



**Regional Office for Capacity Building
for the World Customs Organization Europe Region**

**ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT
2019/2020**



CONTENTS

Foreword

Executive Summary

A. INTRODUCTION

1. General Information

2. Staff

3. Assets

B. STRATEGY

C. ROAD MAP

D. REPORT OF ACTIVITIES

E. EVENTS

F. WORK PLAN 2020/2021

G. ACTIVITIES OF REGIONAL TRAINING CENTERS

H. FINANCIAL ASPECTS

1. Financial Sustainability

2. Member Contributions

3. Previous Year and Projected Budget

4. Outlook

ANNEXES:

Annex I: ROCB Europe Strategic Framework Document

Annex II: Working Method for ROCB Europe Capacity Building Support

Annex III: Revised Role of Capacity Building Contact Points

Annex IV: Draft Terms of Reference for the ROCB Europe

Annex V: Flyers and Brochures

Annex VI: List of Events

Annex VII: Reports by Regional Training Centers

FOREWORD

Customs is the implementing body of international trade provisions in practical terms and has various extensive sub-fields embedded together with many other topics that should be taken into consideration in the process due to regulations stemming from different government agencies. The difficulty of the task of Customs often cited as accelerating trade with ensuring safety and security is therefore holds very much true.

As the Covid-19 (Corona Virus Disease 2019) shaped the world drastically in 2020, the priorities and measures set by governments changed accordingly. This new setting has explicitly had an adverse effect on our lives and how we work. Numerous changes appeared in our day to day routines as we experienced quarantine and faced travel restrictions to begin with. Even though the international trade did not stop, it has been surely affected from the Covid-19. Customs processes continued with precautions and newly implemented measures in order to ensure export and import operations are being carried out.

As the task of Customs continued in this period, it has become even more important than ever. The World Customs Organization and its Member Administrations were not excluded from the turmoil created by the Covid-19. On the contrast, they have played an important role in ensuring the continuation of international trade. However, the new setting has necessitated a new listing of priorities and rescheduling.

In that context, the Heads of Customs Conference for the WCO Europe Region, which was planned to be held at the end of May 2020, has been postponed to a later date. As the ROCB Europe, we were hoping that the Conference would have been organized soon after its originally scheduled date. Unfortunately, the course of the pandemic did not allow for such an occurrence. It was our intention to provide the Member Administrations with an extended report for the delayed Conference. However, the uncertain outlook for the arrangement of the Conference brought the necessity to prepare this annual report from April 2019 to March 2020 and provisionally have another one for the remainder of the time if the Conference would be held before another full year passes. As we are already providing updates through our web site and social media channels, reporting annually to the region has become a must at this time even if the Conference could not be held.

The course of capacity building efforts for the WCO Europe Region experienced a transitional period in 2019. There were newly appointed Capacity Building Director, ROCB Europe Director and WCO Europe Regional Development Manager. All these changes gave way for yet another good working relationship between the WCO Secretariat and the ROCB Europe.

As I took up my new post on 1 June 2019, following my tenure as technical attaché from 7 September 2017 at the ROCB Europe, I have worked in order for the ROCB Europe to be able to support and complement WCO activities, close customs capacity gaps and fulfill the needs of Member Administrations, provide a communication and knowledge platform for the



Members and initiate activities of cooperation on contemporary as well as future-looking practices in the direction which the Region intends to move toward.

This approach inherently includes better integrating the ROCB Europe into the WCO capacity building delivery process with a view to producing more effective and overarching outcomes for the Members in the Region together with enhanced communication among the WCO, Member Administrations and the ROCB Europe.

That is why, the ROCB Europe built its new approach and acted accordingly for increased capacity building events in the WCO Europe Region which I have been aspiring for. The open support showed by the Director of Capacity Building Mr. Taeil KANG provided a much convenient environment for the ROCB Europe to attain this aim.

The main objective we have been striving to accomplish is to make the ROCB Europe involve in the capacity building needs and delivery process in a tangible way. As a result, the new working mechanism enabled ROCB Europe to be better integrated into WCO needs assessment process and capacity building delivery.

Upon this new framework, the ROCB Europe started to act as the organizer and financial sponsor of events based on the capacity building needs received from the Member Administrations that could not be included in the WCO Delivery Plan. The ROCB Europe concretely initiated this process in the context of planned events and it was proved that this kind of a mechanism practically works as foreseen on paper as far as possible despite staff bottleneck. Unfortunately, and evidently, the process interrupted by the Covid-19. However, the ROCB Europe would continue its established path. Without a doubt, the ROCB Europe intends to continue accomplishing capacity building delivery in a more planned way in close cooperation with the WCO Secretariat, possible giving much room for online delivery. In this direction, we already took part in the collection of capacity building needs and analysis of those requests accordingly for forwarding to the WCO Secretariat.

Additionally, the ROCB Europe is now more attentive to the Members' standpoint. In September 2019, we asked for points of view from the Members in the region on how to move forward. I also recurrently reiterated in every possible occasion that the ROCB Europe is always ready to take comments and guidance for the ways the Members would like us to follow. However less feedback we receive, we will continue to work in the frame of WCO and ROCB Europe strategies. We upgraded the Work Plan of the ROCB Europe on the basis of a results-based approach and we envisage additional effectiveness from the work of Office.

In the reporting period, the ROCB Europe organized or coordinated 22 events. In addition to the events we organized which are explained below, at a short glance to the reporting period, we also established new engagements with stakeholders such as UN SPECA (United Nations Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia), GIZ (*Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit* / German Corporation for International Cooperation), RCA (Russian Customs Academy), SELEC (The Southeast European Law Enforcement Center) and CARICC (Central Asian Regional Information and Coordination Centre), built up a Regional Experts Database (RED), launched the work for drafting the Terms of Reference for



the ROCB Europe and completed the review with the Member Administrations, revised the Role of Capacity Building National Contact Points and completed the review with the Member Administrations as well, launched blog articles on our web site, progressively used social media and realized many other points which are available in detail throughout this report.

I am pleased to present this report to the Member Administrations of the WCO Europe Region and I believe the annual activity report would stand for a conformable collection of progress of the ROCB Europe.

**Eser ÇENGEL
Director**

* * *

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Regional Office for Capacity Building for the World Customs Organization Europe Region (ROCB Europe) has been functioning in Baku, Azerbaijan, since 17 October 2011 based on the Memorandum of Understanding signed between the WCO and the Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan signed on 11 November 2009.

Technical staff of the ROCB Europe are seconded by Member Administrations of the WCO Europe Region as a common procedure. Currently, there are three technical staff seconded by the Customs Administrations of the Republic of Turkey (Director) and the Republic of Azerbaijan (Executive Officers).

The ROCB Europe is the beacon for the work of customs capacity building activities in the WCO Europe Region. It exclusively aims at enhancing capacities of Customs Administrations in paving the way for more secure and simplified customs processes and international trade operations.

The ROCB Europe built its new approach and acted accordingly for increased capacity building events in the WCO Europe Region. Upon the new framework, the ROCB Europe started to act as the organizer and financial sponsor of events based on the capacity building needs received from the Member Administrations that could not be included in the WCO Delivery Plan.

The ROCB Europe is functioning in the context of its Strategic Framework which is also in line with the WCO's Strategic Plan as well as its regionalization approach. The Strategic Framework of the ROCB Europe includes, among others, mission and vision statements, values and strategic goals.

In an effort to practically apply the strategic framework into process and approach the objectives in a more straightforward way especially with respect to capacity building delivery for the region, the ROCB Europe continued performing its work in the overall direction of a Road Map.

With the emergence of the Covid-19 pandemic, the ROCB Europe assumed its role by itself since it is crucial to stay updated and work upon well-established communication channels especially in pandemic times.

In that regard, the ROCB Europe reacted soon after the outbreak of the disease by providing an all-in-one gateway "Coronavirus Bulletin" for colleagues and Member Administrations. The Bulletin, which is available at rocb-europe.org/corona, stands as a hub for being updated and reaching information sources from one access point.

In the reporting period, the ROCB Europe organized or coordinated 22 events. Notable events, among others, are Sub-regional Workshop on Electronic Data Exchange, People Development Programme Train the Trainers National Workshop and 3rd Meeting of the WCO



Europe Region National Contact Points for Capacity Building organized by the ROCB Europe in close cooperation with the WCO Secretariat.

In addition to the events, at a short glance, work on Capacity building needs completed, new engagements with stakeholders were established, a Regional Experts Database (RED) was built up, work for drafting the Terms of Reference for the ROCB Europe was launched and a review with the Member Administrations was completed, also a revision was made of the Role of Capacity Building National Contact Points and a review with the Member Administrations was completed as well, blog articles launched on the web site, social media was progressively used and many other points realized in the reporting period.

With the aim of achieving the objectives in the frame of the Strategic Framework and the Execution Program, activities depicted in the Work Plan for the 2020/2021 period is projected to be implemented by the Regional Office for Capacity Building for the World Customs Organization Europe Region. The said Work Plan is constructed in a way to achieving the goals on the basis of results-based management approach which is focused on performance and achievement of outputs, outcomes and impacts.

The ROCB Europe also gathered the reports Regional Training Centers for the reporting period. Additionally, the ROCB Europe endeavored for attaining a snapshot of the RTCs with respect to their fundamental characteristics and provided for standardized reporting for RTCs. Also, a possible initiative for having RTCs as excellence centers on certain customs field(s) has thus started.

As for funding, current mechanism provides adequate resources for maintaining short-term operational capacity. It should also be noted that the host administration, the State Customs Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan, supports the ROCB Europe to a great extent, by bearing the running costs primarily in operational and administrative aspects.

The estimation for future in-place trainings might take a possible downward turn because of the coronavirus. However, these events are intended to be taken online. In that regard and taking the technical advancement anticipation of the Office, expenses would be higher on the information technology part. In any case, the allocation of the financial resources will be made by ensuring effective use of those in an effort to provide best possible benefit to the region in line with the WCO and ROCB Europe strategies.

* * *



A. INTRODUCTION

1. General Information

The Regional Office for Capacity Building for the World Customs Organization Europe Region (ROCB Europe) has been functioning in Baku, Azerbaijan, since 17 October 2011 based on the Memorandum of Understanding signed between the WCO and the Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan signed on 11 November 2009.

The ROCB Europe is the beacon for the work of customs capacity building activities in the WCO Europe Region. It exclusively aims at enhancing capacities of Customs Administrations in paving the way for more secure and simplified customs processes and international trade operations.

One of the main goals of the ROCB Europe is to promote World Customs Organization tools and instruments also by complementing WCO customs capacity building delivery in the WCO Europe Region. In the meantime, it works toward fulfillment of regional needs and priorities in the field of customs that await attention.

The reporting period of the present report is from 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020. Typically, the ROCB Europe presents its report to the Heads of Customs Conference for the WCO Europe Region. Nevertheless, developments due to the Covid-19 pandemic made the arrangement of the Conference uncertain. The Conference was scheduled to be carried out 29-30 May 2020 which then has been postponed to a later date. In this circumstance, it is foreseen that future reports will be drafted according to the course of the regional planning.

2. Staff

Technical staff of the ROCB Europe are seconded by Member Administrations of the WCO Europe Region as a common procedure. Currently, there are three technical staff seconded by the Customs Administrations of the Republic of Turkey (Director) and the Republic of Azerbaijan (Executive Officers).

Mr. Eser ÇENGEL was elected as the head of office upon the decision of the Heads of Customs Conference for the WCO Europe Region which was held on 24-25 April 2019 in Saint Petersburg, Russian Federation. He had been performing his duty as an executive officer at the ROCB Europe since 7 September 2017 before starting his new post as the director on 1 June 2019 at which time he was the only technical staff at the ROCB Europe. Mr. Roger HERMANN from Swiss Customs completed his term as the director of the office on 31 May 2019. The ROCB Europe is thankful to Mr. HERMANN for his esteemed leadership.

The State Customs Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan assigned two staff to the ROCB Europe in November 2019 and February 2020 respectively, making the total number of technical staff three including the head of office.

The Office is ensured with administrative personnel including office manager and support staff as well as guardsmen assigned by the State Customs Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the host administration.

3. Assets

i) Facilities

ROCB Europe operates in its own building, which includes the following alongside spacious offices for staff:

- Fully equipped conference hall;
- Computer lab with working stations;
- 2 well-equipped training classes;
- Cafeteria as well as fully equipped kitchen;
- Parking garage.

ii) Cargo and Container Training Center

The Cargo and Container Training Center is located at the ROCB Europe premises and intended for providing training for frontline customs officers on cargo and container control matters both theoretically and practically. The ROCB Europe hosts cargo and container trainings ex officio at the center upon receiving requests from member states.¹

¹ For more information about the Center, please visit <https://rocb-europe.org/cargo-and-container-training-center>.



B. STRATEGY

The ROCB Europe is functioning in the context of its Strategic Framework submitted to the Heads of Customs Administrations of the WCO Europe Region in 2018 which is also in line with the WCO's Strategic Plan as well as its regionalization approach.

In terms of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats; the following summarized points merit consideration with regard to future work of the ROCB Europe.

There is an extensive ongoing support to the ROCB Europe from the host administration, the State Customs Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan. The ROCB Europe has its own premises with spacious offices and well-furnished large meeting hall and training sections.

The coverage of the ROCB Europe is the largest in comparison to other WCO Regions and it is comprised of Member Administrations some of which are substantially advanced in customs. The location of the ROCB Europe is practical and it is virtually in the center of the WCO Europe Region in geographical means, which makes it easily reachable from any country in the WCO Europe Region.

However, the ROCB Europe traditionally suffers from under employment of technical staff and lack of full financial support from the Member Administrations which in turn causes the ROCB Europe to underperform. The level of low backing seems to be dramatic considering the large coverage of the WCO Europe Region. The attention and willingness to hold collaborative activities of Member Administrations with the ROCB Europe seems limited. Absence of a strategy for the WCO Europe Region has been preventing the ROCB Europe from performing in a fulfilling way in line with regional guidance and needs.

Still, the ROCB Europe has the potential to play a role in regional capacity building activities as well as customs related projects to a much greater extent as opposed to the current situation. The ROCB Europe may act and, to a certain extent, is already acting as a coordination hub for the region and Regional Training Centers, RILOs and Vice-Chairmanship as well as WCO Europe Region Heads of Administration Conference.

The ROCB Europe web site has been used for accessing working documents and announcements for regional meetings and events through public or member only sections, as the case may be. Within the framework of a long-term regional strategy, the ROCB Europe can use its potential for a stable and sustainable work program.

Regardless of the bottlenecks, the ROCB Europe has strived and put much effort to be in effectively service of the Member Administrations and increase its visibility through various initiatives during the reporting period.

The Strategic Framework of the ROCB Europe includes, among others, mission and vision statements, values and strategic goals summarized as follows:



Mission statement:

ROCB Europe is the beacon for the work of customs capacity building activities in the WCO Europe Region. It exclusively aims at enhancing capacities of Customs Administrations in paving the way for more secure and simplified customs processes and international trade operations.

Vision statement:

ROCB Europe's vision is to realize sustainable capacity building activities with concrete outcomes that favorably benefit Customs Administrations.

Values:

Excellence, Cooperation, Inclusiveness, and Continuous Improvement.

The ROCB Europe performs its work in line with its four keystone strategic goals and three strategies on organizational management and communication.

Keystone Strategic Goals:

- Promote the work on customs capacity building and WCO instruments.
- Foster customs reform and modernization process of Member Administrations.
- Strengthen regional cooperation among Member Administrations.
- Enhance collaboration with stakeholders, development partners and donors.

Strategic Goals on Organizational Management:

- Strengthen office management and improve institutional functionality.
- Secure adequate funding and financial sustainability.

Strategic Goal on Communication:

- Address a broad audience and raise awareness on customs capacity building and development.

An Execution Program details the deliverables of the Strategic Goals. It is supplemented by the Work Plan which includes planned activities and updated annually. As a continuation, Progress Report is presented annually which indicates the actual activities carried out in comparison to the Work Plan in an effort to evaluate the performance. The full text of the ROCB Europe Strategic Framework is attached as Annex I.

C. ROAD MAP

Taking into account needs as well as priorities of the WCO Europe Region Member Administrations and the incremental emphasis made on the regionalization in the context of WCO Capacity Building Strategy, the ROCB Europe has committed to work intensively toward fulfillment of regional necessities that await attention.

In an effort to practically apply the strategic framework into process and approach the objectives in a more straightforward way especially with respect to capacity building delivery for the region, the ROCB Europe continued performing its work in the overall direction of the below Road Map.

- *Supporting and complementing WCO Capacity Building activities, better integrating the ROCB Europe in the needs assessment and delivery process;*
- *Closing the capacity gaps and fulfilling the needs of Member Administrations falling out of the scope of WCO planning;*
- *Working toward regional priorities and common areas of interest of the Members;*
- *Providing a communication & knowledge platform for the Region.*

This practical approach gave way for clearer sub-tasks for the ROCB Europe in attaining its goals. In that context, preparatory consultations and work had been done for better integrating the ROCB Europe into the WCO needs assessment process and subsequently complementing the WCO capacity building delivery in the WCO Europe Region. It is also considered possible that the ROCB Europe would benefit from its flexible approach and also from its Regional Experts Database for fulfilling emerging requests or other demands communicated outside the needs assessment process.

At this juncture, the ROCB Europe expressed its readiness to act as organizer and financial sponsor of events based on the capacity building needs received from the Member Administrations that could not be included in the WCO Annual Delivery Plan.

The consultations with the WCO Secretariat (Capacity Building Directorate) landed on a constructive conclusion that this kind of an initiative would be highly useful in terms of boosting capacity building activities in the WCO Europe Region.

In that direction, the role of the ROCB Europe is to take over the organizational matters such as planning, travel arrangements, logistical issues and other related matters necessary for the organization of the mentioned events in liaison with beneficiary administrations and experts



responsible for delivery, together with financial aspects (principally, travel expenses, per diem and other logistical matters if deemed necessary).

The proposed working method for ROCB Europe capacity building delivery in supporting the WCO annual planning that was agreed upon with the Capacity Building Directorate is attached as Annex II.

As for working toward priorities and common areas of interest of the Members in the WCO Europe Region, concentration on the topic was dispersed given the insufficient feedback but most importantly, the emergence of the Covid-19 pandemic. The ROCB Europe assumed its role by itself since it is crucial to stay updated and work upon well-established communication channels especially in pandemic times. In that regard, the ROCB Europe reacted soon after the outbreak of the disease by providing an all-in-one gateway “Coronavirus Bulletin” for colleagues and Member Administrations. The Bulletin, which is available at rocb-europe.org/corona, stands as a hub for being updated and reaching information sources from one access point.

In the meantime, much effort was put into upgrading and keeping updated the web site of the ROCB Europe for easy and effective use by the Members. In that sense, more information was regularly added and documents were uploaded for convenient access through one gateway on the web site.

The ROCB Europe will continue keeping the web site updated and provide the Members with useful information and documents through its web site, correspondence and social media channels.

D. REPORT OF ACTIVITIES

The progress made and the report of activities corresponding to the Strategic Goals and Work Plan 2019/2020 of the ROCB Europe in the reporting period is as follows:

GOAL 1: Promote the work on customs capacity building and WCO instruments

1.1 Maintain and promote sustainable mechanism for the collection of Members' needs

- **Capacity building needs** that could be addressed with WCO support in 2020-2021 identified by the Customs Administrations in the WCO Europe Region were collected in close cooperation with the WCO Secretariat. The needs were then categorized and analyzed by the ROCB Europe. Following, the analysis made which includes possible capacity building events that would be carried by the ROCB Europe within the frame of the next WCO Annual Plan 2020/2021 was forwarded to the WCO Secretariat.

1.2 Upon request, assist Members' efforts in developing tailor-made Customs Capacity Building projects, workshops etc. in the region

- Upon the request received from the Ukraine Customs and in close cooperation with the WCO Secretariat, the ROCB Europe successfully carried out the **Train the Trainers Workshop** at the Regional Training Center in Khmelnytsky, Ukraine from 25 to 29 November 2019. A total of 15 customs officials were trained by the WCO Secretariat, six of which were attending from different regional offices in Ukraine. The event was organized and funded by the ROCB Europe and stood for a very substantial example that ROCB Europe is able to organize and fund capacity building events. Detailed information about the meeting is available in Section E of the present report.

1.3 Assist WCO CB activities in supporting workshops, seminars, meetings in compliance with the WCO Corporate Plan

- **Sub-regional Workshop on Electronic Data Exchange** organized and funded by the ROCB Europe was held on 1-2 May 2019 in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan. Nine Customs Administrations as well as representatives of ROCB Europe and World Customs Organization (WCO) attended the event. Detailed information about the workshop is available in the events section of the present report. Detailed information about the workshop is available in Section E of the present report.

- The **3rd Meeting of the World Customs Organization Europe Region National Contact Points for Capacity Building** was convened in the Conference Hall of the Regional Office for Capacity Building Premises in Baku, Azerbaijan from 27 to 29 January 2020. The Meeting further strengthened the network of the National Contact Points in the region, to clarify the role of National Contact Points, and to strengthen cooperation between the Members, the ROCB Europe and the WCO, among other matters. Detailed information about the meeting is available in Section E of the present report.

1.4 Initiate, plan and implement the Russian translation of WCO training materials

- As the translation phase is completed, the materials in Russian language shall be uploaded to the ROCB Europe web site restricted section together with complementary training tools (see also 2.4 below).

