



# 10 FACTS

## about the EU's Customs Union

### DID YOU KNOW?

The EU's Customs Union is unique in the world. It consists of 28 countries using a common set of rules, called the Union Customs Code, to run one single system for importing and exporting goods.

The new code that comes into force on 1 May will simplify procedures for traders. Among other benefits, it will allow goods to clear customs more simply and quickly, getting them to consumers faster and more cheaply.



**454.2 tonnes of drugs** were seized by EU customs authorities in 2014 – an increase of 10% on the year before.



EU customs authorities are in the front line against the international trafficking of firearms. In 2015, they seized **7,000 weapons** and around **3.2 million items of ammunition**.



**4.3 million businesses** are registered by customs authorities to trade goods in and out of the EU, with **98% of customs declarations** being made electronically.



The EU's Customs Union controls the flow of non-declared cash which can be used to **finance terrorism and other crimes**. Almost **11,000** sums of non-declared cash were seized in 2014, with a total value of **€415 million**.



Trade in **valuable art treasures** out of the EU was responsible for 118 infringements of EU rules on the trafficking and smuggling of cultural goods



**Sea transport** is the most used form of transport for goods in and out of the EU. It accounted for a huge **54% of EU trade** in 2014, followed by **air transport at 19%**.



More than **119 000 officials** of the customs authorities across the EU work to provide service **24 hours** a day and **365 days** a year



Over **35 million articles of counterfeit goods** were detained in 2014, with an estimated value of **€617 million**. **China** was the primary originating country (**80%**), followed by Hong Kong, the United Arab Emirates, Turkey and India.



**Peru** was the originating country of a large amount of counterfeit **fruit** which infringed on Community Plant Variety Rights, while **Panama** was the top source for counterfeit alcoholic beverages. **Thailand** was in the lead for fake ink cartridges and **Malaysia** topped the list for counterfeit mobile phone accessories.



In 2015, the value of **global trade amounted to almost €24 trillion**. The EU accounted for **15%** of that, making it one of the main players on the world's trade arena.

### WHAT DO OUR CUSTOMS OFFICIALS DO?

#### Customs are there to:

- protect us against international trafficking and smuggling of illicit goods, e.g. arms and drugs
- protect consumers against goods which pose a risk to their safety or their health
- protect the financial interests of the EU and its Member States.