



# Union of Finance Personnel in Europe

## UFE view on the Revision of the Union Customs Code

### Who we are:

Ever since our foundation in 1963 The Union of Finance Personnel in Europe (UFE) has been the only organisation representing the trade union interests of employees from all ranks and grades of the tax and customs administration authorities of Europe.

UFE brings together more than 400,000 members from 40 member unions in more than 20 countries.

UFE's membership comprises both EU and non-EU European Tax and Customs officials.

### Our objectives:

- UFE works to raise awareness among European citizens, the governments of non-EU states and EU governments and institutions of the key role played by Tax and Customs officials in protecting their economic interests, their legitimate trade, their consumer safety and ensuring that Europe is free from counterfeit goods illicit drugs which are the scourge of European society.
- UFE stands for tax justice, fair and equitable taxation and a secure European Market.
- UFE members are instrumental in the fight against terrorist financing and organized crime.
- UFE fosters and supports greater cooperation between European tax administrations both within and beyond the EU.
- UFE supports the concept of a well-trained and well equipped Tax and Customs Administration and supports its member Unions in their goal of fair and sustainable remuneration.

## Our view on the Revision of the Union Customs Code:

UFE welcomes the Commission's proposal for a revision of the Customs regulations. The past period has shown that the customs environment has changed significantly. The post Covid era has resulted in new consumer habits. E-commerce is now the norm. Faster ordering of products by consumers via the internet has dramatically increased the volume of shipped goods.

Existing customs procedures are not fit to regulate these new trade practices.

Traders and Customs Officers demand simpler procedures.

UFE supports the Commission's view on focusing on the data flow and working towards a data-driven customs organisation.

Customs procedures must be simplified and made more reliable. Having access to more, targeted, reliable and real-time data will be essential. The development, in conjunction with Customs Officers of new approaches to automated Customs controls. This will result in greater efficiency for traders and for customs staff.

The less uncertainties there are in the legal interpretation of the Customs Code will result in more effective and efficient Customs. Customs administration must turn away from transaction based declarations to more modern and efficient methods.

All electronic data should be made available for Customs Officers to enable them to process data in real-time.

It is the belief of UFE that customs administrations have to be supported through proper financing, giving them the adequate budget to maintain appropriate staff levels and the most effective equipment to exercise their tasks.

UFE believes that there is an immediate need for greater cooperation on Customs administration between not just the members of the EU but all states within the European geographic area.

Smugglers and criminals by their nature do not respect or recognise national borders.

The EU and its European partners should be working together towards a more self-sufficient and sustainable Europe, ready to deal with the problems of the 21st century.

The Customs Code and broader Customs policy should be written and developed to assist in achieving this goal.

UFE sees benefits in establishing a properly funded European Customs Agency for applying uniform risk-analyses and driving IT-developments. Such an agency will, if established properly, result in more harmonised and efficient procedures. The Member States must be consulted on and have the final say in the management-structure of the agency.

UFE wants to stress the importance of customs employees being made less

vulnerable for criminal approach and influence, salaries have to be competing with the private sector, or even better, to reduce the danger of corruption (or even worse).

UFE is available at any time to discuss any Customs issues with the Commission.