GOAL 2: Foster customs reform and modernization process of Member Administrations

2.1 Maintain the pool of WCO accredited and other experts in the Region

- With the official correspondence No: 2019/35 dated 25 September 2019, which was sent to the Member Administrations in the WCO Europe Region, it was stated that the ROCB Europe had initiated the work on the **Regional Experts Database (RED)** in order to provide more efficient and inclusive capacity building delivery and collaborative activity planning in the region. The list is to include experts with comprehensive knowledge from the Member Administrations, whether or not WCO accredited, that are assessed as proficient in their specialized topics as to deliver training or give detailed information. In that context, expert nominations were asked from the Member Administrations and the list is constructed upon the nominations from the Member Administrations. The disclosure of the information about the experts on the WCO web site is restricted by the Member Administrations and the ROCBs are not allowed to access the list according to the information obtained from the WCO Secretariat. The disclosure of the information might be granted by the Member Administrations for the ROCB Europe to access or obtain the list of experts. The main motivation for the ROCB Europe is to have regional experts information in an effort to gain more flexibility and spectrum for delivering tailor-made capacity building assistance for the requesting Member Administrations. Establishing a pool of regional experts is a task given to the ROCBs according to the main WCO documents such as regional structures or revised capacity building strategy.

2.2 Upon request, assist Members to promote WCO e-learning programs and CLIKC! Platform in cooperation with the RTCs and experts

- Various questions and requests from the Member Administrations were responded by the ROCB Europe with respect to WCO e-learning programs and CLIKC! Platform. Where needed, these matters were forwarded or shared with the WCO Secretariat.
- A crosslink on the ROCB Europe website to the WCO web platform CLIKC! is also being maintained and relevant promotion on WCO training tools and materials was made through the ROCB Europe web site or its social media channels.

2.3 Motivate developed Member Administrations to provide contribution in the regional capacity building activities

- During the 3rd Meeting of the WCO Europe Region National Contact Points for Capacity Building held on 27-29 January 2020, it was once again underlined that the ways for having developed countries in the region on board should be looked into and necessary efforts should be made. In the meantime, the ROCB Europe strived for reaching out advanced Member Administrations in every possible occasion to invite these Administrations to consider the possibility of releasing experts for trainings in the region through the events organized by the ROCB Europe. The feedback had been positive from the Member Administrations contacted which stands for a positive progress for the regional capacity building delivery.

2.4 Publish the materials translated into Russian on the ROCB Europe web site

- The ROCB Europe attempts to maintain all documents published on its web site or letters or e-mails sent to the Member Administrations to be presented with their Russian translations.
- In the meantime, WCO materials already translated into Russian are to be uploaded to the ROCB Europe web site following the technical limitations on the web site are removed.

GOAL 3: Strengthen regional cooperation among Member Administrations

3.1 Request Member Administrations to second executive staff to the ROCB Europe

- Members are urged during the meetings as well as with letters, progress report and presentations made to second executive staff at the ROCB Europe. As it is mentioned in the Strategy section, the ROCB Europe traditionally suffers from under employment of technical staff.

3.2 Maintain and update the National Contact Points and the Regional Experts databases on the ROCB website

- Update on national contact points information was requested from the Member Administrations taken advantage of several occasions. The **List of Contact Points** is available on the ROCB Europe web site member section and updated regularly as information received from Member Administrations.
- In addition, with regard to the decision taken during the 2nd Meeting of the World Customs Organization Europe Region National Contact Points for Capacity Building in 2019, the work on the revision of the document on the Role of Capacity Building Contact Points was done by the ROCB Europe. The document covers the role and tasks of a Capacity Building Contact Point which covers matters with respect to cooperation with the WCO Secretariat and the ROCB Europe, promoting and coordinating Capacity Building efforts, monitoring and evaluating the modernization process and expert mobilization and support to Capacity Building Delivery. It was agreed during the said meeting that the draft document would be circulated among Member Administrations following the addition of matters that would comprise roles for contact points from all Member Administrations regardless of the level of development in customs and accordingly submitted to the next Heads of Customs Conference for endorsement. The **Revised Role of Capacity Building Contact Points** is attached as Annex III. Russian version of the document is available on the ROCB Europe web site members section.
- On the other hand, as mentioned in point 2.1 more in detail, the Regional Experts Database is constructed upon the nominations from the Member Administrations following the request letter by the ROCB Europe.

3.3 Collect and disseminate best practices in the Region

- A new work on the collection of open source data of the WCO Europe Region Member Administrations has been initiated during the reporting period. This kind of work may be slowed down in the face of staff bottleneck. Nonetheless, it is planned that the relevant data tables with regard to customs and trade to be published on the ROCB Europe web site within the subsequent reporting period.

3.4 Provide Members with a platform to exchange knowledge and training materials amongst National and Regional Training Centers

- Another work that has been initiated by the ROCB Europe during the reporting period includes the establishment of a web portal that would include informative materials as well as a communication platform among the Member Administrations, the WCO Secretariat and the ROCB Europe. Therefore, the intended work would not be limited only to Regional Training Centers but would provide a platform for training materials and information sharing opportunity for the whole region.

3.5 Further strengthen cooperation with RTCs for deliverable of Capacity Building events

- ROCB Europe web site maintains dedicated pages for Regional Training Centers on which the RTCs can publish their information as well as news and updates.
- One of the responsibilities of the ROCB Europe is to coordinate capacity building activities in the WCO Europe Region. In this sense, cooperation between the ROCB Europe and Regional Training Centers (RTCs) are of vital importance. In this context, as annually done, RTC annual reports were asked from the RTCs in an effort to submit them to the Member Administrations through the present report. This year, the reports were asked by providing a standardized template which included:
 - General information about the RTC including contact person(s);
 - List of events organized or hosted by the RTC;
 - Future events already planned or foreseen, if any;
 - Progress made by the RTC in terms of capacity building;
 - Additional remarks, if any.
- There was another new change by the ROCB Europe with respect RTCs' reporting as a **survey** was also included in the report template. According to the results of the short survey:
 - All the RTCs have its own building including adequate rooms/space for trainings, meetings etc.
 - Most of the RTCs are performing their work on the basis a strategy document action plan or similar.

- Three out of seven of the RTCs have accommodation facilities.
 - None of the RTCs have their own budget separate from the Customs Administration.
 - Only one RTC receives support coming from other than their Customs Administration. However, this support is not financial.
 - Five out of seven of the RTCs consider the number of staff at the RTC is adequate for the workload allocated to the RTC.
 - Five out of seven of the RTCs are willing to specialize on certain topic(s) with already determined fields.
- Annual reports submitted by the RTCs in the WCO Europe Region also gathered by the ROCB Europe. Additional information about the matter is available in Section G. Activities of Regional Training Centers.
- In the meantime, RTCs were invited to continue sharing planning and future activities as well as news and developments in order for the ROCB Europe to have the regional outlook in terms of customs capacity building and related initiatives in the frame of RTCs, with a view to also publishing those on the ROCB Europe web site.
- Its ROCB Europe's intended aim to have each of the RTCs to become excellence centers on certain customs field(s).
- 10th Meeting of the Regional Structures of the World Customs Organization Europe Region had been scheduled to take place from 31 March to 2 April 2020 at RTC Leninskoe, Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic. However, it was postponed due to the developments caused by the Covid-19 pandemic.
- Coordination was made with RTC in Ukraine on the strategy, priorities and accreditation for canine services together with a working meeting as well as with RTC in Kyrgyz Republic on the strategy, planning and related work.

GOAL 4: Enhance collaboration with stakeholders, development partners and donors

4.1 Enhance cooperation, coordination and mutual understanding between development partners and ROCB Europe

- The ROCB Europe established new engagements with stakeholders such as UN SPECA (United Nations Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia), GIZ (*Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit* / German Corporation for International Cooperation), RCA (Russian Customs Academy), SELEC (The Southeast European Law Enforcement Center) and CARICC (Central Asian Regional Information and Coordination Centre).

- Upon the kind of invitation by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, the ROCB Europe attended the third United Nations Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia (SPECA) High-Level seminar and thirteenth session of the Working Group on Trade on 4 July 2019 at the World Trade Organization (WTO) headquarters on the sidelines of the WTO Aid-for-Trade (AfT) review. During the meeting, a variety of the topics were taken into consideration such as trade facilitation challenges and opportunities for sustainable development; policy principles for sustainable and inclusive trade development, non-tariff barriers to trade, and partnerships for trade facilitation and sustainable development in the SPECA subregion. The ROCB Europe took the opportunity to call for launching joint initiatives with the platform which would bring about potential benefits to all stakeholders having regard to the overlapping geographical coverage of the ROCB Europe as well as the SPECA. In the context of the meeting, the ROCB Europe and GIZ had the opportunity evaluate possible joint events for the countries in the region.

4.2 Further promote coordinated or joint activities with international and regional development partners

- The ROCB Europe continued to maintain its collaboration with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and International Network of Customs Universities in the reported period with the coordinated events.
- The ROCB Europe established renewed engagement with the Russian Customs Academy (RCA). Upon the kind invitation of the Russian Customs Academy, the ROCB Europe attended the 3rd Annual Session of the Moscow International Model which replicates the WCO environment and related procedures. On the sidelines of the event, a bilateral meeting was held and possible cooperation areas were elaborated. In an effort to boost the cooperation and realize the common objectives in a structured way, evaluated topics were combined in a draft cooperation plan which is pending confirmation.
- In addition, partnership propositions were forwarded to the Southeast European Law Enforcement Center and Central Asian Regional Information and Coordination Centre will further deepen the efforts on upholding the quality of customs services in our region on a variety of topics, primarily on enforcement and related issues.

GOAL 5: Strengthen Office Management and Improve Institutional Functionality

5.1 Ensure proper conditions for effective functioning of the ROCB and its staff

- The facilities of the office are well maintained. Host administration has been supporting the ROCB in terms of facilities as well. The ROCB Europe has its own building and the conditions are quite proper for effective functioning of the staff and organizing meetings and events. However, the ROCB Europe faces underemployment as it is explained in the section below about staff (see the sub-section 'Staff' in Introduction above).
- In order for the ROCB Europe to function in a more structured way with regard to its objectives, a **Terms of Reference for the ROCB Europe** was drafted. In the drafting phase by the ROCB Europe, a number of documents were taken into consideration, namely, WCO Europe Region 2011 CB Think-Tank: Capacity Building Strategy, WCO Europe Region 2011 CB Think-Tank: Concept Paper for the ROCB in Baku / Azerbaijan, MoU establishing ROCB Europe, ROCB Europe Strategy, Terms of Reference of the WCO Council, Capacity Building Structures (Annex IV to Doc. SC0090E1a), Status of Regional Bodies (SP0605E1a) and draft revised WCO Capacity Building Strategy. The draft document was evaluated during the 3rd Meeting of the WCO Europe Region National Contact Points for Capacity Building which was held from 27 to 29 January 2020 at the ROCB Europe premises in Baku, Azerbaijan. As a result, the participants had a consensus on the draft document and decided that the mentioned document would be circulated among the Member Administrations and accordingly submitted to the next WCO Europe Region Heads of Customs Conference for endorsement. The draft document is available on the ROCB Europe web site members-only section as well as attached as Annex IV to the present report.

5.2 Update the strategic plan and maintain a reporting mechanism

- Strategic Framework for the ROCB Europe (summarized in Section B above) was drafted and presented to the Heads of Customs Conference in 2018. Since then, the ROCB Europe has been performing its work on the basis of the framework as well as overall WCO strategy. As the report could not be presented during a regional conference this year due to Covid-19 pandemic, it is planned to be submitted to the Member Administrations through an official letter in an effort to fulfill the necessity.

GOAL 6: Secure adequate funding and financial sustainability

6.1 Develop a financial plan

- A yearly budget estimate is drafted annually considering possible activities with the estimated amount of expenditure commensurate to the estimated amount of funding. Detailed information is available in Section H.

6.2 Maintain the electronic single-entry bookkeeping

- Electronic single-entry bookkeeping is kept constant for clear and trackable expenses.

6.3 Upon request, undergo a dedicated regional finance/audit committee

- It is reiterated on various platforms as well as in the context of previous regional conferences that an audit could be carried out by any of the WCO Europe Region Member Administrations.

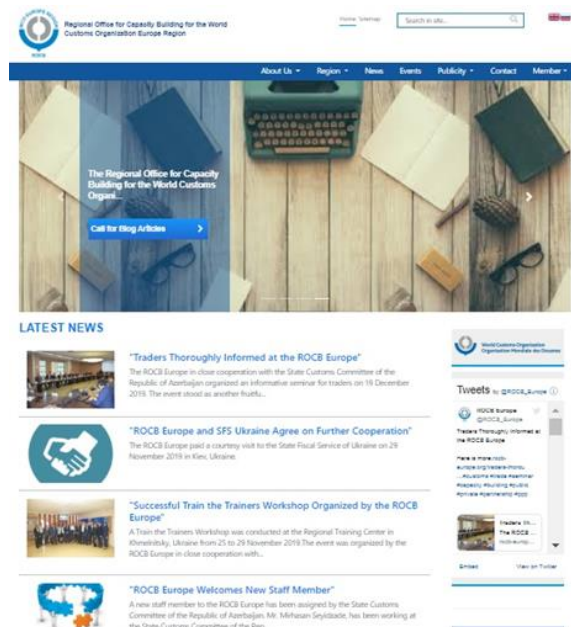
GOAL 7: Address a broad audience and raise awareness on customs capacity building and development

7.1 Maintain and update the ROCB web site

- ROCB Europe web site is kept updated and comprehensive as much as possible as it has the feature of responsive screen and relevant official as well as unofficial documents that are substantial for the WCO Europe Region and the ROCB Europe, either on the public domain or in the member section (which is only accessible with username and password) according to the restriction level of documents.
- As Covid-19 pandemic has made its mark in 2020, it has become much crucial to stay updated and work upon well-established communication channels especially in recent times. The ROCB Europe reacted soon after the outbreak of the disease by providing an all-in-one gateway “**Coronavirus Bulletin**” for colleagues and Member Administrations. The Bulletin, which is available at rocb-europe.org/corona,

stands as a hub for being updated and reaching information sources from one access point.

- The news section of the ROCB Europe web site has been kept frequently updated with the news mainly focused on customs and trade news from the Member Administrations in the WCO Europe Region and relevant international organizations, primarily the WCO.



- As a new initiative, the ROCB Europe has started to publish blog articles on its web site. A call for blog articles was made to the Member Administrations through contact points and it was reiterated at several other occasions. However, no blog article submission was received from the Member Administrations during the reporting period.

- Official letters that are sent to the Region by the ROCB Europe is also being uploaded to the ease of reachability and convenience for the Member Administrations.

- List of events is available on the ROCB Europe web site on an annual basis. In addition to that, the ROCB Europe launched meeting registration section in order for participants to be registered online for events beforehand.

7.2 Use outreach tools and promotion materials

- All missions of the WCO Europe Member Administrations in where the office is located, Baku, Azerbaijan, were notified of the presence and goals of the ROCB Europe as a means of outreach.

- Publicity Materials:

- **Flyer** and **brochure** are available also in Russian language. Copy of these materials are attached as Annex V.
- **Presentation** about the ROCB Europe and its operating context, tasks and responsibilities is frequently used and visited (available on the web site).

- Corporate design:

- Designated letterheads and font character.



- Designated colors and color alignment between the web site and other publicity materials.
- Revised ROCB Europe logo.
- Social Media:
 - Frequently updated **Twitter Page** (account name: @rocb_europe).
 - Frequently updated **LinkedIn Page** (account name: ROCB Europe).

E. EVENTS

In the period from April 2019 to March 2020, the ROCB Europe hosted or coordinated a total of 22 events and was represented in 12 events. Full list of the events is attached as Annex VI.

WCO Europe Region Heads of Customs Conference 2019

WCO Europe Region Heads of Customs Conference was held from 24 to 27 April 2019 in Saint Petersburg, Russian Federation.

40 Customs Administrations, WCO Secretariat, ROCB Europe and RILOs in the WCO Europe Region participated to the Conference. Transit systems compatibility, strategic plan, governance, representation, WCO regional customs laboratories and development of a WCO performance system were among the topics that were taken into consideration.

As was in the last WCO Europe Region Heads of Customs Conference in 2018, delegates were able to access all necessary meeting documents through ROCB Europe web site.

The Conference formally approved the next Director of ROCB Europe as well as welcomed the upcoming Vice-Chair of the region, Azerbaijan Customs.

The final report of the Conference is available on the ROCB Europe web site member section.

Sub-regional Workshop on Electronic Data Exchange

Sub-regional Workshop on Electronic Data Exchange organized and funded by the ROCB Europe was held on 1-2 May 2019 in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan.

Nine Customs Administrations as well as representatives of ROCB Europe and World Customs Organization (WCO) attended the event.

Delegates were informed about the Globally Networked Customs, use of international standards for harmonized data exchange and WCO Data Model during the sub-regional Workshop. Participating Customs Administrations provided presentations about their practices within the context of the Workshop as well.

Participants appreciated the effectiveness of the Workshop and underlined that there should be follow up events on the matter.



People Development Programme Train the Trainers National Workshop

The ROCB Europe, in close cooperation with the WCO Secretariat, delivered a Train-the-Trainer Workshop from 25 to 29 November 2019 on the development of trainers' competences for the State Customs Service of Ukraine officials at the of the Department for Specialized Training and Canine Services of the WCO Regional Training Center of Khmelnytsky.

The event was organized and funded by the ROCB Europe and stood for a very substantial example that ROCB Europe is able to organize and fund capacity building events. Participants were trained by Mr. Si Mohamed from the WCO on according to the WCO Competency approach.

The workshop enhanced the participants' capacities with a view to acting as a competency builder and delivering appropriate training using best practices as well as contributing to the organizational performance of the Ukraine Customs by a strategic and targeted training aiming at developing staff competencies in different fields.

The event supported the Ukraine Customs in having high-level trainers with the necessary competencies to contribute to the competency development process which included improving the trainers' capabilities on preparing, facilitating, and evaluating training sessions in their particular fields.

Within the scope of the event, the ROCB Europe and the WCO Secretariat also had the opportunity to be informed about the expertise of the Regional Training Center of Khmelnytsky on various customs fields which included training of scan systems operators, human resources development, combating illegal cross-border movement of cultural heritage, intellectual property rights, canine services and prevention of transboundary environment offenses.

The ROCB Europe is keen on organizing further capacity building activities in close cooperation with the WCO Secretariat for the Customs Administrations in the WCO Europe Region.

Taking the opportunity of the event, the ROCB Europe paid a courtesy visit to the State Fiscal Service of Ukraine on 29 November 2019 in Kiev, Ukraine.

Information was shared on the new reinforced approach of the ROCB Europe in assisting the Customs Administrations in the WCO Europe Region in close cooperation with the WCO Secretariat and current as well as planned achievements by the Office with respect to customs capacity building. Parties agreed on forging further cooperation on customs and capacity building in a more planned way.



3rd Meeting of the WCO Europe Region National Contact Points for Capacity Building

The 3rd meeting of the WCO Europe Region National Contact Points for Capacity Building was held at the Regional Office for Capacity Building for the WCO Europe Region in Baku, Azerbaijan from 27 to 29 January 2020.

19 Member Administrations, WCO Secretariat, the Vice-Chair of the WCO Europe Region as well as the ROCB Europe were represented in the meeting. The WCO Secretariat delegation was headed by the Director of the WCO Capacity Building Directorate, Mr. Taeil Kang. In this context, the will for further support for the regional affairs on customs capacity building was highlighted with the high-level participation by the WCO Secretariat.

During the meeting, the participants were informed about the WCO and ROCB Europe strategies, activities and initiatives. The national contact points also reviewed and reached a consensus on the documents which foresee structural framework for ROCB Europe as well as for the national contact points for capacity building. It was agreed that the documents would be further refined and would be presented at the upcoming Heads of Customs Conference.

During the three-day session, participating delegates briefed about the capacity building processes in their respective customs administrations and the progress achieved within the scope of Mercator Program.

The meeting also served as a platform for enhancing the communication among the WCO Secretariat, ROCB Europe and participating member administrations.

Final report of the meeting is available on the ROCB Europe web site member section.

Winter School 2020

Winter School 2020 for International Network of Customs Universities (INCU) started at the Regional Office for Capacity Building for the WCO Europe Region in Baku, Azerbaijan on 4 February 2020.

The students from Academy of the State Customs Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Russian Customs Academy, Samara State Technical University, Azerbaijan State University of Economics, National Aviation Academy, Azerbaijan State Oil and Industry University, Customs Institute of Uzbekistan, Baku Higher Oil School and North-West Institute of



Management Saint Petersburg of the Russian Federation are being lectured on a variety of topics regarding customs and international trade.

The 7-day Winter School 2020 program includes an opening ceremony, visits to Azerbaijan Customs Academy, ROCB Europe, campus of Baku Higher Oil School and providing training and lectures on the topics of “Quality of Customs Services and Marketing in Customs”, “The Basics of Academic Research and Writing” and “Tariff Classification and Preferential Rules of Origin”.

The Winter School will be concluded on 12 February 2020.

Meeting of the Working Group on the Revision of the Bergen Agreement

Meeting of the Working Group on the Revision of the Bergen Agreement was held in ROCB Europe premises in Baku, Republic of Azerbaijan, from 23 to 24 January 2020 in order to discuss the issues as requested in the frame of the Agreement.

The Working Group meeting was chaired by the Vice-Chair of the WCO Europe Region, the State Customs Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan. The meeting was held in coordination with the Regional Office for Capacity Building for the World Customs Organization Europe Region.

The Bergen Agreement sets the subgrouping within the WCO Europe Region and involves the procedures for the Member Administrations to be represented in the restricted bodies of the WCO.

