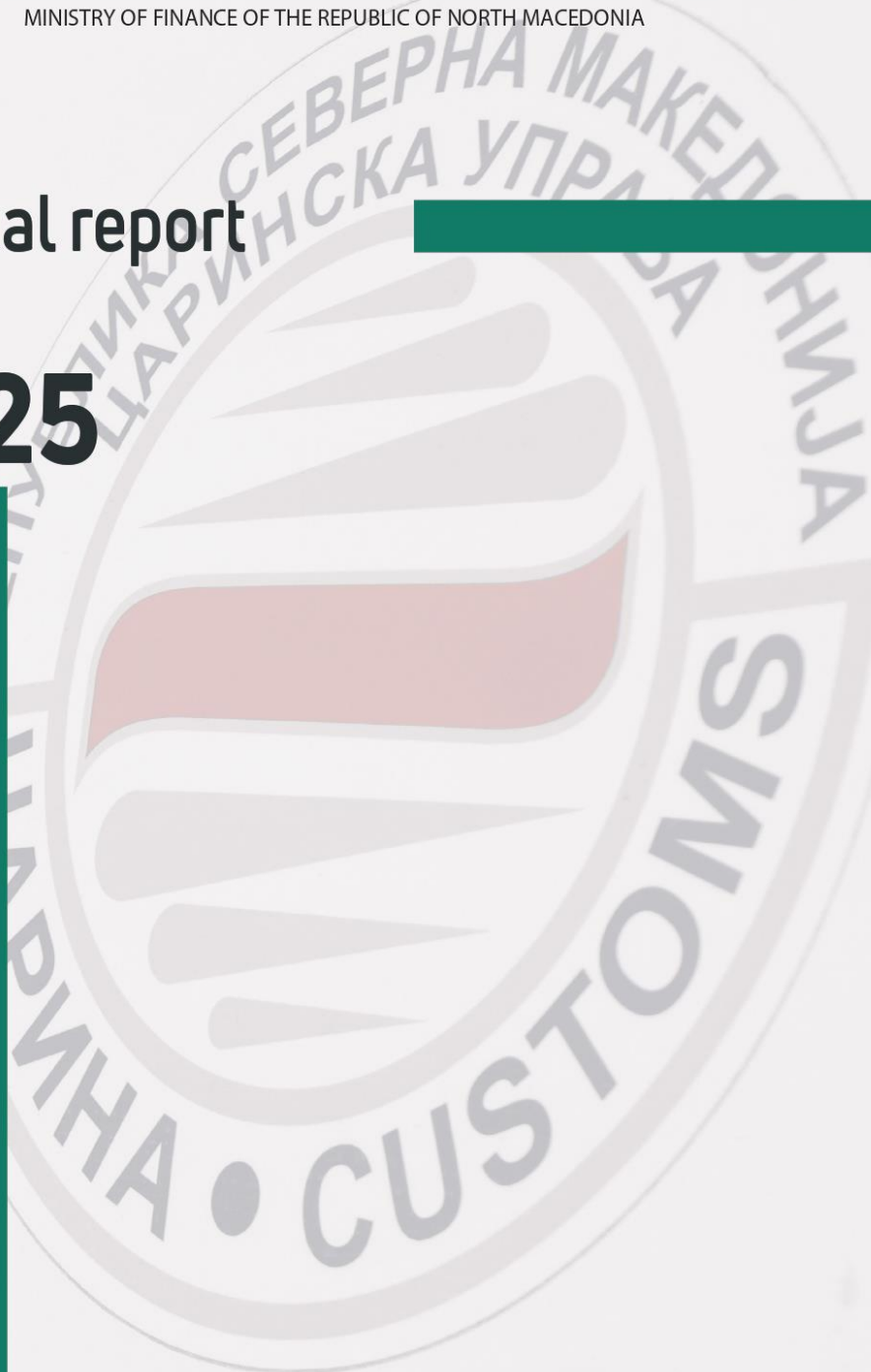


CUSTOMS ADMINISTRATION

MINISTRY OF FINANCE OF THE REPUBLIC OF NORTH MACEDONIA

Annual report

2025





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EU Integration

Progress noted in the latest European Commission Report for the Republic of North Macedonia (2025);¹

The European Union assesses the Customs Administration as having a good level of preparation, in particular through the consolidation and upgrade of IT systems. The New Computerised Transit System (NCTS) Phase 5 development was completed and launched in January 2025. The Customs Administration implements a fully paperless environment for processing customs declarations and excise documents.

The Protocol on Elimination of Illicit Trade in Tobacco Products was ratified in December 2024. The Commission's recommendations from 2024 were implemented to a large extent. In the coming period, the Commission recommends continuing to consolidate and apply its national customs IT systems in line with the Commission's Union Customs Code (UCC) work programme and multiannual strategic plan (MASP) modules and ensure their upgrade; ensuring continued alignment of the customs legislation with the EU acquis and upgrade its national component of the New Computerised Transit System (NCTS) to Phase 6 and strengthened combat of customs fraud, in particular smuggling of tobacco products, also by cooperating with the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF).

The customs legislation is highly aligned with the EU acquis. In the field of customs legislation, the customs tariff for 2025 was adopted to align with the EU Combined Nomenclature.

The Protocol on Elimination of Illicit Trade in Tobacco Products of the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control was ratified in December 2024. This is an important commitment undertaken by the country in combating customs fraud, in particular the smuggling of tobacco products.

Amendments to the Regional Convention on pan-Euro-Mediterranean preferential rules of origin were ratified and took effect on 1 January 2025.

The Law ratifying the amendments to the Convention on a Common Transit Procedure has been adopted and published in the Official Gazette in December 2024. This law is a prerequisite for the launch of the New Computerised Transit System – Phase 5

On administrative and operational capacity, a new Customs Administration Development Strategy was adopted for the period 2025-2027. A comprehensive intelligence system in support of investigation and enforcement is in place. Controls are based upon intelligence-led risk analysis, pre-arrival information and selectivity techniques.

A new Strategy on Integrity and Anti-Corruption for the period 2024-2027 was adopted and is being implemented. The strategy includes 22 targeted measures designed to prevent

¹ COMMISSION STAFF WORKING DOCUMENT North Macedonia 2025 Report, 4.11.2025 (https://enlargement.ec.europa.eu/document/download/267b368e-6b55-4a42-bb72-6395593de4da_en?filename=north-macedonia-report-2025.pdf)

corruption and boost the integrity of customs officers and of the customs institutions. Advanced training on ethics, integrity and the fight against corruption was conducted.

Positive results have been recorded in terms of increased revenue collection and a higher number of seizures of illegal goods.

Maintenance and further development of the Integrated Tariff Environment (ITE) system was secured, and development has commenced of the Economic Operator Registration and Identification (EORI) and Uniform User Management and Digital Signature (UUM&DS) systems.

The report also highlights that the Customs Administration has established regular data exchange with numerous state institutions through the Interoperability Platform.

Reform and Growth Facility for the Western Balkans

The European Commission's Growth Plan for the Western Balkans (2024–2027) aims to enable citizens of the region to benefit from selected advantages of European Union membership during the pre-accession period. A central objective of the Plan is the gradual economic integration of Western Balkan countries into the EU Single Market, thereby fostering economic growth, increasing trade, and strengthening regional stability. Achieving these objectives requires the implementation of substantial reforms to align national economic systems and legislation with the EU acquis.

Within the framework of the Growth Plan, the Customs Administration is responsible for the implementation, monitoring, and reporting of Reform 4.1.6, which focuses on expanding the use of e-Customs services for economic operators, reducing costs, and improving the efficiency of customs procedures.

This reform foresees the adoption of a new national Customs Law, aimed at harmonising domestic customs legislation with the Union Customs Code. In parallel, it supports the implementation of the EU's Multiannual Strategic Plan for Customs (MASP-C), which предусматрива the development of new IT systems to enable the full digitalisation of customs procedures.

A draft version of the new Customs Law has been prepared and submitted to the Ministry of Finance for further consideration and initiation of the formal adoption procedure.

The implementation of activities envisaged under the Growth Plan is expected to enhance the electronic services provided by the Customs Administration to economic operators, reduce the costs of customs procedures, and increase their overall efficiency. In this context, the Customs Administration has initiated the implementation of the reform measure through the development of the New Computerised Transit System – Phase 6 (NCTS 6).

With support from the European Union, a consultant was engaged in 2025 to prepare the technical specifications. A public procurement procedure for the development of NCTS 6 and the provision of project management support is currently underway, with contract implementation expected to commence in the first quarter of 2026.

A functional version of NCTS 6 (opt-out) is expected to be available by 1 June 2026, which also represents the deadline for the system's implementation.

The deployment of the New Computerised Transit System (NCTS) – Phase 6 will bring significant improvements to transit procedures, including enhanced efficiency and the introduction of advanced requirements for data security and safety in transit declarations.

