contemporary needs, to the objectives of a country development; they create conditions for differentiated training, etc.

3. Within the WCO it is possible and necessary to carry out actions based on scientific data and on the regional/national contexts as well as to monitor them. Nonetheless, for sustained progress and capacity building it is important to apply a truly multisectoral approach that mobilizes resources, knowledge and combined efforts of the participants throughout the world.

4. Changes not only in policies, standards, but also in the approach to capacity building in such patterns as, for example, Integrity, will be gradual. The national strategies need a clear plan of long-term sustainable measures and practically achievable short-term and intermediate goals.

5. Implementation of the strategy of modernization based on The Framework of Guidance by all the member-countries may result in one of the most important and positive developments – the facilitation of international trade.

6. Awareness and understanding of the Framework among the guidance stakeholders tend to be related to the level of their engagement with it in their day-to-day activities.

Several components are needed to carry into effect any intentions: initiative, competency, responsibility from the side of all Actors – international organisations, Customs administrations, Customs universities, the Academy – and political will at the regional and national levels.

Endnotes

1. Customs in the 21st century, www.wcoomd.org
2. Trade Facilitation Implementation Guide // UNECE, <http://www.unece.org>
3. Trade Facilitation Implementation Guide // WTO, http://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/tradfa_e/tradfa_e.htm
4. www.wcoomd.org