3rd High-Level Seminar on Trade in Central Asia and 13th Session of the UN SPECA Working Group on Trade

Upon the kind of invitation by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, the ROCB Europe attended the third United Nations Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia (SPECA) High-Level seminar and thirteenth session of the Working Group on Trade on 4 July 2019 at the World Trade Organization (WTO) headquarters on the sidelines of the WTO Aid-for-Trade (AfT) review meeting.

During the meeting, a variety of the topics were taken into consideration such as trade facilitation challenges and opportunities for sustainable development; policy principles for



sustainable and inclusive trade development, non-tariff barriers to trade, and partnerships for trade facilitation and sustainable development in the SPECA subregion.

ROCB Europe also took the opportunity to call for launching joint initiatives with the platform which would bring about potential benefits to all stakeholders having regard to the coverage of the ROCB Europe as well as the SPECA.

3rd Annual Session of the Moscow International Model of the Russian Customs Academy

Upon the kind invitation of the Russian Customs Academy, the ROCB Europe attended the 3rd Annual Session of the Moscow International Model. The model stands for a platform for World Customs Organization experience and gaining in-depth information customs and trade issues globally for students and young professionals on customs.

The ROCB Europe and Russian Customs Academy, in the frame of a bilateral session, exchanged information and ongoing projects as well as future initiatives.

Both sides agreed to move forward on the basis of mutual cooperation on a variety of topics with respect to customs capacity building, research and academics.

The event which was excellently organized by the Russian Customs Academy, included lectures and working sessions which resulted in awarding successful participants.

Seminar for Private Sector on Prospects for Improving the Efficiency of Import-Export Operations

The ROCB Europe in close cooperation with the State Customs Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan organized an informative seminar for traders on 19 December 2019. The event stood as another fruitful example of public - private sector partnership.

During the seminar which was held at the ROCB Europe premises, comprehensive and detailed information on the payments for import and export processes, accelerated cross-border trade through single window mechanism and application of green corridor procedure was shared by the representatives of Azerbaijan Customs.

Participants also had the chance to submit their questions about export and import processes and related customs and trade matters.

The importance and benefits of trusted trader concept, efforts toward further trade facilitation measures and the impact of simplified procedures in terms of international trade operations were also highlighted during the event.

Training on "First Aid" for Customs Volunteers

On September 6, the World Customs Organization's Regional Office for Capacity Building in Europe held a training on "First Aid" for Customs Volunteers of The State Customs Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan. The purpose of the training was to show "Volunteer Customs" how to help civilians to save lives in the event of an accident, to increase their knowledge and skills in this area.

The training, organized on the occasion of the World First Aid Day on September 8, involved experienced doctors from the Emergency Department of the Central Customs Hospital and Up-to-date in medicine Medical Consulting. It was stated that first aid refers to the emergency or immediate care should provide when a person is injured or ill until full medical treatment is available. For minor conditions, first aid care may be enough. For serious problems, first aid care should be continued until more advanced care becomes available.

WCO Revenue Package National Workshop on "Development of Advance Ruling System for Classification, Origin and Valuation"

At the request of the State Customs Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan (SCC), the WCO conducted a mission with the aim of strengthening the Customs' institutional capacity for Classification, Origin and Valuation work, in Baku, Azerbaijan, from 21 and 24 May 2019.

Fourteen Customs officers participated in a WCO Revenue Package National Workshop focusing on the development of Advance Ruling system for Classification, Origin and Valuation, which was facilitated by one external classification expert and an origin expert from the WCO Secretariat. The workshop focused, in particular, on advance rulings for classification, origin and valuation since they play a vital role in promoting trade facilitation and Customs control through risk management.



Technical Meeting of Experts of Customs Administrations of The Member States of Turkic Council on Framework of Caravanserai Project

Turkic Council technical group composed of the customs officials of the Member States met on 17 October 2019 at the Regional Office for Capacity Building for the WCO Europe Region in Baku in order to update the findings and review the recommendations of the previous field visits held in the framework of the Caravanserai Project with the participation of ROCB.

The Secretariat touched upon the outcomes of 7th Summit of the Turkic Council in terms of economy, transport and customs; and briefly informed the experts on the current projects of the Turkic Council in the field of customs cooperation. The Parties also exchanged views on the program of events including field visits and training programs to be organized in the upcoming period under the Turkic Council umbrella.

Workshop on “Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law”

A workshop on “Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law” was held at the Regional Office for Capacity Building for the WCO Europe Region in Baku, Azerbaijan from 19 to 20 February 2020.

The workshop was intended to give an overview about “Human Rights” which covers Regional human rights instruments that help to localise international human rights norms and standards, reflecting the particular human rights concerns of the region.

During the workshop, experts from the Defense Institute of International Legal Studies of the United States made presentations on "Respect and Respect for Human Rights", "Regional International Human Rights Treaty", "Torture - Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment", "Gender Violence and Trafficking in International Law," Law Enforcement reports on other topics such as "the use of force." The workshop, include a series of presentations on "International Armed Conflicts and Law", "Rules for the Use of Force", "Selection of the Target for the Law of Armed Conflict".



Workshop on "Analysing X-Ray Images"

Four-day exercise on the theme "Analysing X-Ray images" kicked off at the World Customs Organization's Regional Office for Capacity Building for Europe Region in Baku on 2 March 2020.

The exercise organized as part the project of the State Customs Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan and Export Control and Related Border Security Program of the US Department of State is being attended by the representatives of the Committee's structural units, areal and specialized customs offices and the Academy of the State Customs Committee.

The aim of the event is to improve knowledge and skills of customs officers working on X-Ray device, share the experience of the US and exchange experience.

Detailed information on raising awareness on radiation, equipment technology, operation procedures, interview techniques, analysis of behavior, analysis of images of passenger transport vehicle, analysis of trucks will be given to the participants during the exercise. It should be noted that the main purpose of the training is to increase the knowledge and skills of customs officers working in the X-ray (X-ray), to share US experience, as well as to exchange experiences.

UNODC-WCO Container Control Programme Trainings

In the frame of the WCO-UNODC Container Control Programme, a number of trainings were successfully delivered at the ROCB Europe. The Container Control Programme (CCP) of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the World Customs Organization (WCO) supports the strengthening of international supply chain with establishing and maintaining effective container controls that will serve not only to prevent trafficking in drugs and other illicit goods, but also to facilitate legitimate trade and protect border revenue.

These events aimed at providing training on registration of cargo selections and inspections, appreciating the need for risk management and reviewing through which modern customs control systems should be based on selectivity approach, and risk management in organizing and controlling customs activities that start with identification, analyzing and evaluation of possible risks thereby continue with treating of selected risks by adoption of risk indicators and profiles.



Audience attending the workshop were also informed about the UNODC-WCO Container Control Programme (CCP) and its mission which is to build capacity in countries seeking to improve risk management, supply chain security, and trade facilitation at seaports, airports and land border crossings in order to prevent the cross-border movement of illicit goods.

Additionally, in the context of the WCO-UNODC Container Control Programme, trainings on Strategic Trade and Export Control Training were successfully delivered at the ROCB Europe. Strategic goods encompass weapons of mass destruction (WMD), conventional weapons, and related items involved in the development, production or use of such weapons and their delivery systems. Despite the importance of combating illicit trafficking in strategic commodities and Customs' role as the first and last line of defense at the national level, this remains a particularly challenging topic for Customs. In this connection, participants of the trainings were informed about the critical aspects with regard to controlling strategic goods.



F. WORK PLAN 2020/2021

ROCB Europe Work Plan 2020/2021

With the aim of achieving the objectives in the frame of the Strategic Framework and the Execution Program, activities depicted in the Work Plan for the 2020/2021 period is projected to be implemented by the Regional Office for Capacity Building for the World Customs Organization Europe Region.

The Work Plan is constructed in a way to achieving the goals on the basis of results-based management approach as further explained below.

Methodology

Results-Based Management (RBM) is a management strategy that is focused on performance and achievement of outputs, outcomes and impacts.² In other words, performance results of given activities are concentrated on by using the approach. It is also a proper way to manage processes within the frame of transparency and accountability. The RBM enables learning from experience, implementing activities as well as adapting to circumstances realistically.

As hardship in measuring capacity development activities has been evident, no pre-defined prescriptions are available in that regard. In this juncture, defining indicators becomes the critical matter in the process. Determining alterations realized necessitates a delicate analysis of functions performed or foreseen to be performed by a given institution. It is important to define and make the analysis on the basis of essential service of the institution and to whom the service is being provided for. Aside from the evaluation feedbacks from the beneficiaries which is also difficult in the face of challenging task of obtaining fully extensive assessments, another way to define the performance exists through reviewing the aspects of service, which might include institutional outreach such as number of beneficiaries serviced. Furthermore, some indicators may be well pre-defined, i.e., regular publication of certain documents or dissemination of useful materials.³ The Work Plan is established on the foundation of these factors, using RBM elements so as to reach a proper level of monitoring the performance and results of activities, outputs and outcomes.

² Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation and Results Based Management:
<https://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/2754804.pdf>

³ Results Based Management Concepts and Methodology:
<http://web.undp.org/evaluation/documents/RBMConceptsMethodgyjuly2002.pdf>

The RBM includes interconnected processes among good planning, monitoring and evaluation. As this interconnectedness has the potential to increase the effectiveness to a great extent, a sensible planning enables focusing on resource allocation and implementation. If effectively made, monitoring and evaluation bolsters the endeavour aimed at attaining the results by better adjusting the initiatives for subsequent periods of planning.⁴ In this context, the RBM approach is adopted also for monitoring and evaluation of the activities and results, thereby having room for flexibility and optimization of reforming activities and, if necessary, a better reevaluation of goals and sub-objectives.

The Work Plan is constructed in the frame of RBM elements, definitions of which are presented below.⁵

Definitions:

Activity: Actions taken or work performed through which inputs are mobilized to produce specific outputs.

Stakeholders: Parties that would have an effect on or would be beneficiaries of a certain activity, having direct or indirect interest.

Output: Specific products and services which come out in consequence of realizing activities through planning.

Status: Standing condition of a certain activity.

Indicator: Quantitative or qualitative factor or variable that provides a simple and reliable means to measure achievement, to reflect the changes or to help assess the performance.

Outcome: Actual or intended changes in conditions.

Impact: Foreseen/intended result of the activities for a particular goal.

⁴ Results-based management: <http://www.fao.org/investment-learning-platform/themes-and-tasks/results-based-management/en/>

⁵ Most of the definitions cited from Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation and Results Based Management: <https://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/2754804.pdf>

ROCB EUROPE STRATEGIC GOALS

Keystone Strategic Goals:

1. Promote the work on customs capacity building and WCO instruments.
2. Foster customs reform and modernization process of Member Administrations.
3. Strengthen regional cooperation among Member Administrations.
4. Enhance collaboration with stakeholders, development partners and donors.

Strategic Goals on Organizational Management:

5. Strengthen office management and improve institutional functionality.
6. Secure adequate funding and financial sustainability.

Strategic Goal on Communication:

7. Address a broad audience and raise awareness on customs capacity building and development.

* * *

The Work Plan for ROCB Europe 2020/2021 is hereby attached.



GOAL 1: Promote the work on Customs Capacity Building and WCO instruments.

#	Activity	Stakeholders	Expected Output	Status	Indicator	Intended Outcome
1.1	Maintain and promote sustainable mechanism for collection of capacity building needs of Member Administrations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Member Administrations• WCO	Collecting and examining the needs and forwarding to the WCO Secretariat with proposals	Ongoing	Number of needs collected and analyzed	Orchestrated approach with the WCO Secretariat for customs capacity building assistance
1.2	Support WCO Capacity Building efforts in compliance with the WCO Annual Delivery Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Member Administrations• WCO	Complementing activities of WCO in the region in the scope of WCO Annual Delivery Plan	Ongoing	Number of activities	Optimized and expanded servicing for fulfilling capacity building needs of Member Administrations
1.3	Initiate, design and implement work for promotion of WCO tools and training materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Member Administrations• WCO• Other International Organizations• Private Sector	Actions on introducing and publicizing promos on WCO instruments	Ongoing	Improvement in advertising	Widened audience and increased frequency for promotion of WCO tools and training materials



1.4	Track WCO developments and align the work of the ROCB Europe accordingly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member Administrations • WCO 	Keeping abreast of WCO state of affairs and trajectory	Ongoing	Number of activities or actions taken	Staying informed and up to date of WCO developments and accommodated Office work in the same direction
-----	--	---	--	---------	---------------------------------------	--

Expected Impact:

Enhanced support for customs capacity of Member Administrations and increased benefit from and better use of WCO instruments.

GOAL 2:

Foster customs reform and modernization process of Member Administrations.

#	Activity	Stakeholders	Expected Output	Status	Indicator	Intended Outcome
2.1	Upon request, support Member Administrations' efforts in Customs Capacity Building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member Administrations • WCO • Other International Organizations 	Provide technical assistance, training and experience sharing activities	Ongoing	Number of activities	Elevated level of Capacity Building at Member Administrations
2.2	Upon request, assist Member Administrations with a view to promoting WCO e-learning platforms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member Administrations • WCO 	Actions on introducing and better familiarizing WCO e-learning platforms for Member Administrations	Ongoing	Consultations with the Member Administrations	Heightened use and awareness of WCO e-learning platforms



2.3	Motivate developed Member Administrations to provide contribution in regional Capacity Building activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member Administrations 	Reach out to developed Member Administrations for more cooperation on Capacity Building	Ongoing	Actions taken	Increased involvement of developed Administrations in regional capacity building processes
2.4	Provide informative and training materials for Member Administrations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member Administrations • WCO 	Prepare, design and publish materials	To be initiated	Publication of materials	Expanded availability of resources for empowering customs knowledge
2.5	Publish the materials translated into Russian on the ROCB Europe web site	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member Administrations • WCO 	Enable necessary technical structure and place translated materials on the web site members only section	To be completed in 2020/2021 period	Publication of materials	Broadened coverage of customs personnel for benefiting from informative sources
2.6	Maintain the Regional Experts Database (RED)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member Administrations • WCO 	Request expert nominations and conduct regular updates for the database	Ongoing	Availability and recency of the database	Sustained and up to date resource of expertise for providing technical assistance

Expected Impact:
Increased customs capacity of Member Administrations.

GOAL 3: Strengthen regional cooperation among Member Administrations.						
#	Activity	Stakeholders	Expected Output	Status	Indicator	Intended Outcome
3.1	Collect and disseminate information on current trends or best practices in the region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member Administrations • WCO • Other International Organizations 	Design and develop materials upon collecting best practices or examining the course of customs and trade	To be initiated	Providing informative documents	Improvement in knowledge among Member Administrations
3.2	Provide Members with an effective platform for communication using innovative technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member Administrations • WCO 	Provide means for effective communication using technical possibilities	To be initiated	Availability of communication platform	Enhancement of communication means among Member Administrations
3.3	Organize events for cooperation and information sharing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member Administrations • WCO • Other International Organizations 	Plan and execute events aimed at gathering Member Administrations on certain topics	Ongoing	Number of activities	Ensured collaboration and information sharing among the Member Administrations
3.4	Request Member Administrations to second executive staff to the ROCB Europe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member Administrations 	Urge Member Administrations to support the ROCB Europe with their human capital	Ongoing	Requests made	Strengthened capability of the Office thereby better cooperation among Member Administrations



3.5	Maintain and update the National Contact Points database	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member Administrations • WCO 	Request Member Administrations for nominations and updates of Contact Points	Ongoing	Availability and recency of the database	Sustained and up to date contact information of Member Administrations
Expected Impact: Increased regional cooperation among the Member Administrations.						

GOAL 4: Enhance collaboration with stakeholders, development partners and donors.						
#	Activity	Stakeholders	Expected Output	Status	Indicator	Intended Outcome
4.1	Build or strengthen partnerships that enable cooperation, information-sharing and mutual understanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member Administrations • WCO • Other International Organizations • Private Sector 	Actions for establishing connections with potential partners and/or boosting collaborative work with existing partners	Ongoing	Improvement with respect to engagements and collaborative work	Wider cooperation possibilities and more effective collaboration



4.2	Promote and/or carry out coordinated or joint activities with partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member Administrations • WCO • Other International Organizations • Private Sector 	Supporting, planning, coordinating and executing activities	Ongoing	Number of activities supported or executed	Strengthened collaboration and reinforced customs capacity building servicing
4.3	Function as a bridge in the WCO Europe Region for improved coordination and information sharing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member Administrations • WCO 	Supplement and facilitate the work of the WCO in the Region and assist Member Administrations in obtaining information thereof	Ongoing	Frequency in flow of information provided and coordination ensured	Increased interoperability and informational status in the region
4.4	Coordinate activities of the Regional Training Centers and further strengthen cooperation among regional structures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member Administrations 	Urge Regional Training Centers (RTCs) to work in cooperation with the ROCB Europe and provide them with guidance	Ongoing	Monitoring activities of RTCs and identifying and designing work for further advancement	Enhanced effectiveness on Capacity Building in the region

Expected Impact:

Increased audience, reinforced promotion of customs capacity building activities and the Office.

GOAL 5: Strengthen office management and improve institutional functionality.						
#	Activity	Stakeholders	Expected Output	Status	Indicator	Intended Outcome
5.1	Ensure proper conditions for the Office and its staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Host Administration • Member Administrations 	Take necessary measures for Office setting to sustain the environment for proper working conditions	Ongoing	Maintenance and improvement with respect to Office environment	Effective functioning of the Office and the staff
5.2	Update the Strategic Framework as well as Work Plan on the basis of feedback from the Member Administrations and maintain a reporting mechanism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member Administrations 	Review and optimize guidance documents in a way to best serve the regional needs and priorities	Ongoing	Regularly updated guidance documents and report of activities submitted to the Members	Adaptive work on the basis of adopted principles and informed Member Administrations of the progress
5.3	Provide bilingual availability for correspondence and documents published by the Office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member Administrations 	Provide Russian language versions of documents produced by the Office as much as possible	Initiated in early 2020	Availability of bilingual documents	Increased outreach of the Office and convenience provided for Russian-speaking Member Administrations



5.4	Digitalize correspondence and documents of the Office for electronic archiving	<i>Not applicable</i>	Establish digital archive for storage of official materials produced by the Office in internal server	To be initiated	Building a digital archive	Ease of access and long-term stable usefulness of documents
-----	--	-----------------------	---	-----------------	----------------------------	---

Expected Impact:
Increased effectiveness and competency of the Office.

GOAL 6: Secure adequate funding and financial sustainability.						
#	Activity	Stakeholders	Expected Output	Status	Indicator	Intended Outcome
6.1	Engage in for ensuring stable and adequate funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Member Administrations 	Inform Member Administrations of the course of financial situation and annual contributions	Ongoing	Endeavor for stable funding and informing Member Administrations thereof	Pre-determined and anticipated amount of annual contributions and activities taken commensurate to the funding



6.2	Maintain accountability and transparency on budgetary aspects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member Administrations 	Retain trackable figures of income and spending	Ongoing	Submitting budget report to Member Administrations	Use of financial resources for attaining the goals of the Office in an accountable, transparent and sustainable way
-----	---	--	---	---------	--	---

Expected Impact:
Improved functionality of the ROCB Europe in providing customs capacity activities.

**GOAL 7:
Address a broad audience and raise awareness on customs capacity building and development.**

#	Activity	Stakeholders	Expected Output	Status	Indicator	Intended Outcome
7.1	Ensure improved technical infrastructure and optimization for stable and user-friendly web site	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member Administrations • WCO • Other International Organizations • Private Sector 	Consistent, readily accessible and user-centric web site	Ongoing	Maintain a properly working effective web site and number of visits	Better and more use of ROCB Europe web site with added benefits for visitors



7.2	Use means of outreach and promotion materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member Administrations • WCO • Other International Organizations • Private Sector 	Implement public engagement efforts and reach out to customs and trade community by effective communication and representation	Ongoing	Number of activities or actions taken on outreach	Upheld customs capacity building related promotion and widened audience
-----	---	--	--	---------	---	---

Expected Impact:

Increased audience as well as awareness in customs and trade community.

G. ACTIVITIES OF REGIONAL TRAINING CENTERS

There are seven Regional Training Centers in the WCO Europe Region as accredited by the WCO. These are:

- RTC Baku (Azerbaijan)
- RTC Budapest (Hungary)
- RTC Bishkek (Kyrgyz Republic)
- RTC Khmelnytsky (Ukraine)
- RTC Moscow (Russian Federation)
- RTC Nur-Sultan (Kazakhstan)
- RTC Skopje (North Macedonia)

The role of the RTCs are:

- The development of regionally relevant training.
- The maintenance of specialist trainer pools.
- The provision of specialist training at a regional level.
- The development and support of the WCO's blended learning programme.

Regional Training Centers in the WCO Europe Region were involved in various activities and events through either organizing or participating during the reporting period up to 56. Also, the number of events already planned by the RTCs is 35. The reports by the Regional Training Centers, as is, are presented in the Annex VII.

In line with the expected output stated in Activity 4.4 of the Work Plan of the ROCB Europe, Regional Training Centers will be urged to work in cooperation with the ROCB Europe and they will be provided with guidance with a view to attaining enhanced effectiveness on Capacity Building in the region.

In the meantime, as explained in Report of Activities, Section D, point 3.5 above more in detail, the ROCB Europe endeavored for attaining a snapshot of the RTCs with respect to their fundamental characteristics and provided for standardized reporting for RTCs. Also, a possible initiative for having RTCs as excellence centers on certain customs field(s) has thus started.