Participation in EU Customs Programme 2021-2027

The EU Customs 2027 Programme aims to ensure the further development of the EU Customs Union. This programme provides support for strengthening the administrative capacity of customs authorities and for improved capacities in the IT environment, in order to more easily cope with the increased volume of trade and new forms of modern trade, as well as more successfully protect against harmful products and substances, better protect businesses and facilitate the flow of legitimate trade.

In 2025, 29 customs officers participated in 14 events (8 physical and 6 online) organised under the Customs Programme. The representatives of the Customs Administration had the opportunity to learn about the status of the activities implemented in the European Union by following the meetings of the following working groups:

- Customs and Tax Training Support Group (TSG),
- European Customs Laboratory Network (CLEN),
- Transit Coordinators Group,
- Electronic Customs Coordination Group (ECCG),
- Customs Union Performance Expert Group (CUP),
- Prohibitions and Restrictions Expert Group.

Within the framework of the program, 3 trainings on IT capacity building (CSI RESTful, CSI and CCN) were also organized, as well as a working visit to the Customs Administration of Serbia on the topic "Sharing best practices in the harmonization of national customs legislation with EU legislation".

Revenue Collection and Protection of the Financial Interests

Ensuring Efficient Revenue Collection

Tax revenues represent a key source of budget financing, accounting for 56.3% of total central government revenues in 2025. The Budget for 2025 projects an increase in tax revenues of 12.8% compared to 2024, aimed at supporting fiscal consolidation, ensuring fiscal sustainability, stabilising public finances, and creating stronger conditions for economic growth.

Within this framework, the Customs Administration plays a significant role. Revenues collected from customs duties, VAT, excise duties, and fees were projected to account for 66.5% of total tax revenue collection, as well as 37.1% of total State Budget revenues in 2025.

The Customs Administration continues to enhance the efficiency of revenue collection through the implementation of measures aimed at reducing the informal economy.

At the same time, ongoing progress in the digitalisation of customs and tax procedures contributes to increased efficiency, reduced administrative burden, and easier compliance for taxpayers.

Revenue collected

In 2025, total revenues collected from imports and domestic trade amounted to 131,634.3 million denars (EUR 2,140.39 million), representing an increase of 5.2% compared to 2024. This corresponds to an absolute increase of 6,461.5 million denars, up from 125,172.8 million denars collected in the previous year.

<i>Total revenues collected</i>	<i>Total 2023</i>	<i>Total 2024</i>	<i>Total 2025</i>	<i>Comparison 2025/2024</i>
<i>Total – in million denars</i>	117,797.4	125,172.8	131,634.3	6,461.5
<i>Customs duty</i>	9,078.4	10,256.9	11,842.7	1,585.8
<i>VAT</i>	73,271.8	76,639.2	79,122.6	2,483.5
<i>Motor vehicle tax</i>	2,166.3	2,661.0	2,993.2	332.3
<i>Excise duty</i>	32,432.8	34,782.1	36,843.1	2,061.0
<i>Fees</i>	848.2	833.6	832.6	-1.0

In 2025, the ratio of revenue collection to staffing levels in the Customs Administration indicates that an average of 107,281,408 denars was collected per employee.

Subsequent collection

Decisions for subsequent collection	Total 2025		Total 2024	
	No.	Amount Denars	No.	Amount Denars
Ex-officio	873	207,609,425	537	61,475,993
Upon client's request	262	20,760,388	438	19,683,275
Total	1135	228,369,813	975	81,159,268

Customs Laboratory

In 2025, a total of 411 samples were received for laboratory analysis at the Customs Laboratory (compared to 141 samples in 2024).

Of the total number of samples analysed, 163 were oil derivatives, 222 were food products, 10 were fertilisers, and 16 were products from the chemical and other industries.

Cases of incorrect tariff classification were identified in 113 samples, including 1 oil derivative, 98 food products, 10 fertilisers, and 4 products from the chemical industry.

The remaining samples were confirmed as correctly classified in accordance with the Customs Tariff.

Application of Tariff and Non-Tariff Measures

Decisions on the Classification of Goods

In 2025, a total of 219 Binding Tariff Information (BTI) decisions were issued. Over the past three years, the total number of valid BTI decisions reached 671.

Alignment with the EU Combined Nomenclature

Three decrees amending and supplementing the Regulation on the classification of certain goods in the Combined Nomenclature were adopted and published in the Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia (No. 62/2025 of 21 March 2025, No. 189/2025 of 11 September 2025, and No. 248/2025 of 11 December 2025). These regulations transpose a total of 12 European Commission regulations concerning the classification of specific goods under the EU Combined Nomenclature.

The transposed regulations were published in the Official Journal of the European Union during the periods 1 July–30 September 2024, 1 October–31 December 2024, and 1 April–30 June 2025.

They cover a range of goods, including textile products, a chemical preparation, a passive optical splitter, advertising material, a projector with a tuner, a tactical response robot, pipette tips, a beanbag, a mixture of sucrose and gellan gum, and a carbonated alcoholic beverage with currant flavour.

Decisions on the Classification of Goods under the Harmonized System (HS) Committee

The decisions on the classification of specific goods adopted by the Harmonized System Committee of the World Customs Organization (WCO) at its 74th session (September 2024) and 75th session (April 2025) have been published.

Trade Facilitation

Harmonization of national customs legislation with the legislation and best practices of the European Union

Customs procedures and formalities related regulations

- **Law Amending the Law on Customs Tariff (Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia No. 130/2025, 27 June 2025)**

The Ministry of Finance, in cooperation with the Customs Administration, prepared amendments to the Law on Customs Tariff aimed at reducing customs duty rates for certain goods used as raw materials or intermediate products in domestic industry. These amendments are aligned with the Government Work Programme 2024–2028 and support the gradual harmonisation of national customs rates with those applied in the European Union, while taking into account the export-import needs of the national economy.

Additionally, the amendments abolish customs duties for goods originating in the United States of America.

- **Amendments to the Customs Law Implementing Regulation**
In July 2025, a **Regulation amending and supplementing the Customs Law Implementing Regulation was adopted** (Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia No. 154/2025, 29 July 2025), enabling the application of Article 2 (5) of the Law on Customs Tariff, which provides for a “free” customs duty rate for goods originating in the United States of America, in line with Article 19(3)(e) of the Customs Law, the decree also prescribes the requirement for proof of origin to confirm that the

goods qualify for preferential treatment as originating from the United States, in line with Article 19 (3) (e) of the Customs Law, i.e. prescribing the requirement for proof of origin to confirm that the goods are originating from the United States.

Legislation in Preparation

- A draft of the new Customs Law, fully harmonised with the Union Customs Code, has been prepared. The law introduces modern digital procedures, new authorisations, the right to be heard in case of a negative decision, updated definitions of customs procedures, and the use of new digital systems. The adoption of the new Customs Law is expected in 2026.
- A new Customs Law Implementing Regulation is also under preparation. This regulation will establish conditions, criteria, and deadlines for administrative actions. In the coming period, detailed guidelines will be issued to clarify procedures for import, export, transit, guarantees, and the entry of goods into the customs territory.

Legislation in Preparation Regulating Excise Duties on Goods Subject to Excise Duty

In November 2024, the following draft rulebooks were submitted to the Ministry of Finance for further processing:

- **Draft Rulebook on the Method of Taxation of Excise Duty on Alcohol, Alcoholic Beverages, and Tobacco Products**, making further harmonization with Commission Regulation (EC) No. 3199/93 of 22 November 1993, related to the mutual recognition of procedures for the complete denaturing of alcohol for the purposes of excise duty exemption.
- **Draft Rulebook on the Method of Taxation of Excise Duty on Energy Products and Electricity**

Key updates in both draft rulebooks include:

- Addition of detailed criteria for reducing guarantees for securing excise debt and guarantees in the form of cash deposits, in accordance with Article 30(13) of the Law on Excise Duties.
- Harmonisation of documents issued by other institutions in the documentation attached to requests for excise licenses and approvals for preferential users.
- Specification of procedures for refunding excise duty to diplomatic and consular missions and their staff, which were previously not detailed.
- Improvement of the text to reflect current excise operations, including the application of the Customs Administration's computer system.

Additionally, the Draft Rulebook on Excise Duty for Energy Products and Electricity specifies the content of monthly reports on purchased and sold quantities of energy products, as well as stocks containing marking substances.

