Spain

Blog Post
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ICS2: What is it and what does it do?

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In our news post earlier this year, we announced that the ICS2 customs software project had gone into production and outlined our involvement in the project. This has so far included three years working on the specifications, architecture design, software development and user interface, plus testing, support and monitoring.

In this blog post, Project Manager Lotte explains more about the project and what the software will be used for.

What is ICS2 and what is its purpose?

ICS2 (Import Control System 2) is the new information system for customs cargo for the EU. The software collects and processes data from goods before they arrive. The goal for this project has two objectives: to collect high-quality data and to enhance availability and utilisation of data for risk management. These two objectives contribute to the goal of ensuring safety and security for all consumers and to protect the EU internal market. This internal market is not only the European Union, but also Switzerland and Norway who are collaborating on this project.

We are really happy that we can work on this project as part of the Sword group. It is an interesting activity with a lot of challenges and a fun tech stack.

There are seven actions that the EU is taking for effective and efficient customs risk management with the ICS2 software:

1. Improve data quality
2. Ensure the availability of data and the possibility to share this data
3. Control and risk mitigation
4. Strengthen capacities
5. Promote inter-agency cooperation
6. Enhance cooperation with trade
7. Tap the potential of international customs cooperation

Who is affected?

The ICS2 project affects Economic Operators that are involved in the transporting or shipping of cargo, express or postal consignments. They will need to declare in advance the Entry Summary Declarations (NES) data in the new ICS2 system. This is done with the new interface that is provided in the system. However, it is also possible for Member States to opt for their own national service interface.

There are also some indirect changes as a result of the new ICS2 system, so all exporters and other individuals from outside of the EU, who send goods through the EU, will be affected by this change.

Future rollouts

There are three major phases to rollout the ICS2 completely. Each phase targets a specific mode of transport and different Economic Operators.

The first release has already happened, in March 2021, and consisted of air postal pre-loading and air express pre-loading.

At the moment, we are working hard towards the second phase, for March 2023, which will have full air express, full air postal and general air cargo.

The last step will be to integrate maritime, rail and road traffic. This is the third and final step, which is due in March 2024.

If you have any questions or want to get your company ready for this transition, we happily welcome you to have a coffee with us and discuss this with you.