Answers to the survey questions by the Regional Training Centers are combined in the table below:



SURVEY ON REGIONAL TRAINING CENTERS

Name of RTC	Does the RTC have its own building including adequate rooms/space for trainings, meetings etc.?	In the context of which of the documents the RTC is performing its work?	Does the RTC have accommodati on facilities?	Does the RTC have its own budget separate from the Customs Administration?	Does the RTC receive financial support coming from other than the Customs Administration?	Is the number of staff at the RTC considered adequate for the workload allocated to the RTC?	Is the RTC willing to specialize in a certain customs topic for providing expertise and trainings?
RTC Baku	Yes	Action/Work Plan	No	No	No	No	Yes/ trade facilitation; risk management; targeting
RTC Budapest	Yes	In line with the expectations of the WCO and the NTCA	Yes	No	No	Yes	No
RTC Bishkek	Yes	Strategy Document	Yes	No	Yes/ Infrastructure and Personnel Support	No	Yes/ Export control and radiation safety
RTC Khmelnitsky	Yes	Strategy Document	No	No	No	Yes	Yes/ STCE, Training of Trainers, Canine Training, Non-Intrusive Methods of Customs Control
RTC Moscow	Yes	Strategy Document	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes/ NII Systems, Customs control of the fissile and radioactive materials
RTC Nur-Sultan	Yes	Action/Work Plan	No	No	No	Yes	No
RTC Skopje	Yes	Strategic Plan	No	No	No	Yes	Yes/ Tariff Classification; Union Customs Code; Origin of goods

H. FINANCIAL ASPECTS

1. Financial Sustainability

Balancing financial sustainability with organizational goals has been one of the core challenges for the ROCB Europe for a considerable period of time. Therefore, it is important to determine major difficulties with respect to financial sustainability that are faced by the Office considering the overall objectives.

In general terms, sustainability is considered as the ability of maintaining an organization in the long term. The challenges in that respect are balancing the need for retaining financial sustainability and organizational objectives through a stable and satisfactory plan in the long term.

In an effort to maintain financial sustainability in the long term with increased expected outcomes from its activities, elements of strategic and financial planning, sound administration, additional funds generation have been worked on by the ROCB Europe.

Strategic and financial planning is needed for a well-established programming of activities and initiatives that would benefit the WCO Europe Region on a large scale in terms of customs capacity building. Strategic and financial planning should be done in line with robust administrative practices. Sound administration also includes transparency and accountability in terms of use of the financial resources directed at Office activities as well as organizational matters of operation. The ROCB Europe has been performing in line with these open and trackable values by briefing the WCO Europe Region Heads of Customs annually of its activities and use of resources. Its annual reports demonstrate accountability and integrity.

The ROCB Europe also strived for additional funding by pursuing additional fund generation. During the reporting period, the Office organized an event for local economic operators in an effort to generate additional income in partnership with Azerbaijan Customs. Additionally, the Office conference hall was rented out for an event to a private sector association. However, it turned out that this kind of initiatives do not generate remarkable additional income for the Office. Renting is not frequently carried out in the face of competitive other places such as hotels, and with the Covid-19 pandemic, it might not be possible for a considerable time. On the other hand, organizing fund raising events returns less income compared to the labor and time devoted to this kind of an event. That is to say, channeling these resources to the core objectives of the Office might be more logical and effective.

Another effective way for funded activities would be having donations by certain willing Member Administrations directed at specific projects or programs coordinated by the ROCB Europe in partnership with the donor member. This kind of a donor partnership would be more satisfactory in terms of expected outcomes and impact. The ROCB Europe is always open and ready to be involved in such partnership initiatives.

Yet, secondment is an excellent example of making contributions to ROCB Europe by the Members. For a considerable period of time, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Switzerland and Turkey have been seconding staff at the ROCB Europe, a policy that deserves much appreciation. Other WCO Europe Region Member Administrations are regularly invited to follow this practice and support the Office to a greater extent as well.

Consequently, abovementioned efforts for generating additional funding are prone to be not as much satisfactory as projected and always bear the risk of sudden disappearance due to its uncertain and spontaneous nature. In the meantime, voluntary characteristic of contributions also bears the risk of disruption of intended ROCB Europe activities. However, the Office has been striving to maintain its effectiveness regardless of this matter.

2. Member Contributions

Current funding mechanism for the ROCB Europe operates as follows:

- a) The amount of annual financial contribution to the ROCB Europe from each of the WCO Europe Region Member is 1,750.00 Euros;
- b) The annual contributions are made on a voluntary basis.

In that context, the trend of the number of contributions received from the Member Administrations in the Region for the last five years is as follows:

Financial Year	2015/2016	2016/2017	2017/2018	2018/2019	2019/2020
Number of Contributing Members	37	38	39	39	31

The ROCB Europe received funding in the amount of 1,750.00 Euros from 31 members totaling 54,250.00 Euros annually for the Financial Year 2019/2020.⁶

3. Previous Year and Projected Budget

Budget items of the ROCB Europe is classified as Chapter 1: Premises, Chapter 2: Supplies and Services, Chapter 3: Missions, Chapter 4: Regional/Subregional Events, Chapter 5: Representation, and Chapter 6: Other. Chapter 1 comprises elements for basic maintenance of premises. Chapter 2 includes items for Office supplies, maintenance and repairing of office equipment, documentation and printing, translations, IT investments and miscellaneous expenses in the context of supplies and services. Chapter 3 is devoted to missions, delivered as a capacity building national support mission or a scoping/working/preparatory mission or a

⁶ This figure is as of 7 October 2019.

public relations mission directed at awareness raising. Chapter 4 comprises regional and subregional events. Chapter 5 is dedicated to representation by the ROCB Europe in meetings divided as WCO and other meetings. Chapter 6 is used for items that are not classifiable in any of the other categories.

The expenditure (in Euro) from 1st of April 2019 until 31st of March 2020 is as follows:

Expenditure

Premises	€ 87.74
Supplies and Services	€ 3,836.22
Missions	€ 8,905.48
Regional/Subregional Events	€ 22,967.40
Representation	€ 14,339.21
Other	€ 289.60
TOTAL	€ 50,425.65

The revenue (in Euro) from 1st of April 2019 until 31st of March 2020 is as follows:

Revenue

Contributions	€ 54,250.00
Other	€ 3,408.16
TOTAL	€ 57,658.16

In this frame, balance for the reporting period stands as below:

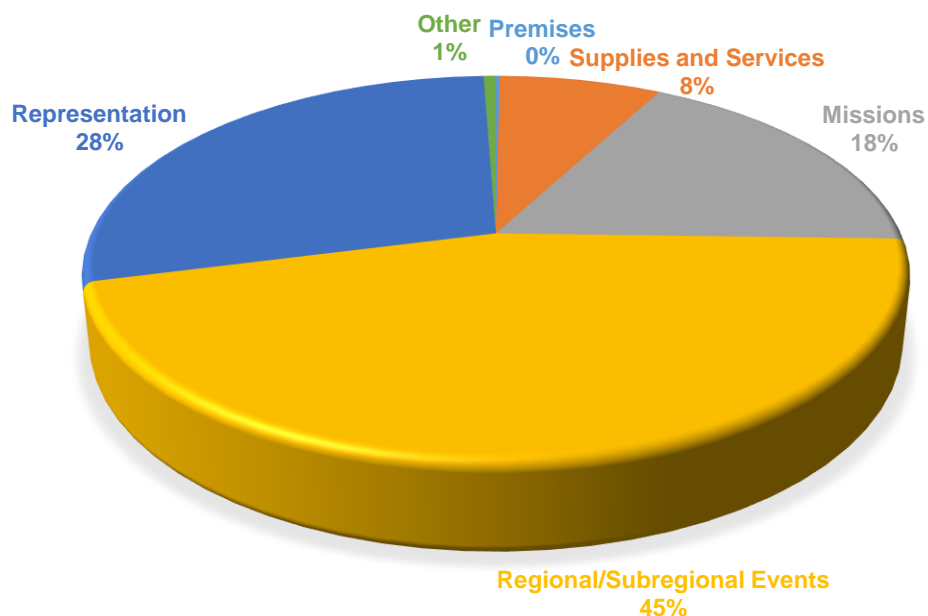
BALANCE	€ 7,232.51
----------------	-------------------

For 2019/2020 financial year, 31 Member Administrations contributed a total amount of 54,250.00 Euro for the ROCB Europe budget and the Office generated an income of 3408.16 Euro.

The current funding for the ROCB Europe provides adequate resources for maintaining short or mid term operational capacity.⁷ It should also be noted that the host administration, the State Customs Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan, supports the ROCB Europe to a great extent, by bearing the running costs primarily in operational and administrative aspects.

⁷ It should be reiterated that “the regional entities are initiatives of the Regions” (Doc. SP0399, paragraph 11) and that the regional entities are “the responsibility of each region” (SP0612E1b, paragraph 77).

DISTRIBUTION OF EXPENSES 2019/2020



Projected budget is constructed with figures intended for allocation to the respective budget fields and actualization of these estimated expenses might differ from the estimated figures in the face of the amount of total contributions falling short or developments due to the course of Covid-19 pandemic.

The estimation for future in-place trainings might take a possible downward turn because of the coronavirus. However, these events are intended to be taken online. In that regard and taking the technical advancement anticipation of the Office, expenses would be higher on the information technology part. In any case, the allocation of the financial resources will be made by ensuring effective use of those in an effort to provide best possible benefit to the region in line with the WCO and ROCB Europe strategies.

Detailed Expenditure: Financial Year 2019/2020 and 2020/2021 Estimates

Chapter 1 - Premises

Description		Expenditure	2020/2021 Estimates
1.0	Maintenance	€ 87.74	€ 100.00
	Total	€ 87.74	€ 100.00

Chapter 2 – Supplies and services

Description		Expenditure	2020/2021 Estimates
2.1	Office Supplies	€ 151.97	€ 200.00
2.2	Maintenance and Repair of Equipment	€ 187.52	€ 250.00
2.3	Documentation/Printing	€ 24.60	€ 500.00
2.4	Translations	€ 0.00	€ 4,000.00
2.5	IT expenses	€ 2,260.45	€ 6,000.00
2.6	Miscellaneous	€ 1,211.68	€ 1,500.00
	Total	€ 3,836.22	€ 12,450.00

Chapter 3 – Missions

Description		Expenditure	2020/2021 Estimates
3.1	Support Missions	€ 5,941.32	€ 15,000.00
3.2	Scoping Missions	€ 1,554.40	€ 2,000.00
3.3	Awareness Raising Missions	€ 1,409.76	€ 1,500.00
	Total	€ 8,905.48	€ 18,500.00

Chapter 4 – Regional/Subregional Events

Description		Expenditure	2020/2021 Estimates
4.0	Regional/Subregional Events	€ 22,967.40	€ 20,000.00
	Total	€ 22,967.40	€ 20,000.00

Chapter 5 – Representation

Description		Expenditure	2020/2021 Estimates
5.1	WCO Meetings	€ 13,634.21	€ 5,000.00
5.2	Other Meetings	€ 705.00	€ 1,000.00
	Total	€ 14,339.21	€ 6,000.00

Chapter 6 – Other

Description		Expenditure	2020/2021 Estimates
6.0	Other	€ 289.60	€ 0.00
	Total	€ 289.60	€ 0.00

Grand Total	€ 50,425.65	€ 57,050.00
--------------------	--------------------	--------------------

4. Outlook

Connection between financial stability and long-term planning should be on a firm footing with a view to ensuring concrete and foreseen outcomes from the activities and initiatives carried out by the ROCB Europe. However, there would be a risk of declined or disrupted sustained operational activity of the ROCB Europe in the face of limited number and voluntary nature of contributions by the Member Administrations.

A pre-defined period for contributions (such as 3 years) and prolongation of the period for additional consecutive one-year periods annually would work against the long-term financing of the Office. This is why the best way would be not setting a period for contributions and, in contrast, having the annual contributions permanent. In this regard, the possibility of making the voluntary contributions permanent without setting any pre-defined period might be taken into consideration.

The draft Terms of Reference (annexed) for the ROCB Europe contains a provision⁸ for voluntary contributions. That is why, if the Terms of Reference is endorsed by a decision of the Heads of Customs of the WCO Europe Region, there might be no need for additional decisions each year from the region for prolongation while financial contributions are already on a voluntary basis. These matters are determined solely upon the decisions of the Heads of Customs of the WCO Europe Region.

* * *

⁸ In Section 4. Budget, it reads “The budget of the ROCB Europe is formed of annual voluntary contributions received from the Members of the WCO Europe Region.”



ANNEXES:

- Annex I: ROCB Europe Strategic Framework Document**
- Annex II: Working Method for ROCB Europe Capacity Building Support**
- Annex III: Revised Role of Capacity Building Contact Points**
- Annex IV: Draft Terms of Reference for the ROCB Europe**
- Annex V: Flyers and Brochures**
- Annex VI: List of Events**
- Annex VII: Reports by Regional Training Centers**



ANNEX I

ROCB EUROPE STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK DOCUMENT

2018-2021

This document is intended for providing a strategic guidance for ROCB Europe.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Regional Office for Capacity Building (ROCB) for the World Customs Organization (WCO) Europe Region is the 6th and final ROCB comprising WCO's largest region which has been operational since 2011.

The Office operates in its own building, which includes spacious conference hall, computer lab and two classrooms alongside offices for staff and has its own Cargo and Container Training Center (Section I: Current Status).

ROCB Europe is the beacon for the work of customs capacity building activities in the WCO Europe Region. It exclusively aims at enhancing capacities of Customs Administrations in paving the way for more secure and simplified customs processes and international trade operations.

ROCB Europe's vision is to realize sustainable capacity building activities with concrete outcomes that favorably benefit Customs Administrations based on the values of *Excellence, Cooperation, Inclusiveness, and Continuous Improvement*.

ROCB Europe performs its work in line with its four keystone strategic goals and three strategies on organizational management and communication (Section II: Strategy).

Keystone Strategic Goals:

- **Promote the work on customs capacity building and WCO instruments.**
- **Foster customs reform and modernization process of Member Administrations.**
- **Strengthen regional cooperation among Member Administrations.**
- **Enhance collaboration with stakeholders, development partners and donors.**

Strategic Goals on Organizational Management:

- **Strengthen office management and improve institutional functionality.**
- **Secure adequate funding and financial sustainability.**

Strategic Goal on Communication:

- **Address a broad audience and raise awareness on customs capacity building and development.**

The Execution Program is projected to be implemented with a view to achieving the strategic goals (Section III: Execution Program).



SECTION I: CURRENT STATUS

A. OPERATING CONTEXT:

The Regional Office for Capacity Building (ROCB) for the World Customs Organization (WCO) Europe Region has been functioning in Baku, Azerbaijan, since 17 October 2011 based on the Memorandum of Understanding signed between the WCO and the Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

ROCB Europe is the 6th and final ROCB comprising WCO's largest region.

ROCB Europe performs its work by means of its technical as well as administrative services. The State Customs Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan gives extensive support in terms of logistical arrangements and administrative support to ROCB Europe.

Technical staff of ROCB Europe is seconded by Customs Administrations of WCO Europe Region. Currently, there are three technical staff seconded by the Customs Administrations of Turkey (head of office), and the Republic of Azerbaijan. (*updated - February 2020*)

The Office is fully ensured with administrative staff including office manager and support staff as well as guardsmen by the State Customs Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

B. ASSETS:

i) Facilities

ROCB Europe operates in its own building, which includes the following alongside spacious offices for staff:

- Fully equipped conference hall;
- Computer lab with working stations;
- 2 well-equipped training classes;
- Cafeteria as well as fully equipped kitchen;
- Parking garage.

WCO, WCO Member Administrations and international governmental organizations as well as the State Customs Committee and other government agencies of the Republic of Azerbaijan are welcome to use the premises.

ii) Cargo and Container Training Center

The Cargo and Container Training Center is located at the ROCB Europe premises and intended for providing training for frontline customs officers on cargo and container control matters both theoretically and practically. The center, which was built with the kind support of Customs Administration of the Netherlands, is the second center worldwide after the one in Rotterdam. ROCB Europe hosts cargo and container trainings ex officio at the center upon receiving requests from member states.

SECTION II: STRATEGY

A. SWOT ANALYSIS

i) Strengths:

- There is an extensive ongoing support to ROCB Europe from the host administration, the State Customs Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan.
- ROCB Europe has its own premises with spacious offices and well-furnished large meeting hall and training sections.
- The coverage of ROCB Europe is the largest in comparison to other WCO Regions and it is comprised of Member Administrations some of which are substantially advanced in customs.
- The location of the ROCB Europe is practical and it is virtually in the center of the WCO Europe Region in geographical means which makes it easily reachable from any country in the WCO Europe Region.

ii) Weaknesses:

- ROCB Europe traditionally suffers from under employment of technical personnel and lack of adequate financial support from the member Customs Administrations which in turn causes ROCB Europe to underperform. The level of low backing seems to be dramatic considering the large coverage of the WCO Europe Region.
- The attention and willingness to hold collaborative activities of Member Administrations with ROCB Europe is limited.
- Absence of a strategy for the WCO Europe Region prevents ROCB Europe from performing in a fulfilling way in line with regional guidance and needs.

iii) Opportunities:

- ROCB Europe has the potential to play a role in regional capacity building activities as well as customs related projects to a much greater extent as opposed to the current situation.
- ROCB Europe can act as a coordination hub for the region for Regional Training Centers, RILOs and Vice-Chairmanship as well as WCO Europe Region Heads of Administration Conference.
- ROCB Europe web site can be used for accessing working documents and announcements for regional meetings and events through public or member only sections, as the case may be.
- Within the framework of a long term regional strategy, ROCB Europe can use its potential for a stable and sustainable work program.

iv) Threats:

- Ongoing low level of support could result in decreased attention and a decline of interest for WCO activities in WCO Europe Region.
- Limited number of high level regional events coupled with low level of regional coordination might result in as an unbalanced regional coordination as well as lack of mutual understanding among Member Administrations.

B. STRATEGIC GUIDANCE

i) Mission statement:

ROCB Europe is the beacon for the work of customs capacity building activities in the WCO Europe Region. It exclusively aims at enhancing capacities of Customs Administrations in paving the way for more secure and simplified customs processes and international trade operations.

ii) Vision:

Realizing sustainable capacity building activities with concrete outcomes that favorably benefit Customs Administrations.

iii) Values:

Excellence, Cooperation, Inclusiveness, Continuous Improvement.

C. KEYSTONE STRATEGIC GOALS

ROCB Europe operates with the aim of achieving the following keystone strategic goals:

- **Promote the work on customs capacity building and WCO instruments.**
- **Foster customs reform and modernization process of Member Administrations.**
- **Strengthen regional cooperation among Member Administrations.**
- **Enhance collaboration with stakeholders, development partners and donors.**

D. ORGANISATIONAL MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

In order to complement and boost the work on the keystone strategic goals, ROCB Europe also operates in the context of the following organizational management strategy goals:

- **Strengthen office management and improve institutional functionality.**
- **Secure adequate funding and financial sustainability.**

E. COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

In order to complement and boost the work on the keystone strategic goals, ROCB Europe also operates in the context of the following communication strategy goal:

- **Address a broad audience and raise awareness on customs capacity building and development.**

SECTION III: EXECUTION PROGRAM

Below program comprises overall deliverables with corresponding elements and is projected to be implemented with a view to achieving the strategic goals of the ROCB Europe through an annually updated detailed Work Plan on the basis of results-based management approach:

GOAL 1:	
Promote the work on customs capacity building and WCO instruments.	
Deliverables	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organize, coordinate or host regional, sub-regional and national events on customs capacity building and WCO instruments. Produce, collect, analyze or disseminate information about customs capacity building and WCO instruments.
Potential Stakeholders	Customs Administrations, WCO, other international governmental organizations, private sector.
Expected Impact	Enhanced customs capacity of Member Administrations and increased benefit from and better use of WCO instruments.
Performance Indicators	Number of events organized, hosted or coordinated.
GOAL 2:	
Foster customs reform and modernization process of Member Administrations.	
Deliverables	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide customs capacity building support through coordination of technical assistance, training and experience sharing activities for Member Administrations. Assist initiation or implementation of projects and programs of Member Administrations on customs capacity building.
Potential Stakeholders	Customs Administrations, WCO, other international governmental organizations.
Expected Impact	Increased customs capacity of Member Administrations.
Performance Indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of events organized, hosted or coordinated. Number of projects or programs assisted.
GOAL 3:	
Strengthen regional cooperation among Member Administrations.	



Deliverables	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a common platform for regional communication, view exchange, information sharing; coordinate regional and sub-regional meetings; keep databases for experts, programs and projects and other relevant information. • Draft and propose WCO Europe Region Regional Strategic Plan.
Potential Stakeholders	Member Administrations, WCO Secretariat.
Expected Impact	Increased regional cooperation between the Member Administrations.
Performance Indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of initiatives taken for strengthening regional cooperation • Status of WCO Europe Region Regional Strategic Plan.
GOAL 4:	
Enhance collaboration with stakeholders, development partners and donors.	
Deliverables	Increase engagement with stakeholders, development partners and donors in order to organize joint activities and urge them to take initiatives.
Potential Stakeholders	Governments, WCO, other international governmental organizations, private sector, embassies, missions in Azerbaijan.
Expected Impact	Increased audience, reinforced promotion of customs capacity building activities and the Office.
Performance Indicators	Number of projects, visits and events carried out.
GOAL 5:	
Strengthen office management and improve institutional functionality.	
Deliverables	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure effective human resources development and provide training where available and proper conditions for staff at the Office. • Conduct on the basis of adopted institutional procedures and principles.
Potential Stakeholders	N/A
Expected Impact	Increased effectiveness and competency of the Office.
Performance Indicators	Ongoing process.
GOAL 6:	
Secure adequate funding and financial sustainability.	