Internal Customs Procedures

Customs procedures

New internal documents have been adopted to regulate customs procedures:

- **New Guidelines on Customs Value**, which regulate the manner and procedure implemented by the organizational units of the Customs Administration of the Republic of North Macedonia when determining the customs value of goods upon import.
- **New User Guide for Searching the SchwackeNet Electronic Catalog**, which describes the manner of searching the data in the SchwackeNet catalog, by the employees of the Customs Administration, for the purpose of assessing the value during the import procedure of new and used passenger motor vehicles, light commercial vehicles, as well as motorcycles.
- **Guidelines for weighing freight motor vehicles**, which regulates the obligations and procedures undertaken by customs officers when implementing the obligation to weigh freight motor vehicles at customs offices upon entry/exit and import/export, with a focus on the acceptance of weighing notes issued by a foreign country, which may last a maximum of 120 days during one year.
- **Revised Guidelines for the classification of computers and software in accordance with the Customs Tariff**, which clarifies the manner of classification of computer systems, computer servers, laptops and other portable devices, parts and accessories for these machines covered by Chapters 84 and 85, Section XVI of the Customs Tariff.

TOTAL DECLARATIONS PROCESSED (Import, Export, Transit) – 2025

e-Customs indicators

Processed declarations (import and export procedure)	Total 2024			Total 2025		
	Import	Export	Total	Import	Export	Total
	556,879	275,318	832,197	597,489	273,522	871,011

Average duration of procedures <i>(Excludes declarations over 2 days due to justified irregularities during customs controls)</i>	2024		2025	
	УВОЗ	ИЗВОЗ	УВОЗ	ИЗВОЗ
	179.88 minutes	42,83 minutes	174,75 minutes	45,31 minutes

Increase in simplified procedure declarations (2025 vs. 2024).	Increase in authorisations for simplified local customs clearance (76 active authorisations).	Imports: Percentage of declarations selected in the red channel by the risk management system with detected irregularities in 2025.
0.8% (1.746 declarations)	<i>No new authorisations were issued in 2025.</i>	24.30 %

Transit declaration processed in 2025

Transit Declarations by Departure/Destination	Number of declarations
Departure - MK Destination - abroad	170,955
Departure – abroad Destination - MK	101,949
Departure – abroad Destination – abroad	99,634

e-Customs indicators

- Increased number of transit declarations processed in NCTS - Phase 5 compared to transit declarations submitted through NCTS - Phase 4 – 57,870 (15.53%)
- Increased number of international transit declarations in NKTS - Phase 5 (in %) compared to declarations submitted through NCTS - Phase 4 – 40,824 (23.88%)

Excise procedures – declarations (2025)

- Production declarations – 21 for energy, 486 for alcohol, and 24 for tobacco
- Production declarations – small producers – 100
- Processing declarations – 48 for energy, 543 for alcohol, and 167 for tobacco
- Loss and destruction declarations – 70 for energy, 91 for alcohol, and 12 for tobacco
- Excise duty payment declarations – for 261 energy products, 1,000 alcohol, and 626 tobacco
- Declarations for additional payment of excise duty – 4 for energy products and 58 for tobacco
- Declarations for excise duty refund – 303
- Monthly reports from preferential users – 298 for energy products and 2,486 for alcohol
- Reports for payment of motor vehicle tax for modified motor vehicles – 48
- Declarations for excise stamps – 1,506 for alcohol and 1,185 for tobacco
- Declarations from farmers – 52
- Electronic excise documents – 29,196 for energy products, 8,587 for alcohol, and 2,133 for tobacco

IMPORT AND EXPORT DECLARATION PER CHANNEL IN 2025

IMPORT declarations 2025			EXPORT declarations 2025			TOTAL 2025		
Green channel	Yellow channel	Red channel	Green channel	Yellow channel	Red channel	Green channel	Yellow channel	Red channel
395.011 66.11 %	151.575 25.37 %	50.903 8.52 %	269.213 98.42 %	3.847 1.41 %	462 0.17 %	664.224 76.26 %	155.422 17.84 %	51.365 5.90 %
IMPORT declarations 2024			EXPORT declarations 2024			TOTAL 2024		
Green channel	Yellow channel	Red channel	Green channel	Yellow channel	Red channel	Green channel	Yellow channel	Red channel
372.102 66.82 %	131.876 23.68 %	52901 9.50 %	267.502 97.16 %	6.985 2.54 %	831 0.30 %	639.604 76.86 %	138.861 16.69 %	53.732 6.46 %

Permits issued through EXIM

In 2025, the competent institutions issued 126,269 import, export, and transit permits through EXIM, with an average processing time of 0.72 days per permit.

Number of Freight Motor Vehicles

A total of 1,130,968 freight motor vehicles (701,831 loaded and 429,137 empty) passed through the border crossings of the Republic of North Macedonia in 2025. The highest traffic was recorded at:

- Serbia: 326,422 FMVs (237,820 loaded and 88,602 empty)
- Bulgaria: 235,971 FMVs (144,450 loaded and 91,521 empty)

Border Freight Vehicle Traffic Data- 2025

		Number of freight motor vehicles that crossed the borders (January-December 2024)																		
		Kosovo			Serbia			Bulgaria			Greece			Albania						
Type of traffic		B	J	T	P	D	D	H	T	B	M	D	Д	Т	К	S	С	B	T	
		l	a	a	e	e	e	e	a	a	a	o	o	o	j	v	t	l	a	
		a	n	n																
Entry																				
Loaded	28.167	0	28.167	73.963	0	73.963	7.767	66.999	17.575	92.341	17.575	26.317	37.736	81.628	36.122	0	0	223	36.345	
Empty	80.769	3.528	84.297	24.796	1.575	26.324	7.386	8.318	12.176	27.880	12.176	4.413	3.348	19.937	21.060	75	933	4.805	28.873	
Exit																				
Loaded	98.820	0	98.820	163.857	0	163.857	6.279	25.301	20.529	52.109	20.529	2.861	12.995	36.385	35.448	0	614	2.154	38.216	
Empty	14.344	3.646	17.990	55.577	6.701	62.278	12.276	32.557	18.808	63.641	18.808	31.366	24.188	74.362	23.089	31	221	2.214	25.555	
Total																				
Loaded	126.987	0	126.987	237.820	0	237.820	14.046	92.300	38.104	144.450	38.104	29.178	50.731	118.013	71.570	0	614	2.377	74.561	
Empty	95.113	7.174	102.287	80.326	8.276	88.602	19.662	40.875	30.984	91.521	30.984	35.799	27.536	94.299	44.149	106	1.154	7.019	52.428	
Total FMV (loaded and empty) crossing certain country			229.274			326.422				235.971				212.312					126.989	1.130.968

Issued Authorisations for the Implementation of Customs Procedures

At the end of 2025, the Customs Administration had the following active authorisations:

- Representation in Customs Procedures: 283 total (275 valid / 2 suspended / 6 revoked)
- Customs Warehousing: 103 total (90 valid / 2 suspended / 11 revoked)
- Import for Processing: 701 total (165 valid / 53 revoked / 483 invalid)
- Export for Processing: 319 total (304 valid / 14 revoked / 1 suspended)
- Simplified Procedures: 112 total (98 for simplified import, 14 for simplified export) – of these, 76 valid / 2 suspended / 8 revoked / 26 invalid
- Deferred Payment Authorisations: 163 total (157 valid / 6 revoked)
- Licences for Licensed Agents: 962 total (929 valid / 3 suspended / 30 revoked)
- New Authorisations for Proof of Origin Simplification (Approved Exporter Status): 9 new; total active 160
- Simplified Transit Procedure Authorisations: 198 total (no new issued / no revoked)
- Authorised Consignee: 69 (no new / no revoked)
- Authorised Consignor: 42 (no new / no revoked)
- General Transit Guarantee: 87 (no new / no revoked)

Total Active Excise Permits (end of 2025)

- Excise Permits: 59 (2 new / 66 amendments / 2 repealed)
- Permits for Small Independent Breweries: 5 (1 new / 5 amendments / 0 repealed)
- Permits for Small Distilleries: 7 (2 new / 0 amendments / 0 repealed)
- Permits for Preferential Users of Excise Goods: 189 (2 new / 201 amendments / 17 repealed)
- Permit for Excise Taxpayers of Petroleum Coke: 1 (0 new / 2 amendments / 0 repealed)
- Permits for Farmers – Small Producers of Spirits: 32 (3 new / 2 amendments / 1 repealed)
- Permits for Users of Excise Stamps: 110 (6 new / 0 repealed)
- Permits for Distributors, Wholesalers, and Retailers: 78 (28 new / 0 repealed)
- Excise Duty Refund Approvals: 317 (14 new / 0 revoked)
- Traders with Marked Fuel: 17 (0 new / 0 revoked)

Total Active Guarantees for Securing Excise Debt: 303 (including 274 registered guarantees for securing excise debt).

Digital processes and services

Registered external IT system users – active and new (as of 31.12.2025)

No.	System	Active users	New users (registered in 2025)
1.	CDEPS	3.843	171
2.	EXIM	8.938	491
3.	NCTS	194	1
4.	PEC	549	6

To automate processes, continuous work is being carried out on developing new systems for interoperability with EU systems and national government platforms.

New Computerized Transit System (NCTS)

On 13th January 2025, the new NCTS 5 system was successfully launched. It is fully aligned with EU customs legislation and the Convention on a Common Transit Procedure, offering improved functionalities over the previous version.

