

[Statement with the background of a former customs officer now working as IT expert in the logistics industry]

European Commission and especially DG TAXUD face challenges far beyond their traditional role of a legal institution. European and 3rd country businesses expect facilitating trade, providing protection, ensuring fairness, enable development of new businesses and: keeping up with technology standards to constantly modernize and optimize processes. The issue that I see is the lack of ability and courage of an EU institution to envision greater changes (and I don't mean to create a modernized union customs code...). The e-commerce business is growing without end in sight, the forwarder market is consolidating, customs clearance software gets internationalized, trade wars come up. An open-minded, forward-looking, encouraging environment with people willing to take risks can come up with solutions, I'm sure.

Why not allow the presentation of goods by sending a GPS signal? Connecting the bar code on a parcel to a customs declaration scanning it like express carriers do within seconds? Or give up the concept of presentation at all and create a process around "passing" the border with less strict physical orientation? Let drones check ports for newly arrived goods? Why not combine free trade agreements with an agreement to forward export data to the importing country? Why not allow the same declaration to be used as import, export or transit declaration just updating it? Why not allow trusted traders to completely do without declarations?

I don't claim saying anything new and I know that there are promising approaches out there. I just like to encourage having a try beyond bureaucratic boundaries. Like Switzerland allows travelers clearing their goods with an app so simplified that it strictly speaking even violates Swiss customs laws.