Deliverables	Ensure long term funding thereby consistent implementation of the Execution Program for customs capacity building activities.
Potential Stakeholders	Customs Administrations, development partners, donors.
Expected Impact	Improved functionality of ROCB Europe in providing customs capacity activities.
Performance Indicators	Balanced budget and the number of activities provided.
GOAL 7:	
Address a broad audience and raise awareness on customs capacity building and development.	
Deliverables	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage as many stakeholders as possible to attract more attention to the work of ROCB Europe and urge stakeholders to take initiatives on customs capacity building by effective communication techniques and representation. • Reach out stakeholders with a view to urging them to uphold customs capacity building related activities.
Potential Stakeholders	Customs and trade community.
Expected Impact	Increased audience as well as awareness in customs and trade community.
Performance Indicators	Number of outreach actions taken.

SECTION IV: PERFORMANCE MONITORING AND REVIEW

A. PERFORMANCE MONITORING

Performance monitoring with regard to Execution Program shall be made based on Progress Report which shall indicate the activities of ROCB Europe on an annual basis taking into consideration a results-based approach and impact observation through quantitative as well as qualitative methods.

B. REVIEW

The ROCB Europe Strategic Framework shall be reviewed by ROCB Europe aligned with the inputs received from the Member Administrations, WCO Europe Region Vice-Chair and the WCO Secretariat.

ANNEX II

WORKING METHOD FOR ROCB EUROPE CAPACITY BUILDING DELIVERY IN SUPPORTING THE WCO ANNUAL PLANNING

Owing to a new initiative concerning the capacity building missions in the WCO Europe Region, the ROCB Europe already expressed its readiness to involve more in capacity building delivery in the frame of WCO Annual Planning. The initiative essentially includes using ROCB Europe resources to carry out missions that could not be provided by the WCO due to lack of funding from donors. The ROCB Europe would take over all organizational and financial matters as the WCO Secretariat's very important support would be formulated as providing expertise; namely, assigning experts / officials with respect to delivery of the said missions.

The outline of chronological annual steps to be taken in that regard are suggested as follows:

- Official letter is sent to member administrations by the WCO Secretariat requesting needs for the upcoming year (January);
- Needs assessment forms are received by the WCO Secretariat as well as by the ROCB Europe (February / March);
- Collected needs assessment forms are compiled, the ROCB Europe forwards its proposal for preferred missions (April / May);
- Once the Corporate Plan is drafted by WCO Secretariat, remaining Members' needs that are not foreseen to be delivered due to lack of funding are shared with the ROCB Europe (mid-summer);
- The ROCB Europe analyses the activities and determines its own list for the missions that would be organized and sponsored by itself (August);
- The WCO Secretariat (Capacity Building Directorate) initiates the work on determining experts / officials for delivery of the missions listed by the ROCB Europe (August / September);
- As the experts / officials are determined by the WCO Secretariat, the ROCB Europe launches mission preparations and communicates with the experts as well as individual Member for preferred time periods for the delivery, work program and related logistical matters;
- Expenses related to the experts' / officials' travel and subsistence allowance on the basis of the WCO Staff Manual rules are borne by the ROCB Europe;
- Additional elements for supporting these missions (such as interpretation, venue renting, etc.) would be borne by the ROCB Europe, if seen necessary;
- The experts / officials delivering a mission are expected to report back after the mission.

ANNEX III

Draft Doc. 2019/3

Role of Capacity Building Contact Points in the WCO Europe Region

Capacity Building Contact Points form a professional network of individuals working within their respective Customs administrations as the main points for liaison.

This role falls within the scope of implementation of the World Customs Organization's (WCO) Capacity Building Strategy and related matters in the WCO Europe Region.

These individuals or structures work closely with the WCO Secretariat (the Regional Development Manager in the Capacity Building Directorate) and the Regional Office for Capacity Building for the Europe Region (ROCB Europe) with the goal of creating conditions conducive to the development and efficiency of the region's Customs administrations.

The role and tasks of a Capacity Building Contact Point are as follows:

1. Cooperation with the WCO Secretariat and the ROCB Europe

- Serve as a focal point to facilitate and promote active communication between the WCO Secretariat, ROCB Europe and their administration in order to ensure the widespread circulation of WCO recommendations and best practices in the Capacity Building and Customs modernization domain;
- Regularly submit information to the WCO Secretariat and ROCB Europe on the progress in terms of the implementation of Customs modernization and capacity building activities and initiatives within their administration;
- Send information to the WCO Secretariat and ROCB Europe on best practices, innovative approaches and/or case studies on different areas of Customs work. This information will be published by the WCO for the Capacity Building Committee and uploaded on the ROCB web site.
- Regularly submit copies of their administration's strategic plans or development programs, if available in English, French or Russian, to the WCO Secretariat and the ROCB Europe with a summary in one of these languages of their reform and modernization process' priorities and key objectives;

- Co-operate with the ROCB to forge close links aimed at promoting capacity building with the donor community and other key partners;
- Organize the internal process for receiving support missions and expert advice delivery from WCO Secretariat and ROCB Europe.

2. Promoting and Coordinating Capacity Building Efforts

- Serve as channels of information sharing and input on members' development projects and programs;
- Support Customs modernization and sustainable organizational development within their respective administrations;
- Provide input to the different Capacity Building initiatives being implemented within their administration;
- Publicize and promote the implementation of recommendations and best practices stemming from regional work and the WCO's tools and instruments;
- Foster the implementation of international Customs standards within their administration.

3. Monitoring and Evaluating the Modernization Process

- Collect, analyze, consolidate and present their administration's requirements and needs for Capacity Building support and ensure that requests for external assistance submitted to the WCO Secretariat and the ROCB Europe are relevant;
- Monitor progress regarding their administration's modernization process, using information gathered from project managers and change initiatives.

4. Expert Mobilization and Support to Capacity Building Delivery

- Identify and evaluate officers within their administration displaying the potential to contribute to the regional and global capacity building activities and submit their data to the WCO Secretariat and the ROCB Europe for participation in expert accreditation workshops and related events;
- Identify and evaluate experienced officers (other than WCO accredited experts) within their administration who can provide any regional/sub-regional assistance especially in areas where no WCO accredited experts are available and submit their data to the WCO Secretariat and the ROCB Europe.



ANNEX IV

Draft Doc. 2019/2

REGIONAL OFFICE FOR CAPACITY BUILDING FOR THE WORLD CUSTOMS ORGANIZATION EUROPE REGION

TERMS OF REFERENCE

I. INTRODUCTION

Starting from 2004, Regional Offices for Capacity Building were established in all regions of the WCO, which are intended to take over the load in the practical implementation of the WCO standards and instruments.

In this direction, in May 2009, the Conference of Heads of Customs Services of the European region in Bergen, Norway, decided to establish a Regional Office for Capacity Building for the WCO Europe Region in Baku, Azerbaijan.

This decision was approved at the 113th/114th WCO Council Sessions in June 2009. On 11 November 2009, the World Customs Organization and the State Customs Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan signed a Memorandum of Understanding on the establishment of the Regional Office for Capacity Building.

The Regional Office for Capacity Building for the World Customs Organization Europe Region (ROCB Europe) has been functioning in Baku, Azerbaijan, since 17 October 2011 based on the said Memorandum of Understanding.

Regional Office for Capacity Building for the WCO Europe Region is the parent structure of the World Customs Organization in the region, whose mission is to effectively coordinate activities in the area of institutional development of customs services, based on international standards and instruments of the WCO.

II. MANDATE

The ROCB Europe is a regional initiative by the WCO Europe Region, established in accordance with the WCO's commitment to regionalization of its Capacity Building Strategy. It acts in close cooperation with the WCO Secretariat, the Vice-Chair of the WCO Europe Region and the host administration.

The direction of the work of the ROCB Europe is based on the guidance steered by the Heads of Customs Administrations of the WCO Europe Region.

III. SCOPE

1. Role

The ROCB Europe is central to capacity building efforts in the WCO Europe Region. It supports Members Administrations primarily in needs assessment process and helps coordinate Capacity Building activities within the region.

In this context, the role of the ROCB Europe consists of the following:

- Working toward Customs Capacity Building in the WCO Europe Region in the context of WCO's Capacity Building Strategy and regionalization approach;
- Supporting the development of Member Administrations on Customs reform and modernization;
- Promoting the work of the WCO and its tools and instruments;
- Identifying common priorities amongst the Members and taking action with a view to achieving the regional objectives in that regard;
- Improving the conditions or establishing necessary mechanisms for enhanced communication in the Region;
- Supporting the development of cooperation among Member Administrations;
- Launching initiatives on emerging trends in Customs that are relevant to the Region;
- Raising awareness on WCO tools and instruments as well as Capacity Building efforts;
- Promoting modern and professional human resources development programs.

2. Functions

The ROCB Europe exclusively aims at enhancing the capacities of Customs Administrations in paving the way for more secure and simplified customs processes and international trade operations.

For that aim, the ROCB Europe performs its work in meeting the following functions:

- Identifying the needs and coordinating Capacity building activities for Member Administrations of the Region accordingly;
- Providing Customs capacity building support through coordination of technical assistance, training and experience sharing activities for Member Administrations;
- Organizing, coordinating or hosting regional, sub-regional and national events on customs capacity building and WCO instruments;
- Organizing appropriate activities with respect to Customs development and priorities of the Region;
- Establishing, managing or coordinating developmental projects for bolstering the Customs modernization that favor Member Administrations;
- Forming and maintaining close liaison with the Member Administrations;
- Developing, promoting and maintaining partnerships with key international and regional stakeholders;
- Representing the WCO at appropriate regional events where applicable;
- Supporting the implementation of international standards for Customs and trade;
- Promoting Public – Private Sector Partnership in Customs matters;
- Coordinating the activities of the Regional Training Centers in the Region;
- Collecting information on the projects, initiatives and best practices in the Region;
- Providing strategic guidance to management of Member Administrations in the Region when needed;
- Producing, collecting, analyzing or disseminating information about customs capacity building and WCO instruments;
- Providing a common platform for regional communication, view exchange, information sharing;

- Evaluating the developmental progress of Member Administrations.

IV. MEANS OF OPERATION

1. Working Method

The ROCB Europe performs its work by means of its professional as well as support services. Professional staff is seconded by the Member Administrations in the WCO Europe Region whereas support staff is provided by the host administration.

2. Annual Activity Plan

The ROCB Europe conducts its work in the frame of an Annual Activity Plan on the basis of its strategy and regional needs and priorities. The draft Plan for the upcoming term is developed by the ROCB Europe in cooperation with the WCO Secretariat and the Vice-Chair and submitted for endorsement by the Heads of Customs Conference of the WCO Europe Region.

3. Annual Progress Report

The ROCB Europe drafts an Annual Progress Report which indicates the achievement made by the Office in the previous term. The Report is submitted to the Heads of Customs Conference of the WCO Europe Region for performance measurement and monitoring purposes.

V. RESOURCES

1. Facilities

The Office is located in its own building provided by the State Customs Committee of Azerbaijan. The host administration bears essential expenses associated with daily functionality of the Office and maintenance.

2. Staff

The ROCB Europe is provided with officials, including a Head, seconded by the Members Administrations of the WCO Europe Region.

The officials seconded to the ROCB Europe by the Member Administrations in the WCO Europe Region enjoy the privileges granted by the Republic of Azerbaijan. At the request of the seconding Customs Administration, these officials are assigned technical attaché status by the WCO Secretariat.

The ROCB Europe staff is independent of their home administration and the host administration in terms of their work for the Office. The WCO Staff Rules applies to the staff of the ROCB Europe where applicable.⁹

The officials may be made available by the Member Administrations of the WCO Europe Region through a remote working mechanism without the need for physically joining the Office.

The ROCB Europe may benefit from the work of officials from the other WCO Regions remotely as the case maybe.

3. Head of the Office

The Head of the ROCB Europe is elected through an appointment process coordinated by the Vice-Chair in cooperation with the WCO Secretariat. In the event of a vacancy of the post, the Vice-Chair calls upon all the Members of the Region for nominating candidates.

A selection board may be formed if deemed necessary during the process. The final decision for the assignment for the post is approved by the Heads of Customs Administrations of the WCO European Region.

The Head of ROCB Europe is assigned for three years, with the possibility of extension for one additional year.

⁹ This provision excludes the cases where the application of a certain staff rule is practically or structurally impossible. For example, terminal allowance.

4. Budget

The ROCB Europe has its own budget, separate from that of the WCO.

The budget of the ROCB Europe is formed of annual voluntary contributions received from the Members of the WCO Europe Region. The Office may seek to generate additional income and financial support.

The Office keeps records of its financial dealings and it is subject to examinations of financial activities upon the decision of the Heads of Customs Administrations of the WCO Europe Region.

The annual financial statement for the previous year as well as the budget estimate for the upcoming year are drafted by the ROCB Europe and submitted to the WCO Europe Region Member Administrations for endorsement.



ANNEX V



REGIONAL OFFICE FOR CAPACITY BUILDING FOR THE WORLD CUSTOMS ORGANIZATION EUROPE REGION

FOUNDATIONS

The Regional Office for Capacity Building (ROCB) for the World Customs Organization (WCO) Europe Region was officially opened on October 17, 2011 in Baku, Azerbaijan.

Operational
since 2011

OBJECTIVE

Enhancing
capacities

The Regional Office for Capacity Building for the World Customs Organization Europe Region exclusively aims at enhancing the capacities of Customs Administrations in paving the way for more secure and simplified international trade operations.

COVERAGE

ROCB Europe comprises WCO's largest region with its 53 members out of 182 total.

53
Members

FOCUS AREAS

Planning
&
Coordinating

Capacity
Building

Developing
Partnerships

- Planning and coordinating Customs Capacity Building activities;
- Developing staff to be able to support Members with organizational development;
- Supporting the implementation of international standards for Customs and trade reflected in the WCO instruments;
- Establishing projects in individual Members of economic regions;
- Coordinating the activities of the Regional Training Centers;
- Developing , promoting and maintaining partnership with key regional stakeholders.



REGIONAL OFFICE FOR CAPACITY BUILDING FOR THE WORLD CUSTOMS ORGANIZATION EUROPE REGION

RESPONSIBILITIES

ROCB Europe aims at supporting Member Customs Administrations to better provide services by:

- Developing, managing and monitoring a pool of experts in organizational development and technical Customs matters;
- Identifying common issues amongst the Members in the implementation of new initiatives and providing seminars, workshops, or direct consultancy to address them;
- Seeking opportunities to establish development projects;
- Evaluating the developmental progress of the Members at regular intervals, for both confirming progress and identifying further development requirements;
- Coordinating the activities of the Training Centers in the region;
- Identifying training needs at a strategic level.



FACILITIES

ROCB Europe premises includes the following:

- Fully equipped conference hall (53 seats with mics);
- Computer lab with 20 working stations;
- 2 equipped training classes (30 seats each);
- Cafeteria as well as equipped kitchen;
- Parking garage.

These facilities are to be rented by organizations and companies for a variety of conferences, business meetings and activities.


World Customs Organization, the customs administrations as well as the State Customs Committee and other government agencies of the Republic of Azerbaijan use the premises of the Regional Office at no charge.

ROCB Europe

<http://rocb-europe.org>

Natig Aliyev str, 4-a AZ1025, Baku, Republic of Azerbaijan

Phone: (+994 12) 464-31-34/35 Fax: (+994 12) 464-31-36

 @ROCB_Europe





Regional Office for Capacity Building for the World Customs Organization Europe Region

REGIONAL OFFICE FOR CAPACITY BUILDING FOR THE WORLD CUSTOMS ORGANIZATION EUROPE REGION

The Regional Office for Capacity Building (ROCB) for the World Customs Organization (WCO) Europe Region exclusively aims at enhancing the capacities of Customs Administrations in paving the way for more secure and simplified customs processes and international trade operations.

ROCB Europe is the 6th and final ROCB that comprises WCO's largest region with its 53 members.

The Office performs its work primarily on the following:

- Developing, managing and monitoring a pool of experts in organizational development and technical Customs matters;
- Identifying common issues amongst the Members in the implementation of new initiatives and providing seminars, workshops, or direct consultancy to address them;
- Seeking opportunities to establish development projects;
- Evaluating the developmental progress of the Members at regular intervals, for both confirming progress and identifying further development requirements;
- Coordinating the activities of the Training Centers in the region;
- Identifying training needs at a strategic level.

ROCB Europe

rocb-europe.org

Natig Aliyev str, 4-a AZ1025, Baku, Republic of Azerbaijan

Phone: (+994 12) 464-31-34/35 Fax: (+994 12) 464-31-36

@ROCB_Europe



REGIONAL OFFICE FOR CAPACITY BUILDING FOR THE WORLD CUSTOMS ORGANIZATION EUROPE REGION

Enhancing capacities for better customs services.

rocb-europe.org

WORLD CUSTOMS ORGANIZATION

The World Customs Organization (WCO), established in 1952 as the Customs Co-operation Council (CCC), is an independent intergovernmental body whose mission is to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of Customs administrations.

Today, the WCO represents Customs administrations the globe that collectively process approximately 98% of world trade. As the global center of Customs expertise, the WCO is the only international organization with competence in Customs matters and can rightly call itself the voice of the international Customs community.

As a forum for dialogue and exchange of experiences between national Customs delegates, the WCO offers its Members a range of Conventions and other international instruments, as well as technical assistance and training services provided either directly by the Secretariat, or with its participation.



WCO Mission Statement

The WCO provides leadership, guidance and support to Customs administrations to secure and facilitate legitimate trade, realize revenues, protect society and build capacity.

World Customs Organization

<http://wcoomd.org>

Rue du Marché, 30 B-1210 Brussels Belgium

Phone: +32 (0)2 209 92 11 Fax: +32 (0)2 209 92 62

REGIONAL OFFICES FOR CAPACITY BUILDING

The Regional Offices for Capacity Building (ROCBs) are the cornerstone of the Region's approach to capacity building as laid out in its Capacity Building Strategy.

Their mission is to assist member Customs administrations with their capacity building programs at regional level by helping them:

- to identify more accurate capacity building needs and possible solutions;
- to enhance the coordination of capacity building activities with regional members and the WCO Secretariat;
- to monitor projects;
- to improve networking with donor agencies and relevant organizations;
- to use resources more cost-effectively; and
- to coordinate the use and implementation of WCO tools and practices in the Region.

REGIONAL TRAINING CENTERS

Regional Training Centers constitute one of the key components of the regional approach. Forming virtually independent and autonomous entities, the regions are best placed to identify and respond to their Members' training needs. This type of training, which is broader in scope than that offered to individual countries, makes it possible to pool and optimize resources in a single region.