By the end of the transition period (21 January 2025), a synchronized upgrade of NCTS 5 was completed, as per DG TAXUD requirements. This upgrade resolved all major differences with the old NCTS 4 system. NCTS 5 is now fully compliant with the Union Customs Code (UCC) procedures and technical standards for data and message exchange.

The system uses modern messaging standards, stricter security protocols, and faster electronic data exchange. It operates stably, with only occasional short interruptions, which were promptly resolved. Implementation of all national requirements is ongoing.

Preparatory work for NCTS 6 is in its final phase. A public procurement notice for its development was published in December 2025 and is currently ongoing.

Implementation of National Systems for Mandatory Tariff Information, Supervision, and Customs Tariff Management

In 2025, the maintenance of the Integrated Tariff Environment (ITE) continued, including ongoing adaptive and preventive maintenance according to the technical specifications. Key activities included:

- Adjusting interfaces between ITE, NCTS, and the Customs Data Warehouse to support system integration.
- Continuous monitoring and improvement of system security.
- Implementation of a solution for electronic submission of BTI requests with automatic administrative number assignment.

To ensure compatibility with the new Customs Law under adoption, a study visit to the Republic of Croatia was conducted to gather knowledge on implementing a new calculator that reflects regulatory changes. A decision will soon be made regarding the integration of these changes into the ITE modules. The SMS module is ready for deployment once internal procedures are updated.

Ongoing activities also include preparatory adaptive changes. In the near future, consulting services will support the development of a new version or adaptation of ITE modules to implement the new Customs Law in line with EU legislation. With the adoption of the new Customs Law and its implementing regulations, specific deadlines will be set to establish these changes and fully achieve the digitalisation envisaged in the new legislation.

Development and Implementation of the New National Single Window (NSW) – Hardware and Software

The establishment of a National Single Window (NSW), financed by a World Bank loan, will enable the full digitalization of the issuance of permits and licenses, their electronic payment, collective use of data by institutions, and communication with institutions in other countries.

During 2025, after analysis and revision of the technical documentation, a public procurement was re-announced for the “Design, Procurement and Installation of the New Single Window

(NSW) in the Republic of North Macedonia,” and a contract was signed with the selected contractor in December. According to the plan, the new system is expected to be fully operational by November 2027, with project activities set to intensify from January 2026.

In parallel, activities were carried out to approve the final version of the draft Law on a Single Window for Customs, which is expected to enter the official adoption procedure in the coming period. In April 2025, training on Management of Information Technologies, Analysis and Reengineering of Business Processes was held for members of the Implementation Working Group, while in June, a training on Change Management and Capacity Building was conducted for members of the Steering Committee.

In connection with harmonization and mapping of data for the NSW project, work is ongoing to align the data currently used in the issuance of import, export, and transit licenses across the participating institutions with the European Customs Data Model (EUCDM 7.0). In this regard, meetings have been held between representatives of the Customs Administration, the consulting team, and institutional representatives to complete the data harmonization phase and prepare a consolidated national data model for the design and implementation of the system by the software contractor.

At the same time, the consulting team, in cooperation with the institutions, analyzed the substantive legal regulations of the competent authorities to identify necessary changes required to comply with the new legal framework for NSW and enable its effective implementation.

Development of Economic Operator Registration and Identification Systems (EORI) and Uniform User Management and Digital Signature (UUM&DS) – Project IPA 3 (2021)

The project “Development of Economic Operator Registration and Identification Systems (EORI2) and Uniform User Management and Digital Signature (UUM&DS)” supports the implementation of EU law under Chapter 29 – Customs Union. Its objective is to ensure compliance with EU requirements for a unified management system for external users, including economic operators and traders. The system enables standardized identification of economic operators and other external users, provides controlled access to national customs systems, and facilitates connection to EU customs systems and European centralized customs services, in line with security policies, legal provisions, and operational responsibilities. This contributes to smoother trade operations and brings the country closer to the EU market and Customs Union.

The Economic Operator Registration and Identification System 2 (EOS/EORI2) serves as a single platform for the registration and identification of economic operators within the customs domain. UUM&DS provides authentication, authorization, and digital signature services, allowing economic operators to access all customs IT systems from a single interface.

Beyond developing and implementing the systems themselves, the project ensures functional interconnections (interfaces) with existing customs systems within the Customs Administration and relevant IT systems across government institutions.

Since May 2025, the selected contractor has focused on developing an initial prototype, delivered in August 2025, with a second version delivered in October 2025. The project will introduce a national-level EORI number, with the legal basis provided by the upcoming new Customs Law, harmonized with the Customs Law of the Union.

The project, funded by the European Union through the EU Delegation to the Republic of North Macedonia, commenced on 6 November 2024 and is planned for a 24-month implementation period. The total project value is 2 million euros.

e-Customs Systems Availability – 2025

System	Total no. of working hours	No of incidents	Incidents in hours	Incidents in %	Availability in %
CDEPS	8,784	56	27.43	0.31%	99.69%
NCTS	8,784	25	42.15	0.48%	99.52%
ITE	8,784	1	0.33	0.01%	99.99%
EXIM	8,784	13	13.41	0.15%	99.85%

Reported incidents via the Service desk

In 2025, the Service Desk handled 12,481 reports of incidents cases, including 488 incidents related to hardware malfunctions and network issues, while 11,993 were associated with software and business-related disruptions.

Modernization of ICT Infrastructure

In 2025, the Customs Administration successfully completed the project “**Establishment of a Risk Management System and Customs Data Warehouse**”, funded by a grant of 4.8 million USD from the Government of the Republic of Korea.

Through this project, the Customs Administration received an advanced Risk Management System and a related data warehouse to store and analyze customs data, including information on passengers at airports, goods in transit, data from customs procedures, and other relevant

systems. Employees in the relevant sectors were trained to use and operate the system, thereby strengthening the operational capacity of the Administration.

The project also expanded the existing hardware and software IT infrastructure. Following its completion in mid-2025, the Risk Analysis System is expected to significantly improve the risk analysis process, enabling better targeting of high-risk shipments and facilitating legal trade.

All data on imports, exports, transit, excise goods, as well as records of seizures, misdemeanor, and criminal charges, are integrated into the system and analyzed using advanced artificial intelligence. The system also identifies shipments with declared values that differ from market prices or are unusually low compared to average import values, alerting customs officers to inspect containers and prevent potential attempts at customs fraud.

IT Security

The domain upgrade and migration of user mailboxes in a hybrid operating mode configuration is in its final phase, in accordance with the Plan for overcoming security vulnerabilities in the IT Infrastructure.

The domain infrastructure (Active Directory) and email are key elements of the information infrastructure and directly affect the cybersecurity of the organization. Continuous monitoring, updating and modernization of these systems are key activities for improving security and compliance with relevant standards (e.g. ISO 27001).

The domain upgrade and migration of user mailboxes activity is being implemented in cooperation with the Government, which provides funding.

Additionally, in the last quarter of 2025, a software solution for managing computer threats through control and monitoring of remote sessions – SYTECA – was implemented.

SYTECA enables centralized recording, monitoring and archiving of logs related to remote access to systems. The implementation of the solution increases the security of remote access to systems and enables compliance with the provisions of the Personal Data Protection Law and relevant standards (e.g. ISO 27001).

Improving the Business Environment and Facilitating Trade

Action Plan for a Regional Common Market (RCM)

The Regional Common Market Action Plan 2025–2028, as part of the Western Balkans Growth Plan, aims to stimulate economic growth and support the region's social and economic convergence with the EU Single Market. The plan serves as a tool to advance the EU accession process and focuses on the free movement of goods and services, horizontal trade measures,

human capital development, a business-friendly environment, competitiveness, and digital transformation.

Within this framework, the customs services of the Western Balkans are implementing activities to reduce waiting times at borders, digitalize procedures, enable fully electronic trade documents, protect intellectual property rights, safeguard public health and the environment, and strengthen digital connectivity and cybersecurity.

Strengthened cooperation in customs and tax matters includes:

- Harmonization of CEFTA rules with the updated Pan-Euro-Mediterranean (PEM) rules for cumulation of origin, and alignment of rules of origin with the EU.
- Enhanced benefits for trusted economic operators, including priority lanes and reduced controls.
- Electronic data exchange with postal operators, and simplified, accelerated customs clearance of e-commerce shipments, with pre-selection of shipments of special interest to ensure uninterrupted flow of legal postal traffic.
- Harmonized tariff classification and determination of origin of goods to create a predictable trade environment.
- Establishment of a network of customs laboratories.
- Harmonized and reduced fees for trade operations and improved control of border and common crossings.