ANNEX VI

Events Organized or Coordinated by ROCB Europe April 2019 – March 2020

#	Event	Location	Date
1	UNODC-WCO Container Control Programme: Condensed Theoretical Training	ROCB Europe, Baku, Azerbaijan	8-12 April 2019
2	Sub-regional Workshop on Electronic Data Exchange	Ashgabat, Turkmenistan	1-2 May 2019
3	Working Meeting with the Regional Training Center and Customs Academy of Ukraine	Khmelnytsky, Ukraine	27-28 May 2019
4	WCO Revenue Package National Workshop on Development of Advance Ruling System for Classification, Origin and Valuation	ROCB Europe, Baku, Azerbaijan	21-24 May 2019
5	UNODC-WCO Container Control Programme: Air Theoretical Training	ROCB Europe, Baku, Azerbaijan	21-24 May 2019
6	UNODC-WCO Container Control Programme: Theoretical Training	ROCB Europe, Baku, Azerbaijan	1-10 July 2019
7	Training on First Aid for Customs Volunteers	ROCB Europe, Baku, Azerbaijan	6 September 2019
8	Training for Customs Officers of Department for Intelligence and Investigation for Azerbaijan Customs	ROCB Europe, Baku, Azerbaijan	16 September - 4 October 2019
9	UNODC-WCO Container Control Programme: Practical Training	ROCB Europe, Baku, Azerbaijan	30 September - 4 October 2019
10	Technical Meeting of Experts of Customs Administrations of the Member States of Turkic Council on Caravanserai Project	ROCB Europe, Baku, Azerbaijan	17-18 October 2019

11	Training Seminar on Anti-counterfeiting Strategies and Product Identification for Azerbaijan Customs	ROCB Europe, Baku, Azerbaijan	29 October 2019
12	UNODC-WCO Container Control Programme: Strategic Trade and Export Control (STEC) Training	ROCB Europe, Baku, Azerbaijan	4-8 November 2019
13	People Development Programme Train the Trainers National Workshop	RTC Khmelnytsky, Ukraine	25 - 29 November 2019
14	Training Transfer of Medicines Through Customs Border Checkpoints for Azerbaijan Customs	ROCB Europe, Baku, Azerbaijan	3 December 2019
15	Seminar for Private Sector on Prospects for Improving the Efficiency of Import-Export Operations	ROCB Europe, Baku, Azerbaijan	19 December 2019
16	Meeting of the Working Group on the Revision of the Bergen Agreement	ROCB Europe, Baku, Azerbaijan	23 - 24 January 2020
17	3 rd Meeting of the WCO Europe Region National Contact Points for Capacity Building	ROCB Europe, Baku, Azerbaijan	27-29 January 2020
18	Winter School 2020 for International Network of Customs Universities (INCU)	ROCB Europe, Baku, Azerbaijan	4-7 February 2020
19	Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law Seminar	ROCB Europe, Baku, Azerbaijan	19-20 February 2020
20	UNODC-WCO Container Control Programme: Train the Trainers Workshop	ROCB Europe, Baku, Azerbaijan	2-6 March 2020
21	Training on Analysing X-Ray Images	ROCB Europe, Baku, Azerbaijan	2-6 March 2020
22	UNODC-WCO Container Control Programme: Strategic Trade and Export Control (STEC) Training	ROCB Europe, Baku, Azerbaijan	9-13 March 2020

Representation at Events by the ROCB Europe

April 2019 – March 2020

#	Event	Location	Date
1	WCO Global Meeting of the Heads of the Regional Offices for Capacity Building, Regional Training Centres and the Vice-Chairs' Offices	WCO Headquarters, Brussels, Belgium	4-5 April 2019
2	WCO Capacity Building Committee 10 th Session	WCO Headquarters, Brussels, Belgium	8-10 April 2019
3	WCO Integrity Sub-Committee 18 th Session	WCO Headquarters, Brussels, Belgium	11-12 April 2019
4	WCO Europe Region Heads of Customs Conference 2019	Saint Petersburg, Russian Federation	25-26 April 2019
5	Russian Customs Academy 3 rd Annual Session of the Moscow International Model	Russian Customs Academy, Moscow, Russian Federation	21-24 May 2019
6	WCO IT/TI Conference & Exhibition	Baku, Azerbaijan	12-14 June 2019
7	WCO Council 133 rd /134 th Sessions	WCO Headquarters, Brussels, Belgium	27-29 June 2019
8	3 rd High-Level Seminar on Trade in Central Asia and 13 th Session of the United Nations Special Program for the Economies of Central Asia (SPECA) Working Group on Trade	WTO Headquarters, Geneva, Switzerland	4 July 2019



9	WCO Permanent Technical Committee 225 th /226 th Session	WCO Headquarters, Brussels, Belgium	28-31 October 2019
10	WCO Integrity Sub-Committee 19 th Session	WCO Headquarters, Brussels, Belgium	20-21 February 2020
11	WCO Global Meeting of WCO Regional Structures 15 th Meeting	WCO Headquarters, Brussels, Belgium	2-3 March 2020
12	WCO Capacity Building Committee 11 th Session	WCO Headquarters, Brussels, Belgium	4-6 March 2020



ANNEX VII

REPORTS BY REGIONAL TRAINING CENTERS



WORLD CUSTOMS ORGANIZATION
EUROPE REGION REGIONAL TRAINING CENTER (RTC)
ANNUAL REPORT
(1 April 2019 – 31 March 2020)

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

Name of the RTC:	Regional Training Centre of the World Customs Organization in the Kyrgyz Republic (RTC Bishkek)
Head of the RTC:	Nurbek Djeenbekov
RTC Website and E-mail Address:	Stc@customs.gov.kg
Number of Staff:	10 Staff (instructors)
Contact Person:	Narynkul Tagainazar kyzy
Contact Person E-Mail & Phone Number:	T.narynkul@mail.ru Mob. +996502595957 +996708774414



II. ORGANIZED OR HOSTED EVENTS

#	Name of the Event	Date	Attendance	Purpose & Outcomes
1	14 th Global meeting of heads of WCO ROCBs and RTCs. Brussels, Belgium	3-5 April 2019	1 WCO RTC staff member from Kyrgyzstan	Negotiation of the WCO "Mercator" programme on trade facilitation. During the meeting, the possible dates of the visit of the WCO assessment mission to the Kyrgyz Republic were discussed, where a proposal was made by the WCO to combine the assessment mission with the preparation of a plan to implement the recommendations and conclusions of the assessment mission. During the meeting, working contacts were established with colleagues from other WCO RTCs and agreements were reached on the prospects for further cooperation.
2	Официальная церемония открытия РУЦ ВТамО в Бишкеке WCO RTC official opening ceremony Round table: "The best practices in the development of training and continuing education courses to ensure radiation safety" ("BEST PRACTICE")	16 April 2019	30 participants	The official opening of the WCO RTC in Bishkek, which will serve as a platform for organizing and conducting multi-format meetings, training events (trainings, seminars, conferences) for the WCO European Region. Exchange of experience and networking with international projects and donors, as well as representatives of other countries.
3	WCO Expert Assessment and Diagnostic Mission at the Bishkek RTC	June	WCO RTC Bishkek and Customs HQ	Expert assessment by WCO experts on the operation of the RTC Bishkek. Prioritization of the RTC Bishkek area, analysis and evaluation by WCO experts on the further development of the Bishkek RTC.
4	ToT for instructors	9-13 December 2019	24 staff members	Assisting in the training of high-quality instructors of the RTC Bishkek, for the full implementation of the tasks of the RTC Bishkek



**Regional Office for Capacity Building
for the World Customs Organization Europe Region**

5	3rd meeting of national contact points to discuss cooperation on institutional development with the support of the WCO Baku, Azerbaijan	27-29 January 2020	2 participants	Discussion of key issues of the development of cooperation with the WCO, particularly regarding the activities of the WCO RTC, as well as to discuss issues on the Agenda for the upcoming RTC Meeting on the basis of the Bishkek RTC, organizational and technical issues for planning, conducting the Meeting and proposed issues for inclusion in the Agenda
6	Global Meeting of Heads of Regional Offices for Institutional Building (ROCB) and WCO Regional Training Centers (RTCs) Brussels, Belgium	2-6 March 2020	3 participants	Enhancing interaction and coordination between the WCO RTC, ROCB and the WCO Secretariat; discussion of further development steps and promising areas on the WCO RTC. Experience exchange. Establishing contacts. Discussion of issues and problems on the implementation of the Mercator Program. Acquiring new skills, best practices from other countries, etc.



III. PLANNED OR FORESEEN EVENTS

No	Event title	Target group	Venue	Due date	Responsible party	Source of funding
1.The development of regional training in the WCO European Region						
1.1	Regional Workshop on introduction of HR Program – I stage	Customs administration of Central Asian countries	RTC Bishkek	1 quarter 2021	ROCB, Experts of the WCO, RTC Bishkek	Donor funds – OSCE Programme office in Bishkek
1.2	Regional Workshop on introduction of HR Program – II stage	Customs administration of Central Asian countries	RTC Bishkek	2 quarter 2021	ROCB, Experts of the WCO, RTC Bishkek	Donor funds – OSCE Programme office in Bishkek
1.3	Regional event on the use of Technical means of customs control on radiation safety	WCO European Region, Central Asian countries	RTC Bishkek/ RTC Moscow (Saint Petersburg)	1 quarter 2021	ROCB, RTC Bishkek, RTC Moscow, RTC Astana, RTC Khmel'nitsky	Based on availability of funds (Donor funds)
1.4	Round table on EEU legislation (experience sharing)	Member countries of the EEU	RTC Bishkek/ RTC Moscow	2 quarter 2021	RTC Bishkek, RTC Moscow	Based on availability of funds (Donor funds)
1.5	Regional event of Gender equality (based on needs of the WCO)	WCO European Region, Central Asian countries	RTC Bishkek	3 quarter 2021	ROCB, RTC Bishkek	With the support of the WCO, ROCB,



						international organizations
1.6	<p>Ensuring sustainability in developing the capacities of customs administrations in the WCO European Region.</p> <p>Regional seminar for managers "Leadership"</p> <p>(in accordance with the Annex, paragraph 37 of the "WCO Document SC0090E1a")</p>	WCO European Region, Central Asian countries	RTC Baku, RTC Bishkek	4 quarter 2021	ROCB, RTC Baku, RTC Bishkek	With the support of the WCO, ROCB, international organizations and donors

2. Promotion and support of the pool of accredited customs experts

No	Event title	Target group	Venue	Due date	Responsible party	Source of funding
2.1	Regional workshop on "Export control, (radiation control)" (accreditation of specialist with the support of the WCO)	WCO European Region, Central Asian countries	RTC Bishkek	2 quarter 2021	Secretariat of the WCO, ROCB, RTC Bishkek, RTC Khmel'nitsky	Based on availability of funds (Donor funds)
2.2	Regional workshop on «Train of trainers» (training of highly qualified trainers in the WCO European Region)	WCO European Region	RTC Bishkek	1 quarter 2021	Experts of the WCO, RTC Bishkek, RTC Khmel'nitsky	Based on availability of funds (Donor funds)



3. Modernization and digitalization of the education process in the WCO European Region

No	Event title	Target group	Venue	Due date	Responsible party	Source of funding
3.1	Promoting the widespread use of the WCO CLiKC, e-learning platform at the regional level	WCO European Region	ROCB (Azerbaijan, Baku) RTC Bishkek	3 quarter 2021	With support of the ROCB in WCO European Region	Based on availability of funds (Donor funds)
3.2	Modernization of the continuing education process (specialized training): Round Table on the application of the latest techniques, best practices, interactive learning technologies	WCO European Region	ROCB (Azerbaijan, Baku) RTC Bishkek	4 quarter 2021	With support of the ROCB in WCO European Region	Based on availability of funds (Donor funds)

4. Facilitation of the co-operation with ROCB and other RTCs in the WCO European Region.

No	Event title	Target group	Venue	Due date	Responsible party	Source of funding
----	-------------	--------------	-------	----------	-------------------	-------------------



**Regional Office for Capacity Building
for the World Customs Organization Europe Region**

4.1	Creation of a joint electronic library of the RTC in the European Region (Exchange of experience, training programs and materials)	WCO European Region, Central Asian countries	ROCB (Azerbaijan, Baku)	During the course of 2021	ROCB, RTC Bishkek	Donor funds – OSCE Programme office in Bishkek
4.2	On the website of the ROCB, creation of the heading “WCO European Region trainers (accredited and non-accredited)” (Exchange of specialists meeting international standards for participation in training events)	WCO European Region, Central Asian countries	ROCB (Azerbaijan, Baku)	Until the end of 2021	With support of the ROCB in WCO European Region	Not required
4.3	Creation of effective communication mechanisms (Holding a meeting of the WCO RTC (Follow Up)).	WCO European Region	ROCB (Azerbaijan, Baku) RTC Bishkek	3 quarter 2021	With support of the ROCB in WCO European Region	Based on availability of funds (Donor funds)
4.4	Regional event aimed at assisting entrepreneurs and participants in foreign economic activity in trade issues (introduction of WCO courses and trainings for foreign economic activity participants)	WCO European Region, Central Asian countries	WCO Academy, ROCB, RTC Bishkek	4 quarter 2021	With support of the WCO Secretariat and WCO Academy	Based on availability of funds (Donor funds)
4.5	Round table on achievements and follow up activities Discussion of the possibilities of creating programs (modules) for special and specialized training for customs administrations in the WCO	WCO European Region	ROCB (Azerbaijan, Baku)\ RTC Bishkek	4 quarter 2021	With support of the ROCB in WCO European Region	



European Region (full-time, distance learning, combined learning)					
---	--	--	--	--	--

5. Assisting in capacity building activities within implementation of the WCO Mercator Program

No	Event title	Target group	Venue	Due date	Responsible party	Source of funding
5.1	Enhancing co-operation with international organizations and donors to ensure financial security in implementation of the recommendation of the WCO "Mercator" Program	WCO European Region	ROCB (Azerbaijan, Baku)\RTC Bishkek	During the course of 2021	With support of the WCO, ROCB and RTC Bishkek	International organizations, projects and donors
5.2.	Holding regional meetings, round tables, exchange of experience, within the framework of the implementation of the recommendation of the WCO "Mercator" Program	WCO European Region	RTC Bishkek, RTC Baku, under the coordination of the ROCB (Azerbaijan, Baku)	During the course of 2021	With support of the WCO, ROCB and RTC Bishkek	Based on availability of funds (Donor funds)



IV. DEVELOPMENTS

One of the results of the RTC Bishkek at the beginning of 2020 is the revised Strategic Document of the RTC Bishkek, which is closely interlinked with the Strategic Document of the WCO ROCB Europe.

Strategic Document of the WCO RTC Bishkek and an Annual report of the RTC Bishkek are attached to this document as Annexes.

These documents were developed in accordance with the requirements and the main ruling documents of the WCO (Appendix IV of the WCO Strategic Document "Requirements for the Creation and Activities of a Regional Office for Capacity Building of the ROCB and RTC WCO", and also based on a thorough analysis of the needs of regional events and trainings in the WCO European Region.

While developing the Strategic document the RTC Bishkek carried out necessary work on the preliminary approval process, on a working level with the head of the ROCB in the WCO European Region, taking into account the interests and relevant proposals of the ROCB and based on the ROCB's strategic document for 2018-2021.

The Annual Action Plan of the RTC Bishkek for 2021 was drawn up on the basis of the Strategic document of the WCO and contains the following points:

1. The development of regional training in the WCO European Region
2. Promotion and support of the pool of accredited customs experts
3. Modernization and digitalization of the education process in the WCO European Region
4. Facilitation of the co-operation with ROCB and other RTCs in the WCO European Region.
5. Assisting in capacity building activities within implementation of the WCO Mercator Program

The RTC Bishkek will diligently continue its work regarding the development of the next stage of the RTC Bishkek Strategic Document, which is closely interlinked with the WCO Strategic Document, with the involvement of a WCO expert, with the assistance of the main donor of the RTC Bishkek OSCE Programme Office in Bishkek.



V. ADDITIONAL REMARKS

The RTC Bishkek notes that during the reporting period from April 2019 to March 31, 2020 activities were mainly aimed at preparatory works related to the implementation of the activities of the RTC Bishkek. Namely, the training of high-quality instructors with the assistance of WCO experts; invitation of WCO experts to conduct diagnostics and assessment of RTC Bishkek, participation of RTC Bishkek employees in various WCO events, to establish contacts with other WCO RTCs and to expand cooperation, to learn the experience of other WCO RTCs, etc. Based on this information, an annual plan for the near future was developed.

At the same time, the RTC Bishkek notes that many of the planned activities for the 2nd half of 2020 are postponed to 2021, given the unstable situation in the world, in connection with the COVID-19 pandemic.



WORLD CUSTOMS ORGANIZATION
EUROPE REGION REGIONAL TRAINING CENTER (RTC)
ANNUAL REPORT
(1 April 2019 – 31 March 2020)

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

Name of the RTC:	RTC-WCO in Skopje, Ss. Cyril and Methodius University, Faculty of Economics – Skopje, RN of Macedonia
Head of the RTC:	Irena Kikerkova, Ph.D.
RTC Website and E-mail Address:	www.eccf.ukim.edu.mk
Number of Staff:	
Contact Person:	Irena Kikerkova, Ph.D., Ss. Cyril and Methodius University, Faculty of Economics – Skopje, RN of Macedonia Zaklina Andreska, Customs Administration of the RN of Macedonia
Contact Person E-Mail & Phone Number:	irena@eccf.ukim.edu.mk , + 389 2 3 286 860 zaklina.andreska@customs.gov.mk , + 389 70 279 114



Brief History & Information about the Center:

The Customs Administration of the Republic of North Macedonia, the Faculty of Economics-Skopje, and the World Customs Organization from Brussels, Belgium signed a Memorandum of Understanding in the autumn of 2007 and initiated the establishment of a regional training center for continuous training of customs servants and the business community according to the professional standards of the WCO. The established cooperation and the proposed initiative were supported by the Macedonian Government. On the 27th of September 2009 the General Secretary of the World Customs Organization, Mr. Kunio Mikuriya, officially opened the Regional Training Centre - World Customs Organization (RTC_WCO) as an organizational unit of the Ss. Cyril and Methodius University, Faculty of Economics –Skopje. Since, the RTC-WCO organized in average two international trainings and workshops with accredited WCO experts per year; many national trainings on issues of importance and of relevance for the Customs service, updating the knowledge and strengthening the competences of the customs officers, but also for customs brokers and forwarders; organized lectures by eminent customs experts; hosted visits for delegations from foreign Customs administrations such as from Azerbaijan, Kyrgyzstan, Syria, South Chorea, as well as of the high representatives of the Regional Office for Capacity Building – WCO for Europe; and two times was hosting the annual meeting of the Heads of the RTC-WCO and the ROCB-WCO for Europe. In October 2019 the RTC-WCO in Skopje hosted the XIV WCO world annual scientific PICARD Conference in Skopje.

II. ORGANIZED OR HOSTED EVENTS

#	Name of the Event	Date	Attendance	Purpose & Outcomes
1	<i>Training for new Customs declaration Processing System and Excise Documents (CDPS – ED)</i>	<i>1 April 2019</i>	<i>20</i>	<i>Business community and stakeholders to gain basic skills and knowledge for new IT system.</i>



				<i>Representatives from customs brokers, importers and exporters were trained and prepared for new It system which was fully operational on 1st of July 2019.</i>
2	<i>Training for new Customs declaration Processing System and Excise Documents (CDPS – ED)</i>	<i>2 April 2019</i>	<i>23</i>	<i>Business community and stakeholders to gain basic skills and knowledge for new IT system.</i> <i>Representatives from customs brokers, importers and exporters were trained and prepared for new It system which was fully operational on 1st of July 2019.</i>
3	<i>Training for new Customs declaration Processing System and Excise Documents (CDPS – ED)</i>	<i>3 April 2019</i>	<i>22</i>	<i>Business community and stakeholders to gain basic skills and knowledge for new IT system.</i> <i>Representatives from customs brokers, importers and exporters were trained and prepared for new IT system which was fully operational on 1st of July 2019.</i>
4	<i>Training for new Customs declaration Processing System and Excise Documents (CDPS – ED)</i>	<i>4 April 2019</i>	<i>34</i>	<i>Business community and stakeholders to gain basic skills and knowledge for new IT system.</i> <i>Representatives from customs brokers, importers and exporters were trained and prepared for new IT system which was fully operational on 1st of July 2019.</i>
5	<i>Training for new Customs declaration Processing System and Excise Documents (CDPS – ED)</i>	<i>5 April 2019</i>	<i>24</i>	<i>Business community and stakeholders to gain basic skills and knowledge for new IT system.</i>



				<i>Representatives from customs brokers, importers and exporters were trained and prepared for new IT system which was fully operational on 1st of July 2019.</i>
6	<i>Training for new Customs declaration Processing System and Excise Documents (CDPS – ED)</i>	<i>12 April 2019</i>	<i>28</i>	<p><i>Business community and stakeholders to gain basic skills and knowledge for new IT system.</i></p> <p><i>Representatives from customs brokers, importers and exporters were trained and prepared for new IT system which was fully operational on 1st of July 2019.</i></p>
7	<i>Training for new Customs declaration Processing System and Excise Documents (CDPS – ED)</i>	<i>3 April 2019</i>	<i>34</i>	<p><i>Business community and stakeholders to gain basic skills and knowledge for new IT system.</i></p> <p><i>Representatives from customs brokers, importers and exporters were trained and prepared for new IT system which was fully operational on 1st of July 2019.</i></p>
8.	<i>XIV Annual PICARD Conference</i> “SMART BORDERS FOR SEAMLESS TRADE, TRAVEL AND TRANSPORT”- acknowledging the importance of swift movement of goods, people and means of transport through borders	<i>22 -24 September 2019</i>	<i>200</i>	<i>Exchange of practical customs experience and scientific research on Big Data Analytics for customs purposes; border cooperation and coordination in terms of information exchange; special economic zones as sources of tax evasion; adjustment of customs procedures to the fast-changing technologies; international e-trade in goods and its impact on international trade flows.</i>

III. PLANNED OR FORESEEN EVENTS

#	Name of the Event	Date	Attendance	Purpose & Outcomes
1	<i>Tariff classification of goods Classification of the latest high-tech device</i>	<i>To be determined</i>	15	<i>Acquaint participants with current issues regarding tariff classification of these goods Prepare for new changes in CN 2022</i>
2	<i>Data analytics</i>	<i>To be determined</i>	10-15	<i>Improve analytical skills of customs officers Identify priorities for improvement customs business processes</i>
3	<i>Excise Law (new IT system on Excise)</i>	<i>End of the year (depending on EMCS development and Covid19 developments)</i>	30-50	<i>Participants to gain knowledge how to implement new procedures as a result of new IT systems and procedures.</i>



V. DEVELOPMENTS

Customs Administration of the Republic of North Macedonia continues to provide necessary trainings for the customs officers as well as trainings and counseling for the business community. In the period from 1. 4.2019 to 31.3.2020 Customs Administration realized 313 events in form of trainings, presentations, workshops with 3.310 customs officers as participants. Within these trainings 14 were organized for business community with 473 participants.

The official mutual recognition of AEO status within CEFTA participating countries, as well as the process of alignment with EU legislation will be the main focus for the upcoming period. In the process of the capacity building stakeholders will have possibility to use modern training techniques (e-learning courses), as well as distance learning due to COVID protective measures all over the world. Providing new equipment and enhancing competencies of the trainers and employees for distance learning will be one of the challenges for the upcoming period.

V. ADDITIONAL REMARKS

The RTC had accepted and implemented a Strategic Plan as an official document, as well as Annual Action Plans.

Due to the fast changes of technology and the need of establishing paperless customs procedures, in the past three years the annual Action Plans were adjusted to the establishment and putting in full performance of the New Computerized Transit System, Integrated Tariff Environment and the CDPS (Custom. At the moment a new Strategic Plan for the fort coming period is needed, though putting in place as an official document is postponed, due to the need to adjust undertaken obligations as a candidate member-state of the European Union, and as a full member of the CEFTA-2006 Trade Agreement.