Authorized Economic Operator Framework – Greater Benefits for Trusted Economic Operators

Within the framework of the AEO (Authorized Economic Operator) project, the CEFTA Contracting Parties promote enhanced benefits for AEO holders and closer cooperation with other state authorities. This includes prioritizing controls, with fewer documentary and physical inspections. In North Macedonia, an inter-ministerial working group—comprising the Customs Administration, Food and Veterinary Agency, Phytosanitary Administration, State Inspectorate for Agriculture, and State Market Inspectorate—is examining opportunities to provide greater benefits for AEO holders and reduce waiting times at border crossings.

At the regional level, additional benefits for AEOs are planned through the Comprehensive Roadmap for Better Use of Green Corridors, which focuses on improved cooperation and modernization of border and joint border crossings.

In October 2025, a regional meeting was held in Skopje, attended by all CEFTA countries and their representatives from Food Agencies, Phytosanitary and Veterinary Administrations, under the organization of GIZ – German Association for International Cooperation. The meeting

concluded that greater engagement from all stakeholders is necessary to ensure AEO holders receive priority in customs controls, facilitating and promoting trade.

At the end of 2025, there were 29 companies from North Macedonia – holders of Authorized Economic Operator status.

Regional E-Commerce Market within CEFTA

Electronic Data Exchange with Postal Operators

As part of CEFTA activities, a regional e-commerce market is being promoted by adopting harmonized rules and principles of the internal market, facilitating customs clearance of shipments, and addressing limited access practices such as geo-blocking. With support from the German Society for International Cooperation (GIZ), the Customs Administration is implementing a pilot project for electronic data exchange with postal operators.

The project includes upgrading the customs system CDEPS in the pre-arrival information section for postal operators, enabling the receipt and processing of shipment data before arrival. The international tender, managed by GIZ, has concluded with a selected company expected to begin system upgrades in January 2026. At the end of 2025, preparatory activities commenced, marking an important step for both the Customs Administration and AD Posta.

The implementation of this project will benefit Macedonian citizens who order and receive parcels by post, providing enhanced security and significantly reducing processing times.

Similar pilot activities for the exchange of electronic advance data (EAD) are also underway in Serbia and Montenegro.

Donated Scanner for Postal Parcels

As part of the HERMES project, implemented in cooperation with the Post of North Macedonia, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) donated a modern X-ray scanner to the Customs Administration in October 2025. This new-generation scanner uses artificial intelligence to automatically analyze and detect suspicious items in postal and courier parcels. It has been installed at the central facility in Skopje for receiving and processing international postal parcels, where postal and customs officials collaborate.

Employees of the Post and the Customs Administration received specialized training on proper scanner operation, image interpretation, and effective use of AI-based tools. The scanner has significantly enhanced the capacity to detect illegal weapons, ammunition, explosives, drugs, and other prohibited items, particularly amid rising international postal traffic.

This advanced technology is a key step toward modernizing postal controls, strengthening inter-institutional cooperation, and achieving the objectives of the HERMES project to enhance security and prevent transnational crime via postal channels.

1. Horizontal Trade Measures

Green Lanes and Reduced Border Waiting Times

The green lanes established at major border crossings with Albania, Serbia, and Kosovo in 2020 have significantly improved the efficiency of customs procedures, resulting in faster clearance and reduced waiting times at borders. Through the Systematic Exchange of Data (SEED) system, pre-arrival information on shipments is shared among all relevant authorities involved in customs clearance—including Customs, the Phytosanitary Administration, the Food and Veterinary Agency, and the Food Inspection services.

Since 2021, green lanes have been expanded to facilitate the transport of all types of goods by both road and rail within the framework of CEFTA, further enhancing regional trade flows.

At the national level, strong support has been provided for the implementation of measures and objectives outlined in the Comprehensive Roadmap for Improving Green Lanes, Promoting Customs Cooperation and Modernizing Border/Common Crossing Points, developed by the Transport Community.

Regarding the extension of green lanes to EU Member States, the first phase of the pilot project enabling the movement of goods from North Macedonia to Greece via the Bogorodica–Evzoni border crossing has been successfully completed. This was carried out in line with the Memorandum of Understanding on Electronic Data Exchange signed between the two countries in July 2022.

The implementation of the second phase—facilitating the movement of goods in the opposite direction—is pending amendments to the Union Customs Law. These amendments are expected to establish the necessary legal framework for two-way data exchange through the SEED system, which underpins the functioning of green corridors.

Furthermore, following an initiative by Bulgaria in June 2025 to establish similar cooperation, a Memorandum of Understanding on Electronic Data Exchange between the Customs Administrations of North Macedonia and Bulgaria was signed in Brussels in December 2025. Preparatory activities are currently underway to connect both administrations through the SEED system.

The reconstruction and modernization of key border crossing points between CEFTA member states and EU Member States are being advanced through 11 project fiches developed by the Transport Community, serving as a prerequisite for the effective implementation of green lanes.

For North Macedonia, these initiatives cover the Blace–Hani i Elezit, Deve Bair–Gjueshevo, and Bogorodica–Evzoni border crossings, all of which are of strategic importance for regional and EU connectivity.

With regard to financing, the European Commission’s Directorate-General for Enlargement and the Eastern Neighbourhood (DG ENEST) issued a call for expressions of interest to the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia for participation in the establishment of Green Lanes. In response, the Government confirmed its strong commitment to the full modernization of the three border crossings. The Customs Administration has been designated as the central coordinating authority for this initiative. In addition, a dedicated Working Group will be established to facilitate direct engagement with all relevant stakeholders and to support the effective planning and implementation of the envisaged investments.

Improved Risk Management (in line with the revised CEFTA Risk Management Strategy)

In order to strengthen risk management practices, the CEFTA Risk Management Strategy 2025–2028, together with its Implementation Roadmap and Action Plan, developed by the CEFTA Secretariat in cooperation with the Parties, is currently in the process of adoption. The Strategy is the result of extensive consultations, bilateral discussions, and technical assessments, aimed at establishing a harmonised and effective regional risk management framework.

The Strategy focuses on enhancing cooperation among CEFTA Parties, improving the selectivity of controls through advanced risk analysis and assessment, and promoting the use of modern technologies. These measures are intended to support the creation of a more efficient, secure, and predictable trading environment.

Through coordinated efforts by the customs administrations of the CEFTA Parties, the Strategy will serve as a foundation for continuous improvement, enabling timely adaptation to emerging and evolving risks in international trade.

Furthermore, the Strategy builds upon key priorities identified in the Comprehensive Roadmap for Improving Green Corridors, Promoting Customs Cooperation and Modernizing Border/Common Crossing Points, ensuring the modernization and further strengthening of risk management processes across the region.

Enhanced Inter-Agency Cooperation

In the execution of its mandate, the Customs Administration maintains close and continuous cooperation with key national institutions, including the Ministry of Interior – Bureau of Public Security, the State Market Inspectorate, the Food and Veterinary Agency, and the Public Revenue Office, among others.

Joint border controls

Border crossings with Serbia

Joint controls with Serbia at the Tabanovce Motorway border crossing are carried out continuously and efficiently, without operational disruptions. On 8 May 2025, a new Agreement on Joint Controls was signed, introducing a one-stop system for passport control.

The Agreement has been in force since the start of the summer tourist season (July 2025) and has already delivered tangible results. Notably, it has led to a significant reduction in the time required to complete passport checks and customs formalities for passenger traffic in both directions.

Border crossings with Albania

The implementation of the Agreement on Joint Border Crossings with Albania is applied at the border crossing point Kjafasan and it is taking place smoothly, but to accelerate the flow, improvement of infrastructure conditions is necessary. Such infrastructure projects on the Albanian side are ongoing and are being implemented within the framework of the regional Trade and Transport Facilitation Project in the Western Balkans financed by the World Bank, and they should be completed by March 2026.

Negotiations for the conclusion of a new agreement on joint controls with Albania were completed on 18.08.2025. The next step is the signing of the agreed text of the agreement by both sides, after which the procedures for its ratification should be carried out in the parliaments of both countries.

The new agreement will enable passport control with a single stop at the Kjafasan/Kjaftane border crossing.

Border Crossings with Kosovo

The Agreement on Joint Border Crossings and Joint Controls with Kosovo, in force since 8 February 2024, began practical implementation on 12 April 2025 with the introduction of a one-stop system for entry and exit passport controls. Since its implementation, the Agreement has delivered clear and measurable improvements, including reduced processing times for passport checks and a faster flow of vehicles and passengers in both directions. The Agreement applies to the two main border crossings with Kosovo—Blace/Hani i Elezit and Jažince/Globocica—enhancing efficiency and facilitating smoother cross-border movement.

Harmonised Working Hours and 24/7 Availability of Inspection Authorities at Main Border Crossings

Serbia

BP Tabanovce – Full harmonisation of working hours is in place, with 24/7 operations of customs authorities, inspection services, and veterinary and phytosanitary services. The Food and Veterinary Agency operates in coordinated 12-hour shifts aligned with the inspection services of the Republic of Serbia.

Kosovo

BP Blace – On the Macedonian side, inspection services operate in harmonised working hours with customs authorities; however, 24/7 availability is not implemented. On the Kosovo side, inspection services have shorter working hours, with availability for live animal consignments ensured on an on-call basis at any time.

Bulgaria

BP Deve Bair – The working hours of customs authorities (operating 24/7) and inspection services (08:00–16:00) is not harmonized on the Macedonian side. On the Bulgarian side, only the veterinary service operates on a 24/7 basis.

BP Novo Selo – Working hours between customs authorities and inspection services are not harmonised. On the Bulgarian side, inspection services operate with varying schedules, with limited overlap only during the daily shift of customs authorities.

BP Delchevo – customs authorities' working hours (24/7) and those of inspection services on the Macedonian side are not harmonised. No inspection services are present on the Bulgarian side.

Albania

BP Kafasan – Their working hours of the customs authorities (24/7) and those of the inspection services on the Macedonian side are not harmonised. On the Albanian side, inspection services are mutually coordinated and supported by on-call arrangements, but do not operate 24/7, resulting in overlap only during the daily customs shift.

Greece

BP Bogorodica – On the Macedonian side, full coordination exists with 24/7 operations of both customs authorities and inspection services. On the Greek side, inspection services are mutually coordinated and supported by on-call arrangements, but do not operate continuously, with overlap limited to the daily customs shift.

BCP Medjtitlija – The working hours between customs authorities (24/7) and inspection services on the Macedonian side are not harmonised. On the Greek side, inspection services operate on an on-call basis without permanent presence at the border and without alignment with the 24/7 customs operations.

Digitalisation and Paperless Environment through CEFTA SEED

With the support of CEFTA, the implementation of a new project for the maintenance and upgrade of the SEED system (System for Systematic Electronic Exchange of Data between CEFTA Parties) is underway. The project aims to further advance trade facilitation and regional economic integration by enabling regular, structured, and secure data exchange among CEFTA Parties and with the EU.

The scope of data exchange covers key areas including customs procedures, phytosanitary controls, food safety, veterinary and pharmaceutical products. At the same time, the project promotes the transition towards a paperless trading environment while strengthening the safety and security of trade, without creating unnecessary barriers to legitimate trade flows.

Building on previous activities related to the development of common risk profiles, the project foresees additional functionalities, including the exchange of information on performed controls and rapid alerts, development of a mechanism for verification of proofs of origin, monitoring of cross-border cash movements, exchange of weigh-in-motion (truck weighing) data, and continuous updating of relevant databases.

In this context, implementation has also commenced following the signing of the Memorandum on Electronic Data Exchange with the Customs Administration of Montenegro.

Cooperation in the Protection of Intellectual Property Rights

In 2025, the Customs Administration continued to ensure effective protection of intellectual property rights through coordinated cooperation with relevant institutions (Mol, the Public Prosecutor's Office, rights holders etc.).

Protection of Society

As part of their core protective function, customs authorities perform comprehensive controls on goods crossing the state border, including verification of compliance with food safety, public health, and environmental standards. They also enforce regulations related to the protection of intellectual property rights, monitor the import of drug precursors, oversee trade in cultural goods and wildlife, and prevent the illicit movement of cash across borders.

In addition, customs authorities play an important role in combating illegal migration and tackling organised crime. These efforts rely on close, continuous, and well-coordinated cooperation among law enforcement bodies at both national and international levels.

The effective delivery of these responsibilities requires further development of advanced data exchange systems, strengthened risk management in customs operations, and enhanced cooperation with competent authorities responsible for market surveillance, as well as with foreign customs administrations through increased harmonisation of procedures and practices.

Suppression of Illegal Trade and Organised Crime

Based on intelligence activities and reports of suspected smuggling, the Customs Administration carried out targeted operations and controls, resulting in significant interventions:

- 3 February 2025, BCP Deve Bair: During inspection of a passenger vehicle entering the country, 140 bottles of collagen and 5 ozone therapy kits were seized, worth €2,400.
- February–June 2025, BCP Delchevo: Strengthened vehicle controls led to 4 cases of collection of customs duties for imported auto parts and 4 cases resulting in mandatory fines. In one case, the auto parts were returned abroad.
- Freight Vehicle Controls: Several freight vehicles were detected operating without a license for public transport of goods in international road traffic.
- Transport of Dangerous Goods: Enhanced inspections of tankers revealed multiple vehicles without permits for transporting dangerous goods. The tankers belonged to a transport company that also lacked the necessary permits.
- 20 January 2025, BCP Tabanovce: During a mobile team inspection of a passenger vehicle exiting the country, undeclared cigarettes were discovered.
- 28 November 2025, BCP Novo Selo: A mobile customs team inspecting an empty refrigerated freight vehicle with Serbian license plates discovered 4,400 boxes of electronic cigarettes and 800 boxes of cigarettes hidden in a bunker in the front compartment of the refrigerator.

The Strategy for the Prevention of Illegal Production, Trade, and Smuggling of Tobacco and Tobacco Products (2025–2027) and its Action Plan have been adopted, providing a framework for systematic prevention and enforcement.

The Customs Administration also actively contributed to the preparation of the National Strategy for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons (2025–2030), participating in the meeting organised by the Ministry of Interior in cooperation with SEESAC² (23–26 September 2025).

² South Eastern and Eastern Europe Clearinghouse for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SEESAC)

Enhancing Research and Intelligence Activities

Through continuous efforts to strengthen research and intelligence capabilities and ongoing investments in electronic workflows, the Customs Administration has enhanced its cooperation with international partners, including the Delegation of the European Union.

In December 2025, the EU Delegation concluded three procurement contracts under the Customs Administration support program IPA 2021 – EU Against Organised Crime and Support to Trade³, implemented through direct management.

The concluded EU-funded contracts under the IPA 2021 program provide for the procurement of essential equipment and systems to enhance the operational capacities of the Customs Administration, including:

- 20 special vehicles for mobile teams and customs inspectors,
- 5 vehicles for the storage and transport of customs dogs,
- 1 special vehicle for the transport of temporarily detained persons,
- An integrated information system – the Control and Investigation Management System (CIMS) – along with hardware for managing customs controls and investigations,
- Various specialized equipment for the Control and Investigations Sector.

These initiatives are designed to strengthen the institutional capacity of the Customs Administration in combating smuggling and customs fraud.

The Control and Investigations Management System (CIMS) is a comprehensive information system for the Control and Investigations Sector. It is intended to replace existing applications that cover only specific operational segments, while also addressing processes not previously included. The system will ensure data harmonisation and standardisation, enable process integration, improve traceability of objects, and enhance operational procedures.

The total value of this project-donation is €2 million, fully financed by EU funds.

Platforms for Data Exchange with Other Institutions

The Interoperability Platform

The National Interoperability Platform provides a secure framework for cooperation and the exchange of data and documents among institutions engaged in the prevention and detection of crime, money laundering, and terrorist financing. Data exchange is carried out through web services available on the platform, enabling rapid, reliable, and efficient communication between institutions.

³ Supply for strengthening institutional and technological capacities to investigate organised and cross-border crime and corruption

The Customs Administration actively leverages this platform in its operations, exchanging information with the Ministry of Interior, the Basic Public Prosecutor's Office Skopje, the Public Revenue Office, and other relevant authorities involved in combating crime.

Financial Investigations

The EU-funded IPA project LERMS (Law Enforcement Records Management System) commenced in September 2024 and is scheduled for a 24-month implementation period. The project aims to establish an integrated IT system for managing and monitoring cases related to organised crime, corruption, and terrorism, while providing advanced analytical capabilities and statistical reporting. LERMS involves collaboration among key institutions, including the Ministry of Interior, the Public Prosecutor's Office, the Financial Police Directorate, the Financial Intelligence Directorate, the Agency for Confiscated Assets Management, and the Customs Administration.

A detailed system design and development plan has been prepared, defining the data structure and establishing technical connections between LERMS, the Customs Administration's new risk management system, and the National Interoperability Platform. Web services and intermediary software solutions have been developed to ensure system compatibility and seamless data exchange among the participating institutions.

In December 2025, encryption of personal data was implemented, and automated daily data exchange was introduced. Testing of the system's functionalities is scheduled for January 2026.

In 2025, the Financial Investigation Unit initiated 15 financial investigations targeting 19 individuals and 9 legal entities, marking a significant increase compared to 2024, when 5 investigations were conducted against 5 individuals and 2 legal entities.

The Financial Investigation Unit actively participates in the Institutional Network for the Protection of the Financial Interests of the European Union (AFCOS Network) in the Republic of North Macedonia, contributing to the alignment of national financial investigations with EU standards.