WORLD CUSTOMS ORGANIZATION
EUROPE REGION REGIONAL TRAINING CENTER (RTC)
ANNUAL REPORT
(1 April 2019 – 31 March 2020)

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

Name of the RTC:	The WCO RTC (Khmelnyskyi, Ukraine)
Head of the RTC:	Andrii Voitseshchuk
RTC Website and E-mail Address:	e-mail:ds.post@customs.gov.ua
Number of Staff:	69
Contact Person:	Iryna Kykylyk
Contact Person E-Mail & Phone Number:	E-mail: irinakykylyk@gmail.com ; Phone Number:+380679485878



Brief History & Information about the Center:

The WCO Regional Training Centre was relocated from Dnipro city to Kmelnytskyi in 2016. The RTC functions on the basis of the Department for Specialized Training and Canine Services of the State Customs Service of Ukraine. The WCO RTC provides high level training via professional programmes and implementation of WCO standards and best practices, conducting training activities at the national, regional and international levels.

II. ORGANIZED OR HOSTED EVENTS

#	Name of the Event	Date	Attendance	Purpose & Outcomes
1	Train-the-Trainers Workshop in Strategic Trade Control Enforcement of the World Customs Organization	June 03-11, 2019	The workshop was attended by 15 representatives of the customs administrations of Azerbaijan, Armenia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova and Ukraine who are undergoing the first stage of accreditation.	Train-the-trainers workshop in strategic trade control enforcement of the World Customs Organization under the auspices of the WCO and with the financial support of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe was held at the WCO RTC (Khmelnyskyi, Ukraine) which functions on the basis of the Department for Specialized Training and Canine Services of the SFS. The training was delivered by WCO expert trainers, including a representative of the Department who is also a WCO expert trainer in this area from Ukraine. After this workshop one more representative of Ukraine received this international recognition - a WCO expert trainer.



2	Training of Trainers Workshop	November 25-29, 2019	The workshop was attended by 15 representatives, including 9 employees of the Department (WCO RTC)	<p>As part of the corporate plan of the WCO Regional Office for Capacity Building (ROCB) in the Europe Region, the WCO conducted a national Training-of-Trainers (TOT) Workshop. The workshop was held at the Regional Training Centre (RTC) in Khmelnytskyi from 25 to 29 November and was based on the WCO competency approach. The aim of the workshop was to equip the RTC with a pool of 15 (among them 9 – Department officials) competency builders in technical and managerial areas, able to effectively enhance the training delivery system and deliver competency-based training to the State Fiscal Service (SFS) staff.</p> <p>At the end of the workshop the participants received certificates signed by the WCO Secretary General Kunio Mikuriya.</p>

III. PLANNED OR FORESEEN EVENTS

#	Name of the Event	Date	Attendance	Purpose & Outcomes
	Training of trainers on the AEO Institute (the process of assessing the enterprise compliance with the criteria, monitoring and re-assessment of the compliance), as well as	4 quarter of 2020	Training for trainers (venue - WCO RTC, Khmelnytsky, Ukraine):15 trainers (3 officials of WCO RTC, 12 -	- training of 15 trainers (3 officials of WCO RTC, 12 - officials of the State Customs Service of Ukraine);



**Regional Office for Capacity Building
for the World Customs Organization Europe Region**

1.	the interaction of customs and business in the acquisition and confirmation of competencies related to AEO (training system, certification of competence)		officials of the State Customs Service of Ukraine)	- Implementation of the best practices of the WCO member states on the AEO system of training for AEO and customs validators.
2.	Diagnostic Mission of Canine Development. Expert assistance in canine development of the State Customs Service of Ukraine	4 quarter of 2020	WCO RDTC, Khmelnytskyi, Ukraine	Assessment of the activities of the WCO RDTC (Khmelnytskyi, Ukraine) and development of the WCO RDTC Strategy for the years 2020 - 2023
3.	Accreditation of Canine Experts. Training for trainers	1 quarter of 2021	WCO RDTC, Khmelnytskyi, Ukraine	Activities related to the development of the canine services: - training of 3 officials of WCO RDTC - dissemination of best practices of the WCO member states in the field of canine teams training.
4.	The WCO RTC Diagnostic Mission on Training	1 quarter of 2021	WCO RTC, Khmelnytskyi, Ukraine	Activities to evaluate the system of raising the level of professional competence of customs officials of Ukraine.
5.	Workshop in Strategic Trade Control Enforcement of the World Customs Organization for Centra Asia region	1 quarter of 2021	Via video conference	Implementation of the WCO's strategy to assist its Members' efforts in preventing illicit trafficking of goods related to weapons of mass destruction and fulfilling commitments arising from UN Security Council Resolutions such as UNSCR 1540 and others



IV. DEVELOPMENTS

1. The officials of the Department took part in delivering of international events at the WCO request:

- **Workshop for the officials of port control units of the Kyrgyz Republic.** The workshop was held under the auspices of the Embassy of Japan in the Kyrgyz Republic and Export Control and Related Border Security Program of the US Embassy. The workshop was conducted by a UNODC expert together with a representative of the Department for Specialized Training and Canine Services of the SFS, an accredited WCO expert-trainer in Strategic Trade Control Enforcement (STCE) (September 09-13, 2019, Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic).

- **Training of trainers for the officials of the customs service of Kyrgyz Republic.** The main objective of this workshop was to provide the Kyrgyz Customs Services and the Regional Training Center (RTC) in Bishkek with a pool of trainers with the necessary competencies to contribute to the competency development process of customs staff. Moreover, this Workshop was aimed at developing trainers capable of preparing, facilitating, and evaluating training sessions in their particular fields (Customs, support or management). (December 09-13, 2019, Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic).

- a representative of the Department took part in the 3-d **Meeting of the WCO Europe Region National Contact Points for Capacity Building** (January 27-29, 2020, Baku, Azerbaijan).

2. Achievements: Experts accreditation

In the framework of the WCO Strategic Trade Control Enforcement Program and under the auspices of Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) the Department officials as the trainers were invited to participate in conducting of the WCO STCE regional training. As a result of the second accreditation stage Maksym Prykhodchenko and Pavlo Biletskyi became the WCO expert-trainers in the field of strategic enforcement and trade control (May 07-10, 2019, Dushanbe, Republic of Tajikistan).

3. WCO CLIKC!

- the Department officials are **National Coordinators of the WCO e-Learning Portal CLiKC!**

365 employees of the State Customs Service of Ukraine were given access to the WCO e-learning portal (in comparison with 106 persons in 2019)



**Regional Office for Capacity Building
for the World Customs Organization Europe Region**

4. Implementation of the WCO RTC Strategic Plan:

- Forming a **pool of trainers** on the regional level has started: candidates made presentations in different areas of customs matter (May 21-22, 2019, Khmelnytskyi, Ukraine).

The aim of the event was to evaluate customs knowledge, practical skills for training delivery as well as language skills in order to identify English- and Russian-speaking experts who can become potential WCO experts.

Key-skills of the candidates were rated on the basis WCO Training of Trainers (ToT) Manual, namely communicative and facilitation skills such as information analysis, using of software, professional communication, time management, ability to explain specialized customs terminology as well as foreign language skills.

V. ADDITIONAL REMARKS

Cooperation:

- the working meeting between the Department official and Mr. Roger Hermann, the Head of the European region ROCB, took place on May 28, 2019, Kyiv, Ukraine;

- a study visit of Mr. Tong Hua, a representative of the WCO A/P ROCB, took place in the framework of cooperation between the WCO RTC/Europe region and the WCO Asia-Pacific region in the Department for Specialized Training and canine Services of the SFS (July 03, 2019, Khmelnytskyi, Ukraine);

- a working visit to the Department of the officials from the General Customs Directorate of the Czech Republic took place on September 05-06, 2019.

During the visit Czech colleagues got acquainted with the main tasks, functions, directions as well as prospects of development of the Department and the WCO RDTC.



WORLD CUSTOMS ORGANIZATION
EUROPE REGION REGIONAL TRAINING CENTER (RTC)
ANNUAL REPORT
(1 April 2019 – 31 March 2020)

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

Name of the RTC:	WCO Regional Training Centre on the basis of Russian Customs Academy
Head of the RTC:	Mr. Vladimir Mantusov
RTC Website and E-mail Address:	rta.customs.ru; academy@customs-academy.ru
Number of Staff:	10
Contact Person:	Ms. Anna Yakunina, Deputy Head of the International Cooperation Department
Contact Person E-Mail & Phone Number:	international@customs-academy.ru ; +7-495-500-13-36



Brief History & Information about the Center:

Russian Customs Academy is a leading specialized higher educational institution that provides training, retraining and advanced training of specialists in the field of Customs, economics, law, as well as a research center that conducts innovative research on current problems in the field of foreign economic activity and Customs.

One of the priorities of Russian Customs Academy is the development of international cooperation and specialists' training for the foreign customs services. Russian Customs Academy is the basic training center for customs officials of the CIS customs services. It is carried out on the basis of intergovernmental agreements and resolutions of the Government of the Russian Federation. According to the Memorandum of Understanding between the WCO and the State Customs Committee of the Russian Federation dated November 25, 2002, the Regional Training Center (WCO RTC) was created and successfully operates on the basis of the Academy.

The purpose of the Center is international cooperation development in training, education, modernization, research in the customs field, as well as joining the WCO international conventions. WCO RTC regularly holds international events, including with participation of the leading WCO experts on topical Customs issues. More than 700 representatives of the Customs Services of Russia, CIS member states and other foreign countries have been trained in the RTC.

Center of Excellence for the NII specialists' training for the WCO member states that was assigned the corresponding international status, was created on the basis of the Academy.

Representatives of the foreign customs administrations show a deep interest in the training technologies of the International Centre and note its high educational potential.

Representatives of the Academy take an active part in the meetings of the WCO technical expert groups on NII Systems that are held at the WCO headquarters (Brussels).

II. ORGANIZED OR HOSTED EVENTS

№	Name of the Event	Date	Attendance	Purpose & Outcomes
1	<i>III session of the Moscow International Model of the World Customs Organization</i>	<i>22-24 May 2019</i>	<i>Representatives of the foreign customs services and partner universities (70 pers.)</i>	<i>Promoting the emergence of innovative solutions to improve the efficiency of Customs administrations of states and integration associations in the global economy using the work experience of the WCO bodies; Studying the structure, principles of activity, functions, powers of the WCO bodies; Creation of an innovative youth platform for self-realization and professional growth of young people, developing their potential in the interests of Customs and international Customs cooperation; Development of the ability to apply modern communication technologies for professional interaction, including in the WCO official languages</i>
2	<i>Training of Palestinian Customs officials</i>	<i>26 June-05 July 2019</i>	<i>Palestinian Customs officials (3 pers.)</i>	<i>Training in English on an additional professional program "Modern approaches to risk assessment in Customs" (using E-learning). As a result of the training, Palestinian Customs officials were awarded with the certificates confirming the E-Learning completion</i>
3	<i>Training for officials of the General Customs Administration of the People's Republic of China (GCA of the PRC)</i>	<i>01-05 July 2019</i>	<i>Customs officials of GCA of PRC (10 pers.)</i>	<i>Training GCA of PRC officials on the theme: "Illegal movement of nuclear materials and radioactive substances across the Russian-Chinese border"</i>



**Regional Office for Capacity Building
for the World Customs Organization Europe Region**

4	<i>Workshop for Customs officials of Kyrgyz Republic on the basis of Training and specialized Customs (Bishkek)</i>	<i>02-04 September 2019</i>	<i>Customs officials of Kyrgyz Republic (20 pers.)</i>	<i>Workshop on the theme: "Methods of detection and determination of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances in the international mail". At the end of the workshop, the participants were awarded with the certificates prepared by the OSCE Program office</i>
5	<i>Workshops for Customs officials of Kyrgyz Republic in Osh</i>	<i>02-06 September 2019</i>	<i>Customs officials of Kyrgyz Republic (27 pers.)</i>	<i>Workshops on the themes: "Harmonized Commodity Description and Coding System of the Eurasian economic Union" and "Determination of the Customs value of goods. Methods for determining Customs value"</i>
6	<i>Training for officials of the National Academy for Customs, Indirect Taxes and Narcotics (NACIN), Republic of India</i>	<i>16-20 September 2019</i>	<i>NACIN delegation headed by the Director General Mr. D. Singh (5 pers.)</i>	<i>Lectures and training sessions were held in English as part of the implementation of the additional professional program "Current issues of Customs control". Upon completion NACIN representatives were awarded with the certificates of successful completion of training at Russian Customs Academy</i>
7	<i>Training of the Heads of the border Customs authorities of the General Customs Administration of the People's Republic of China</i>	<i>15-28 September 2019</i>	<i>Heads of the border Customs authorities of the General Customs Administration of the People's Republic of China (10 pers.)</i>	<i>Training of the Heads of the border Customs authorities of the General Customs Administration of the People's Republic of China</i>
8	<i>Training of Palestinian Customs officials</i>	<i>18-27 September 2019</i>	<i>Palestinian Customs officials (4 pers.)</i>	<i>Training in English on the additional professional program "Customs value of goods" using E-learning. As a result of the training, Palestinian Customs officials were awarded with the certificates confirming the E-Learning completion</i>



**Regional Office for Capacity Building
for the World Customs Organization Europe Region**

9	<i>Training of Customs officials of the Republic of Azerbaijan on the basis of the Academy of the State Customs Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan</i>	<i>24-26 September 2019</i>	<i>Customs officials of the Republic of Azerbaijan (17 pers.)</i>	<i>Training of Customs officials of the Republic of Azerbaijan to work with X-ray scanners for personal inspection under the additional professional program "Purpose, General arrangement and procedure for working with x-ray scanners for personal inspection".</i>
10	<i>IAEA regional training courses</i>	<i>14-18 October 2019</i>	<i>IAEA representatives, officials of Russian Federal Customs service and foreign customs services (25 pers.)</i>	<i>Regional IAEA training courses on radiation detection methods for personnel directly performing control functions at Customs borders. The courses included lectures, practical sessions and field classes. Officials were awarded with the personal certificates of the completion</i>
11	<i>Training of Palestinian Customs officials</i>	<i>11-20 November 2019</i>	<i>Palestinian Customs officials (4 pers.)</i>	<i>Training in English on the additional professional program "Origin of goods" using E-learning. As a result of the training, Palestinian Customs officials were awarded with the certificates confirming the E-Learning completion</i>
12	<i>Training of Customs officers of Kyrgyz Republic in Osh, Kyzyl-Kiya</i>	<i>18-22 November 2019</i>	<i>Customs officers of Kyrgyz Republic (55 pers.)</i>	<i>Training of Customs officers of Kyrgyz Republic to work on inspection systems as part of the implementation of the additional professional program "Application of the inspection system ST-6035 for Customs control purposes". At the end of the training, the final exam was held in the form of testing and documents on professional development were prepared</i>
13	<i>Training of Customs officers of Kyrgyz Republic in Osh, Kyzyl-Kiya</i>	<i>10-14 February 2020</i>	<i>Customs officers of Kyrgyz Republic (48 pers.)</i>	<i>Training of Customs officers of Kyrgyz Republic in the operational application of Russian-made inspection systems. The officers worked out all necessary actions aimed at performing both X-ray scanning of vehicles and actions aimed at ensuring radiation safety</i>



III. PLANNED OR FORESEEN EVENTS

#	Name of the Event	Date	Attendance	Purpose & Outcomes
1	<i>IV session of the Moscow International Model of the World Customs Organization</i>	<i>III-IV quarter of 2020</i>	<i>Representatives of the WCO Secretariat and WCO ROCB Europe region, Customs administrations of the foreign countries and partner universities</i>	<p><i>Promoting the emergence of innovative solutions to improve the efficiency of Customs administrations of states and integration associations in the global economy using the work experience of the WCO bodies;</i></p> <p><i>Studying the structure, principles of activity, functions, powers of the WCO bodies;</i></p> <p><i>Creation of an innovative youth platform for self-realization and professional growth of young people, developing their potential in the interests of Customs and international Customs cooperation;</i></p> <p><i>Development of the ability to apply modern communication technologies for professional interaction, including in the WCO official languages</i></p>



IV. DEVELOPMENTS

One of the main activities of the WCO RTC on the basis of Russian Customs Academy is organizing the activities of the International Centre of Excellence for the NII specialists' training. Representatives of the Center take an active part in the meetings of the WCO technical experts Group on non-destructive Customs control technologies on the issues of developing a unified file format (UFF) for inspection systems. Participation in the WCO technical expert Group provides:

- an opportunity to test at the international level the author's results of research and development work carried out by Russian Customs Academy on the creation of software for NII operators' training;
- formation of the methodological, algorithmic and information support for automatic image recognition technologies obtained using inspection systems together with Russian Federal Customs Service and Scantronic-systems, the developer of Russian inspection systems;
- development of scientific and methodological support for use of the UFF in the EEU member States;
- creation creative conditions for proactive training of domestic inspection systems operators, as well as all students at the Academy at the level of WCO international standards.

Another achievement is awarding Russian Customs Academy on April 10, 2019 with the certificate of recognition of compliance of the educational program "Customs Business" with the WCO PICARD professional standards.



WORLD CUSTOMS ORGANIZATION
EUROPE REGION REGIONAL TRAINING CENTER (RTC)
ANNUAL REPORT
(1 April 2019 – 31 March 2020)

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

Name of the RTC:	Lt. Gen. Mihály Arnold Regional Training Centre of the World Customs Organization (henceforth: WCO RTC)
Head of the RTC:	International Relations Department of the National Tax and Customs Administration's Central Management (henceforth: NTCA CM) supervises the RTC
RTC Website and E-mail Address:	international@nav.gov.hu ;
Number of Staff:	There is no permanent staff in the Budapest RTC
Contact Person:	LT. Col. Zsuzsa Kecskés
Contact Person E-Mail & Phone Number:	kecskes.zsuzsa@nav.gov.hu ; international@nav.gov.hu ;



Brief History & Information about the Center:



WCO_RTC_agreeme
Budapest nt_2001.pdf



Signed Protocol RTC
brochure



The very first WCO RTC was established in 2001 in Budapest. (Please find attached the signed Memorandum of Understanding.) In the 10 years elapsed since the establishment the Hungarian Customs and Finance Guard (NTCA's predecessor in title) organized many successful international events thus contributing to the realization of the objectives of the WCO. The 10th anniversary was celebrated in February 2011 with the participation of Mr. Kunio Mikuriya, Secretary General of the WCO, and Mr. Walter Deffaa, Director General of the Directorate General Taxation and Customs Union. Since then as well, our goal is to further enhance cooperation with the WCO.



II. ORGANIZED OR HOSTED EVENTS

#	Name of the Event	Date	Attendance	Purpose & Outcomes
1	WCO Europe Regional Workshop on Cross-Border E-Commerce	26-28 March 2019	50 participants from 26 Member Customs administrations of the Europe region and the private sector	<p>The workshop was aimed at assisting WCO Members of the Europe region with the implementation of the Framework of Standards on Cross-Border E-Commerce to build capacities for addressing the challenges presented by growing cross-border E-Commerce.</p> <p>The participants gained deeper insight into different models of revenue collection on E-commerce shipments and associated issues such as valuation, classification and rules of origin.</p>
2	„Common Challenges, Smart Solutions – Digital Transformation of Tax and Customs Administrations from IT and HR Perspective” - international professional and academic conference organized in cooperation with WCO, NTCA and National University of Public Service	20-21 November 2019	120 participants	<p>Examination of the tax and customs administrations' cooperation, or in case of integrated administration the cooperation of the two professional fields from a perspective determined in the actual year on the basis of lectures and case studies.</p> <p>The participants returned home enriched with new knowledge based on the presentations and case studies, as well as the exchanges of views.</p>



**Regional Office for Capacity Building
for the World Customs Organization Europe Region**

<p>3</p>	<p>Several sub-regional working group meetings or professional trainings with the participation of the Visegrad Group's countries (V4 - Poland, Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary), or V4 countries + Austria and Slovenia in the following topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - transfer price audit; - possibilities of economies' digital audit; 	<p>24-26 May 2019</p> <p>17-21 June 2019</p> <p>8-11 July 2019</p>	<p>15-20 participants/event</p>	<p>Exchange of experience, creation of expert networks, search for new solutions to challenges. The goal is being achieved.</p>
<p>4</p>	<p>Bilateral negotiation with the Zambian Revenue Authority in the issues of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - management of border operations; - capacity building; - training initiatives and - Customs systems. 	<p>18-20 May 2019</p>	<p>8 participants</p>	<p>Presentation on the regulatory system and practice of the European Union Member State, Hungary, within the framework of the study visit. During the theoretical lectures of the negotiations, the visitor country got an idea of the rules and procedures of the areas to be explored, while during the site visit, practical experience was gathered.</p>
<p>5</p>	<p>Trilateral seminar (China, Serbia and Hungary) on e-commerce and its customs management</p>	<p>27-29 May 2019</p>	<p>12 participants</p>	<p>Discussing the challenges related to e-commerce and examining the possibilities of practical cooperation in ecommerce. Serbia and Hungary got acquainted with the Chinese practice, while China was informed about the regulations and the established system of the European Union.</p>



III. PLANNED OR FORESEEN EVENTS

#	Name of the Event	Date	Attendance	Purpose & Outcomes
1	Regional Workshop on Performance Measurement for WCO Europe Region	It was planned to 8-12 June 2020 – According to the prevailing global circumstances caused by the COVID-19 pandemic it is postponed to early 2021	50-60 persons	The WGPM is postponed to November 2020. The outcomes of the 2 nd Meeting of the Working Group on Performance Measurement (WGPM) will be an important basis to define the course of the Regional Workshop.