Throughout 2025, the Unit's personnel took part in numerous international trainings, workshops, and meetings organized by partners including the OSCE, UNODC, the Regional Center for Security Cooperation (RACVIAC), ICITAP, WHO, and other international organizations. These activities focused on strengthening financial investigations, interagency and cross-border cooperation, combating money laundering and terrorist financing, and enhancing oversight of firearms, excise products, crypto-assets, and illegal trade in hazardous substances. Participation in these events enhanced professional capacities, improved coordination with domestic and international institutions, and promoted the application of international standards in financial investigations.

Representatives of the Financial Investigation Unit also contributed to the Working Group for the Development of a **New Strategy for Combating Money Laundering and Terrorism Financing (2025–2028)**, organized by the Financial Intelligence Unit with technical and administrative support from the Council of Europe Office in North Macedonia. The Strategy, together with its Action Plan, has been submitted to the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia for adoption.

The Government of the Republic of North Macedonia adopted the Report on the National Risk Assessment of Money Laundering, Financing of Terrorism, Financing of Weapons of Mass Destruction, in the preparation of which representatives of the Customs Administration actively participated.

The Financial Investigation Unit also actively participated in the work of the Working Group for the preparation of the Strategy for Strengthening the Capacities for Conducting Financial Investigations and Confiscation of Assets for the Period 2025-2028 (with an Action Plan), which was adopted by the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia in June 2025.

In accordance with the recommendations of the MONEYVAL⁴ Committee, from the Report on the Republic of North Macedonia, which notes that "The Republic of North Macedonia operates with the system for declaring the state border for cash, checks and monetary gold that does not cover all bearer-negotiable instruments", an amendment was made to the Law on Foreign Exchange Operations in February 2025. The adopted amendments align with the Law on Customs Administration and the Law on Prevention of Money Laundering and Financing of Terrorism, in order to cover the larger number of bearer-negotiable instruments and means of payment that can be covered by the term "physically transferable means" in relation to the term "cheques".

Border Interagency Unit (BIE)

The **Border Interagency Unit (BIU)**, established with the support of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in cooperation with the World Customs Organization and Interpol, operates in accordance with international standards for the selection and inspection of passengers, baggage, and cargo at airports in North Macedonia. Its primary objectives are the suppression of drug smuggling, terrorism, illegal migration, and other forms of organised crime.

Following the completion of the first phase of the project (2020–2023), preparations were made for the second phase, which began on 1 April 2024 and is scheduled to run until 31 December 2027. This phase includes Ohrid International Airport, where construction and modernization works are underway. A dedicated BIU office has been designated at the airport and will be equipped with furniture, technical equipment, and tools provided by UNODC.

⁴ Committee of Experts on the Evaluation of Anti-Money Laundering Measures and the Financing of Terrorism

At St. Peter and Paul Airport in Ohrid, the BIU will monitor operations through the analysis of passenger data and, based on pre-established criteria, conduct risk-based selection of passengers with a potential involvement in illegal activities.

Training and Regional Cooperation of the Border Interagency Unit

Customs officers at Ohrid International Airport received specialized training to strengthen their capacities in interpreting X-ray control images, enhancing the detection of prohibited items and suspicious cargo.

With the launch of the second phase of the BIU project, participation is expanding across the Southeast European region. In addition to North Macedonia, Serbia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Albania, and Kosovo have joined the initiative. The second phase covers key international airports, including Skopje and Ohrid, Belgrade and Niš, Sarajevo, Podgorica and Tivat, Tirana and Kukës, and Pristina.

In 2025, BIU officers actively participated in multiple operational actions, trainings, and regional initiatives aimed at strengthening airport controls and combating drug trafficking, illegal migration, and human trafficking. Activities included:

- Operational action days and EMPACT initiatives at airports,
- Participation in ESCORT operations led by the Ministry of Interior,
- Study and mentoring visits to regional airports,
- Specialized training and regional workshops on passenger interception techniques, including advanced use of API⁵/PNR⁶ data,
- Participation in regional coordination meetings and steering committees under UN programs for passenger and cargo control in Southeast Europe,
- Training sessions for newly established airport units in the region.

In 2025, officers from the Border Interagency Unit (BIE) carried out multiple enforcement activities at Skopje International Airport, achieving significant results in the fight against smuggling, illegal migration, and other illicit activities:

- Cigarette smuggling: 9 cases detected at exit
- Perfume smuggling: 2 cases detected
- Illegal migration: 4 cases detected
- Deportations: 3 individuals for violating residence regulations
- Seizures of valuables:
- 1,711 grams of gold jewelry

⁵ Advanced passenger information

⁶ Passenger name record

- 15,800 euros in cash
- 14 kg of gold and silver dust, and precious stones
- 2 cases involving Rolex watches

Additionally, the unit processed 2,570 pieces of information received from the APP/PNR unit at the Ministry of Interior.

Coordinated Actions to Suppress the Gray Economy

The Customs Administration, in close cooperation with the Ministry of Interior, has actively conducted coordinated operations to combat the gray economy in 2025:

- Temporary import of passenger vehicles: During the first quarter, five vehicles under the temporary import procedure with full duty exemption were seized for violations of the Decree on the Implementation of the Customs Law. Requests for initiating misdemeanor proceedings were filed against the vehicle owners.
- Illicit trade in cigarettes: In June, a coordinated search with the Ministry of Interior led to the detection of illegal cigarette trading, resulting in criminal charges.
- Illicit trade in mobile phones: In July, following the order of the Public Prosecutor and at the request of the Ministry of Interior, the Investigations Department participated in a search of a legal entity involved in illegal mobile phone trade, leading to the filing of criminal charges.
- Postal inspections: In December, joint controls with the Public Security Bureau and the Postal Agency targeted postal operators. Criminal charges were filed for goods found without paid customs duties.

Participation in Joint Activities of Customs Investigation Services

Meetings and Preparatory Sessions:

- 23 January 2025: Meeting of the Working Group for the HERMES project at UNODC headquarters in Skopje, focused on detecting illegal trafficking in weapons, weapon parts, and ammunition in postal shipments.
- 9–11 September 2025: Preparatory meeting for Operation DEMETER XI, organized by the World Customs Organization and RILO, to review planned activities and objectives.
- 24 September 2025: Online preparatory meeting for Operation PANDORA X, organized by Europol, to discuss operational objectives.
- 10 September 2025: Operational meeting with the Customs Administration of Serbia, organized by SELEC, focusing on cooperation and information exchange regarding suspected customs fraud involving excise products.

- 15–16 September 2025: Operational meeting with the Customs Administration of Turkey, organized by SELEC in Ohrid, addressing information exchange on detected narcotics smuggling cases.
- 30 September – 2 October 2025: Working meeting with the Customs Administration of Albania, organized by the OSCE offices in Skopje and Tirana in Ohrid, to review the bilateral Agreement on a Joint Contact Center.
- 11 November 2025: Pre-operational meeting for Operation NELSON in Bucharest, Romania, focused on combating illegal money transfers across South-Eastern Europe, organized by SELEK in cooperation with HM Revenue & Customs and the UK National Crime Agency.
- 6 November 2025: Eleventh meeting of the SELEC Container Transport Security Working Group in Bucharest, Romania.

Workshops

- Two workshops on the application of the new Law on Confiscation of Property in Civil Proceedings, organized by the Council of Europe Office in North Macedonia, with two Council of Europe experts as lecturers (29–30 January and 24–25 February 2025).
- Workshop on Identification of Products Suspected of Infringing Intellectual Property Rights, held at the Customs Administration on 26 March 2025.
- Pre-Operational Workshop for Operation STOP 4, conducted online from 26–27 February 2025.
- National Training Course on Combating Terrorism – Prevention, held from 9–13 June 2025 at the Ministry of Interior Training Center in Skopje, organized by the Law Enforcement Training Agency of the European Union (CEPOL), within the second phase of the regional IPA project “Partnership against Crime and Terrorism – Phase 2.”
- EMPACT Training (European Multidisciplinary Platform Against Threats) Cycle 2026–2029, organized by CEPOL, focused on raising awareness of the EMPACT Cycle and the EU’s crime prevention priorities, as well as strengthening the knowledge, roles, and obligations of participants (online, 26 June 2025).
- Training on Protection of Cultural Heritage, organized by the Italian Carabinieri under the IPA 2021 twinning project “Strengthening Institutional Capacities in Dealing with Crimes against Cultural Heritage and the Environment”, held in Skopje from 15–26 September 2025.
- Online Workshop – PANDORA X Cyber Patrol, within the framework of the international Operation PANDORA X, focused on combating illegal trade and smuggling of cultural goods (27–31 October 2025).
- Training on Identification of Risks Using IT Technology Based on Artificial Intelligence, organized by the Embassy of the Czech Republic, held at the Ministry of Interior Training Center in Skopje on 9 October 2025.

- Workshop of the National Commission for Small Arms and Light Weapons (NCSLW), focused on the development of the new National Strategy and Action Plan for Small Arms and Light Weapons 2026–2030, as well as preparation of the annual report (18 November 2025).