**WORLD CUSTOMS ORGANIZATION
EUROPE REGION REGIONAL TRAINING CENTER (RTC)
ANNUAL REPORT
(1 April 2019 – 31 March 2020)**

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

Name of the RTC:	
Head of the RTC:	Gulu Novruzov
RTC Website and E-mail Address:	www.ascca.edu.az
Number of Staff:	-
Contact Person:	Sevinj Aliyeva (Senior Specialist at the Lifelong Learning Centre)
Contact Person E-Mail & Phone Number:	sevinj.aliyeva@ascca.edu.az / +994 70 846 6547



Brief History & Information about the Center:

On September 30, 2002, the State Customs Committee (SCC) and the World Customs Organization (WCO) signed a Memorandum on the establishment of a Regional Training Center (RTC) in Baku. The opening ceremony in September 2003 was attended by the Secretary General of the WCO. It is possible for 50 people to study at the center at the same time. The RTC is provided with modern equipment, conference hall, classrooms, library, etc. In the framework of cooperation with the WCO, seminars/workshops and trainings of national, regional and international importance are held at the RTC, on a variety of customs-related topics. For these purposes, the WCO ensures the assignment of trainers for the training process. National planned seminars and trainings are also held here on the basis of approved training plans drawn up in consistency with the conducted needs assessment results. Since its formation, the RTC has identified the standards and requirements for customs education in the region and the main directions and priorities of cooperation. Furthermore, Other than coordinating and implementing activities, RTC Baku also provides assistance to customs services. Seminars undertaken by the RTC include "Trade environment in Azerbaijan: innovative projects applied in the customs system", "Management principles of the Azerbaijani model of release time measurement project", "Trade assistance based on release time measurement - reforms and applications", etc. On October 27-30, 2003, an international seminar was held at the WCO RTC. The seminar was organized within the framework of the joint program of the European Union, the United Nations Development Program and the Government of Azerbaijan " South Caucasus regional drug control program" (SCAD).

On December 3-4, 2009, the 1st meeting of the WCO RTCs in the Europe Region was held at the WCO RTC in Baku. The event was attended by the responsible representatives of the customs services of Azerbaijan, Hungary, Macedonia, Kazakhstan, Russia, as well as the WCO.

The RTC hosts different international and regional meetings. Customs Valuation, Unified Administrative Documentation in Europe and its Implementation Methods, Trade Facilitation and World Trade Organization Capacity Building, Mobile Brigades, Single Window and Data Harmonization in Central Asia, International Road Transport, Harmonized System and other workshops and sessions can be indicated are the examples of such meetings.

It should be noted that with a view to ensuring the training of the high-ranking personnel of the SCC of the Republic of Azerbaijan, professional development and scientific research on customs, the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Mr. Ilham Aliyev issued a respective Decree in January, 2012, on the Establishment of the Academy of the SCC of the Republic of Azerbaijan (ASCCA). The main aim in establishing this public higher education institution is the training, sustainable and regular professional development of the customs officers of the county, in order to meet the demands of the customs authorities in Azerbaijan. The ASCCA also runs several BA and MA degree programs, as a regular higher education institution.

II. ORGANIZED OR HOSTED EVENTS

#	Name of the Event	Date	Attendance	Purpose & Outcomes
1	Training on “Methodology for transport and release of goods under Customs seals and stamps of vehicles and containers”	3-4 September 2019	25 employees of the State Customs Committee (SCC) and its structural units	Training to increase the knowledge and skills of customs officers related to the procedure of control over technical conditions and issuance of certificates of release according to the “Methodology for transport and release of goods under Customs seals and stamps of vehicles and containers” approved by the Order of the State Customs Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan No. 1000/245 dated 03.09.2019 The survey results of employees involved in the training were generally positive. Employees of the relevant customs authorities apply the acquired knowledge in their service activities.
2	Professional development training of customs authorities on search operations	16 September – 4 October 2019	22 employees of the Main Operational Investigation Department (MOID), Operation and Inquest Departments (divisions) of Territorial General Customs and Specialized Customs Departments	Teaching knowledge about the national and legal bases of operational search activity of customs authorities, its implementation, problematic aspects and improvement, ensuring human rights and freedoms in these activities, and the specifics of the implementation of search operations. The knowledge and professional skills acquired by the employees involved in the training were evaluated at the end of the training and were generally positive.



3	Training on operation and maintenance module of “B-Scan” for customs officers	1-2 October 3-4 October	26 employees of SCC and Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic (NAR) specialized in the service of technical control means and implementation of technical means	Teaching knowledge and professional skills about the operation, maintenance and technical maintenance of “B-Scan” equipment. The survey results of employees involved in the training were generally positive. Employees of the relevant customs authorities apply the acquired knowledge in their service activities.
4	Operator exercise on the rules of operation of “Hi-Scan Hi-Trax II” X-ray inspection device	4-8 October 2019	12 employees of customs authorities specialized in implementation of technical means and employees of the Azerbaijan State Customs Committee’s Academy (ASCCA)	Teaching knowledge and professional skills on the rules of operation of “Hi-Scan Hi-Trax II” X-ray inspection device The survey results of employees involved in the training were generally positive. Employees of the relevant customs authorities apply the acquired knowledge in their service activities.
5	Training on accurate and correct reading of X-ray images of “B-Scan” equipment	24-26 September 2019	13 employees of SCC and NAR specialized in the service of technical control means and implementation of technical means, employees of the ASCCA	Teaching knowledge and professional skills on accurate and correct reading of X-ray images of “B-Scan” equipment The survey results of employees involved in the training were generally positive Employees of the relevant customs authorities apply the acquired knowledge in their service activities.
6	Training on Targeting & Intelligence (introductory course)	15-18 October 2019	22 employees of SCC, other structural units of MOID, employees of ASCCA	Teaching knowledge about the legal basis of fight against customs offenses and other offenses and experience of its implementations within the framework of Targeting & Intelligence Introduction Course Surveys were conducted at the end of the training in order to evaluate the knowledge acquired by the employees involved in the training and survey results were generally positive.



7	Training-seminar on “Strategy to combat fake and counterfeit products and product identification”	29 October 2019	48 employees of SCC’s structural units, territorial and specialized customs departments, and ASCCA	Importance of “Strategy to combat fake and counterfeit products and product identification” on the economic security of the state, teaching knowledge about the detection methods of such products and related entities The results of the surveys done by employees involved in the training and the results of practical trainings were generally positive.
8	Professional development trainings on operational search activities of customs authorities	6 November-14 December 2019	22 employees of the Main Operational Investigation Department, Operation and Inquest Departments (divisions) of Territorial General Customs and Specialized Customs Departments	Teaching new knowledge about the national and legal bases of operational search activity of customs authorities, its implementation, problematic aspects. and improvement, ensuring human rights and freedoms in these activities, and the specifics of the implementation of search operations. The knowledge and professional skills acquired by the employees involved in the training were evaluated at the end of the training and were generally positive.
9	Training on module for transportation of medicines, as well as service and civilian weapons at customs border checkpoints by natural persons, which are not intended for production or commercial purposes	3 December 2019	28 employees of SCC’s structural units, territorial and specialized customs departments	Teaching knowledge and professional skills about the legal basis of transportation of medicines, as well as service and civilian weapons at customs border checkpoints by natural persons, which are not intended for production or commercial purposes; related rules; offenses; and measures to eliminate the causes of such offenses. The survey results of employees involved in the training were generally positive.



10	Training on "Prospects for improving the efficiency of import-export operations"	19 December 2019	12 employees of SCC and ASCCA, people engaged in entrepreneurial activity	The main topic of the seminar "Prospects for improving the efficiency of import-export operations" was to create more favorable conditions for foreign trade participants, increase the effectiveness of state business regulation mechanisms, and to develop civil servant-entrepreneur relations in accordance with the principles of modern management The information and recommendations provided in the training were generally positive.
11	Operator exercise on the rules of operation of "Hi-Scan Hi-Trax II" X-ray inspection device	24-28 December 2019	12 employees of "Azerterminal-Complex" Union's departments	Teaching knowledge and professional skills on the rules of operation of "Hi-Scan Hi-Trax II" X-ray inspection device The survey results of employees involved in the training were generally positive. Employees of the relevant customs authorities apply the acquired knowledge in their service activities.
12	Training on "The use of "Hi-Scan Hi-Trax II" X-ray inspection device module	13-18 Januaryy 2020	16 employees of customs authorities specialized in technical service	Teaching knowledge and professional skills on the rules of operation of "Hi-Scan Hi-Trax II" X-ray inspection device The survey results of employees involved in the training and skills they demonstrated in the practical trainings were generally positive. Employees of the relevant customs authorities apply the acquired knowledge in their service activities.
13	Training on "Level 2" maintenance of HCVT 6029 inspection system	5 February 2020	12 employees of customs authorities specialized in technical service	Teaching knowledge and skills related to the scientific and practical aspects of "Level 2" maintenance of HCVT 6029 inspection system, causes of possible malfunctions in the system and their elimination.



				The survey results of employees involved in the training and the results of the practical trainings were generally positive.
14	Training on the Code of Ethics with customs officials	10 February and 25 May 2020	25 employees of SCC's structural units, territorial and specialized customs departments	Teaching knowledge about the international and national normative-legal acts covering the rules of ethical conduct, aspects and importance of their implementation in the activities of customs authorities, rules of communication of customs officers with different categories of people, ways to resolve disputes The survey results of employees involved in the training were generally positive.
15	Professional development training for the staff of the Cynology Center	12-20 February 2020	2 employees of the Cynology Center of the SCC (with the dogs they use in the service)	Teaching knowledge and professional skills about the scientific-theoretical and legal bases of the cynology service, its role in the detection of customs offenses and their perpetrators, rules of implementation of search dogs, methods of smuggling etc. The survey results of employees involved in the training and the results of the practical trainings were generally positive.
16	Training on "Transport of goods under Customs seals and stamps of vehicles and containers" module	13-14 February 2020	25 employees of SCC, its territorial and specialized customs departments	Teaching knowledge and skills related to the rules for the transport of goods under Customs seals and stamps of vehicles and containers, detection of offenses in these activities. The survey results of employees involved in the training were generally positive.



17	Training on the activities of customs authorities in the field of international humanitarian law	19-20 February 2020	10 officials of SCC, MOID, and specialized customs bodies	Providing up-to-date information on normative-legal acts in the field of international humanitarian law and their implementation in the activities of customs authorities. The survey results of employees involved in the training were generally positive.
18	Training on "Container Targeting" module	24-28 February 2020	20 employees from the structural units of SCC, territorial and specialized customs departments, and ASCCA	Providing information on up-to-date knowledge and professional skills related to the offenses in international freight shipping by containers and disclosure of facts related to smuggling crimes and their perpetrators The survey results of employees involved in the training were generally positive.
19	Training on "Analysis of X-ray images"	2-6 March 2020	10 employees of SCC and employees of NAR specialized in the operation of SCC's technical control means and implementation of technical means	Teaching up-to-date knowledge and professional skills related to the forms and methods of the analysis of X-ray images. The survey results of employees involved in the training and the results of the practical trainings were evaluated positively. Employees of the relevant customs authorities apply the acquired knowledge in their service activities
20	Training on operation of modern X-ray equipment and inspection systems.	4 March 2020	36 employees of the customs authorities specializing in the application and maintenance of technical means	Teaching modern knowledge and professional skills in the operation of modern X-ray equipment and inspection systems. The survey results of employees involved in the training and the results of the practical trainings were evaluated positively. Employees of the relevant customs authorities apply the acquired knowledge in their service activities

III. PLANNED OR FORESEEN EVENTS

RTC note: as mentioned in the “Developments” section below, due to the COVID-19 pandemic situation, some of the planned trainings on 64 modules for the year 2020 have been canceled and they are planned to be held online. The following table only presents an example of the planned or foreseen events. A relevant full list is available at the RTC upon request.

#	Name of the Event	Date	Attendance	Purpose & Outcomes
1	Practical training on more effective inspection of trucks and containers	20-22 April 2020	Participants from SCC General Customs Department for Western Territory	Enhancement of the participants' experience in the inspection of trucks and containers
2	Practical training on more effective inspection of railway trains and wagons	18-20 May 2020	Participants from SCC General Customs Department for Western Territory	Enhancement of the participants' experience in the inspection of railway trains and wagons
3	Practical training on customs inspection through extensive use of various types of technical control means	08-10 June 2020	Participants from SCC General Customs Department for Western Territory	Enhancement of the participants' experience in the use of various types of technical control means



4	Seminar on different types of drugs and methods of their concealment	17-18 August 2020	Participants from SCC General Customs Department for Western Territory	Participants' increased knowledge on different types of drugs and methods of their concealment
5	Special preparation on radiation safety	September– December 2020	Participants from f SCC General Customs Department for Western Territory	Research



IV. DEVELOPMENTS

01 April 2019 – 31 March 2020

Based on a Decree signed by the SCC Chairman, a Commission was established for the capacity building of the personnel recruited in the customs authorities in the SCC system, as well as the customs officers' professional knowledge advancement and skills improvement, and for the coordination of national and international events. The ASCCA rector was appointed as the chief of the Commission, which is headquartered at the RTC. The head of the ASCCA's organizational units have been included in the activity of the Commission's Headquarters.

In the period of 01 April 2019 – 31 March 2020, twenty trainings have been conducted on various themes related to the activity areas of the customs authorities, and such themes included but are not limited to the following: law enforcement; use of modern technical verification means and their application in the struggle against customs law violations; customs control and customs clearance on containers used in international freight transport; combat strategy against fake and counterfeit products and product identification; in the framework of the "Hunter" project: Container targeting; prospects for improving efficiency in import-export operations; Targeting & Intelligence introductory course etc.

Experts from the other countries, SCC professionals and ASCCA professors/teachers were involved in the trainings. The trainings were materialized at the SCC territorial and specialized customs authorities, based on the relevant SCC decrees and on the modules (programs) prepared in line with the standards of the WCO, international organizations and the requirements of the country's normative-legal acts in the customs area, and the relevant international and national practice resources. In the preparation of the training programs, the opinions and comments of the SCC customs entities, international organizations' documentary requirements on customs, and results of analyses conducted on the demands of professional preparation.

The trainings programs focused on the enforcement of legal requirements and human rights and freedoms, coordination of modern knowledge with practice, and ensuring international and national security. The presentation slides, lectures, video films related to the international and national practices and specific cases were used in the trainings. Usually, the interactive methods, case studies and real-world simulations (in particular, the practical, close-to-reality exercises and workshops) are employed in the training processes. A laboratory arranged at the ASCCA is equipped with the necessary technical and control facilities, with the purpose of conducting the training exercises at the ASCCA.

In order to increase the trainings' quality and improve the training process, anonymous opinion surveys among the trainings' participants were conducted and their results were analyzed, discussed at the meetings with the head of the RTC and then, used as a feedback for improving the training processes.

The funds of the ASCCA library and those of various international libraries are used for the trainings. At the end of the indicated trainings, an evaluation of the customs professionals' newly acquired professional knowledge and skills was conducted, and the certificates were delivered to the successful participants.

The trainings' participants positively assessed the knowledge they presented to them in the trainings. Before and after the trainings, meetings with the trainings' participants were held with the participation of the ASCCA leadership, in order to learn their opinions on the organization of the trainings. For assessing the practical



application of the participants' acquired knowledge and skills, relevant surveys are submitted to the structural units of the customs authorities in the SCC system, and the surveys' results are analyzed and used in the training processes.

In the indicated period, 398 representatives of the customs authorities participated in the trainings conducted on 20 modules.

For the current year, a table of the planned trainings on 64 modules was compiled. However, given the COVID-19 pandemic situation and ensuing problems posed to the arrangement of the practical exercises, some of them have been canceled. Several of these modules are planned to be conducted online. The ASCCA proceeds with the provision of a full and high quality online education for the students.

The conducted and planned events have led to the following outcomes, in general:

- the training participants have acquired the necessary knowledge and skills related to their professional service areas, and most of them apply the learning outcomes in practice;
- the activism of the customs service professionals in ensuring the national and economic security has increased;
- positive changes in the dynamics of the combat against customs violations;
- regular improvement of the customs officers' professional preparation, through learning and application of the other countries' important practices in the area;
- increased pedagogical skills of the trained experts and customs officers.



**WORLD CUSTOMS ORGANIZATION
EUROPE REGION REGIONAL TRAINING CENTER (RTC)
ANNUAL REPORT
(1 April 2019 – 31 March 2020)**

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

Name of the RTC:	RTC WCO in Nur-Sultan city
Head of the RTC:	Botagoz Abilova
RTC Website and E-mail Address:	-
Number of Staff:	4
Contact Person:	(Ms) Aray Yerzhan
Contact Person E-Mail & Phone Number:	ar.erzhan@kgd.gov.kz +77072016499



Brief History & Information about the Center:

At 2009, on the basis of the Memorandum between Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Kazakhstan and WCO about establishing WCO Regional training center in Nur-Sultan city Training Methodical Center of the State Revenue Committee of the Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Kazakhstan has obtained an international status and became the fifth regional training center of the WCO European region.

The official opening of the WCO RTC in Astana took place on December 14, 2009, attended by Prime Minister of the Republic of Kazakhstan K. K. Masimov, Minister of Finance of the Republic of Kazakhstan B. B. Zhamishev, WCO Secretary General Mr. Kunio Mikuriya, as well as heads of customs services of Central Asian countries.

On December 14-15, 2009, the first regional workshop on «Integrated border management» was held, which was attended by WCO experts, representatives of customs services of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Mongolia, Russia, Tajikistan and Ukraine. The workshop participants discussed the most pointed questions, considered the prospects for improving integrated border control, and the world experience in border control.

The concept of establishing WCO RTC is being developed proceeding from the state interests of purchasing regional customs services by qualified and professionally trained specialists who are able to ensure the introduction and use of progressive measures in the customs administration and, consequently, increase the level of efficiency of all customs activities

RTC is considered as a link between European and Central Asian regions which aspires to use regional interaction, maintain close ties with regional and foreign customs services.

RTC's objectives:

- establishing contacts with foreign educational institutions;
- planning and carrying out of international events directed on improvement of professional skills of customs bodies employees in priority directions;
- development of cooperation in the field of education with international programs and organizations accredited in the Republic of Kazakhstan, in accordance with cooperation agreements;
- organization of international workshops, conferences, forums in RTC;
- introduction of WCO distance learning (E-learning) In educational process.



II. ORGANIZED OR HOSTED EVENTS

#	Name of the Event	Date	Attendance	Purpose & Outcomes
1	International workshop on «Actual issues of determining the customs value and classification of goods».	June 24-28, 2019	A total of 46 people, of them: Central Asia (Uzbekistan - 1, Turkmenistan - 1, Tajikistan - 1), the EAEU (Armenia - 1, Kyrgyzstan - 1, Russia - 2), Central Office of State Revenue Committee (SRC's CO) - 7; territorial State Revenue Departments (SRD)-32	Study of international experience and practical aspects in the field of customs value determination and classification of goods, as well as exchange of experience with representatives of customs services of foreign countries invited to this workshop.
2	Regional workshop on «Improving the customs risk management system»	September 19-20, 2019	A total of 43 people, of them: Uzbekistan - 2; Kyrgyzstan - 2; GIZ - 1; (SRC's CO) - 8; Training Methodical Centre (TMC) - 2, territorial SRD - 28	Obtaining practical skills in customs risk management, studying international theoretical and practical experience in the field of risk management in order to apply it to improve the customs risk management system of the Republic of Kazakhstan.



III. PLANNED OR FORESEEN EVENTS

#	Name of the Event	Date	Attendance	Purpose & Outcomes
1	Sub-regional webinar, diagnostic mission «Authorized economic operators»	June 29 – July 2, 2020	A total of 63 people, of them: Uzbekistan - 4, Kyrgyzstan - 3, Tajikistan - 4, USAID - 5, SRC - 4, SRD - 43.	Assistance to the State Revenue authorities of the Republic of Kazakhstan in implementing a comprehensive strategy for the implementation of the World Trade Organization Agreement on trade facilitation in terms of improving the AEO Institute, by carrying out an online diagnostic mission.
2	International workshop on «National transit coordinator: functioning criteria for effective implementation of operational transit measures and interaction with other countries' coordinators»	September 7-11, 2020	A total of 50 people, of them: SRD's employees – 34, SRC – 11, TMC – 5.	Ensuring a rapid and efficient transit regime by facilitating transit procedures.
3	International workshop on: «Time release Study»	October 5-9, 2020	A total of 50 people, of them: SRD's employees – 34, SRC – 11, TMC – 5.	Measurement of relevant aspects of the efficiency of the state revenue bodies of the Republic of Kazakhstan and other regulatory bodies during the standard process of import, export and transit of goods. The study aims to accurately measure the listed elements of foreign trade flows.

* * *



ROCB EUROPE ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT 2019/2020

This work is a product of the staff of the ROCB Europe, except where explicitly stated otherwise. It is intended to be submitted to the Member Administrations of the World Customs Organization Europe Region. The report is also available on the ROCB Europe web site member section. For additional information and updates, please visit rocb-europe.org.

Regional Office for Capacity Building for the World Customs Organization Europe Region

Address

Natig Aliyev str, 4-a AZ1025, Baku, Republic of Azerbaijan

Phone numbers

(+994 12) 464-31-34; (+994 12) 464-31-35

Fax

(+994 12) 464-31-36

Web Site

rocb-europe.org

E-mail

info (at) rocb-europe.org