Conferences, congresses and symposia

- Participation in a pre-operational meeting for Operation STINGRAY (focused on illegal trafficking in nuclear and other radioactive materials), organized by the World Customs Organization (Brussels, May 13-16, 2025), with the participation of representatives of customs administrations from the countries participating in the operation, Interpol, the International Atomic Energy Agency, the United Kingdom Border Force, RILO Eastern and Central Europe.

Verification of Documents within the Framework of Mutual Administrative Assistance in Customs Matters

In 2025, the Investigations Department sent 416 requests to foreign customs authorities for the verification of proofs of origin issued by them. Responses were received for 350 of these requests, of which 113 (32.3%) were negative and 55 (15.7%) indicated false proofs of origin.

Regarding the additional verification of proofs of origin issued by Macedonian customs authorities, which is carried out following requests from foreign customs authorities, the Investigations Department received 72 requests during 2025. In the same period, responses were sent to foreign customs authorities for 59 requests with the results of the verification.

Based on administrative cooperation with foreign customs services, the Investigations Department also received 17 requests for administrative assistance in 2025, after which additional checks of documents attached to export and transit declarations were carried out. No irregularities were found in these cases.

The Investigations Department conducts additional checks of the value in invoices attached to imports into the country. A total of 70 requests were sent to foreign customs authorities during 2025, and 55 responses were received, of which 11 identified irregularities.

Control of Commercial Companies

A total of 212 controls were carried out in 2025, as follows:

- 121 controls of commercial companies, with 62 findings of irregularities. Evaded duties were determined in a total amount of approximately 73.94 million denars.
- 64 controls of users of LPG as a fuel or users of marked mineral oils, with 22 findings of established irregularities.
- 9 controls of holders of excise permits, approvals, and of wholesale and retail traders of mineral oils, with 4 findings of irregularities. Evaded duties were determined in a total amount of approximately 0.19 million denars.
- 18 combined controls (external and customs inspections), with 1 finding of established irregularities. Evaded duties were determined in a total amount of approximately 1.22 million denars.

Compared to 2024, when a total of 195 controls of trade companies were conducted, during which evaded duties were determined in a total amount of approximately 36.38 million denars, there is an increase in the number of controls by 8.72% and an increase in the amount of determined evaded duties by 107.12%.

Special Investigative Measures

The Sector for Special Investigative Measures is a developing unit within the Customs Administration. A functional analysis is currently underway to define the sector's full competencies. With the operational launch of the SEICO system and the completion of the functional analysis, the sector is expected to become fully operational.

Special Investigative Measures Sector – Preparations for Operational Work:

- Meetings held with the Operational-Technical Agency (OTA) and the Directorate for Security of Classified Information (DBKI), January 2025.
- Measures announced to meet the minimum requirements for security accreditation of the communication-information system "System for Issuing Electronic Court Orders (SEICO)", owned by the OTA, February 2025.
- Participation in training on creating prohibited zones for unmanned aircraft, organized by the Civil Aviation Agency, April 2025.
- Participation in a workshop on the application of special investigative measures in firearms-related crimes, covering best practices, challenges, and lessons learned, held in Tirana (Albania), May 2025.

- Adoption of a Guideline on Physical Security in the Special Investigative Measures Sector, May 2025.
- Adoption of a Guideline on the Operation of the Video Surveillance System in the Special Investigative Measures Sector, May 2025.
- Setup, installation, and testing of all equipment provided by the OTA, June 2025.
- Participation in the event “Support and Encouraging the Use of the Established Accredited System for the Transfer of Classified Information: Advantages, Opportunities, and Challenges”, organized by OTA with support from DCAF – Geneva Centre for Security Sector Management, June 2025 in Skopje.
- Consent-accreditation for the use of the SEICO system was obtained from the Operational Technical Agency (OTA). This provides the Customs Administration with official authorization to put into operation the system for electronic issuance of court orders for the implementation of special investigative measures, including the monitoring and recording of telephone and other electronic communications, as well as the electronic handling of classified information, July 2025.
- In accordance with the Action Plan, the OTA organized practical training for employees of the Special Investigative Measures Sector on the use of the SEICO system, November 2025.

In the coming period, an official confirmation is awaited from the OTA that both the prosecution and the courts are fully ready to use the system. Once confirmed, the system will be practically operational for the electronic issuance of court orders for the implementation of special investigative measures, including monitoring and recording of telephone and electronic communications and the handling of classified information.

Unit for Supervision of Holders of Authorizations

The Unit for Supervision of Holders of Authorizations (at the level of each customs house) verifies compliance with the prescribed conditions for holding approvals for simplified procedures once every two years.

In 2025, a total of 127 documentary controls were carried out:

- **USHA Bitola** – 10 documentary controls of simplified procedures for local customs clearance of import or export, with minor irregularities detected in 3 cases.
- **USHA Shtip** – no controls of simplified procedures for local customs clearance of import or export were conducted. A total of 76 documentary controls were carried out for authorizations related to procedures with economic impact, including holders of PPC approvals, with no irregularities detected.

- **USHA Skopje** – **29 documentary controls** of authorizations for simplified procedures were conducted. Irregularities were identified regarding discrepancies between the authorizations in paper and in the MEOS module, as well as cases where legal entities had approvals for simplified procedures but were not using them. With the consent of the holders, proposals for amending the authorizations were prepared
- **USHA Kumanovo** – **4 documentary controls** of authorizations for simplified procedures were conducted without irregularities.
- **USHA Gevgelija** – no controls of simplified procedures for local customs clearance of import or export were conducted. **8 documentary controls** were carried out for authorizations related to procedures with economic impact, import for processing, and holders of temporary storage authorizations.

According to the procedure for conducting field inspections of authorization holders, the Unit for Supervision of Holders of Authorizations (USHA) carried out a total of 297 field inspections (284 planned and 13 extraordinary) on authorization holders:

- **USHA Skopje** – **101 regular and 3 extraordinary field inspections** of authorizations for procedures with economic effect and holders of PPC authorizations. As a result of these inspections, 215 reports of customs violations were prepared for 27 legal entities due to non-compliance with the obligations of authorization holders and actions contrary to customs regulations.
- **USHA Bitola** – **55 field inspections** (42 planned inspections and 3 extraordinary inspections of authorizations for procedures with economic effect, and 10 planned inspections for simplified procedures for local customs clearance of import or export), with irregularities detected in 44 cases (41 cases of irregularities in authorizations for procedures with economic effect, and 3 cases of irregularities in authorizations for simplified procedures for local customs clearance of import or export). The 10 inspections for simplified procedures for local customs clearance were carried out both as documentary and field inspections.
- **USHA Shtip** – **90 field inspections** of authorizations for procedures with economic effect and holders of PPC authorizations (87 planned and 3 extraordinary inspections). Irregularities were detected in 5 cases.
- **USHA Gevgelija** – **32 field inspections** (28 planned and 4 extraordinary) of authorizations for procedures with economic effect and holders of UO, CS, and PTT authorizations. Irregularities were detected in 5 cases.
- **USHA Kumanovo** – **16 field inspections** (all 16 planned) of authorization holders for import for processing, customs warehousing, and simplified procedures, with no irregularities detected.

Field Inspections of Authorization Holders – conducted by the Unit for Supervision of Holders of Authorizations
in 2025



USHA	No of post-clearance controls			Type of authorization for simlofied procedure ⁹	No. of cases where irregularities were detected	Subsequent collection of under-calculated customs debt/excise duty		Refund of over-calculated customs debt/excise duty		No. of cases of initiated subsequent checks and verification of document authenticity	No. of cases of initiated misdemeanor proceedings
	Initial controls	Extraordinary controls	Planned controls			No. of cases	Amount (MKD)	Број на случаи	Износ (ден)		
Skopje	121	3	101	IP,OP,CW, TSF,PTT	0	7	815.058,00	0	0	1	215
Kumanovo	1	0	16	IP,CW,PTT, TSF	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Shtip	20	3	87	IP, OP, CW, TSF, PTT	5	0	0	0	0	0	5
Битола	3	3	52	IP,OP and CW	44	7	643.144,00	0	0	0	0
Gevgelija	8	4	28	IP, CW,PTT	5	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total:	153	13	284		54	14	1.458.202,00	0	0	1	220

IP-Inward processing, EP- Export processing, CW – Customs warehousing, TS- Temporary storage,SP- Simplified Procedures, PTT – Preferential Tariff Treatment – end-use, USHA – Unit for Supervision of Holders of Authorisations

Controls of declarations in simplified procedures 2025	No of controls	Established irregularities
Customs House Bitola - Total	319	21
Customs Office Bitola	68	2
Customs Office Prilep	96	2
Customs Office Ohrid	62	5
Customs Office Struga	93	12
Customs House Shtip - Total	273	0
Customs Office Veles	98	0
Customs Office Shtip	162	0
Customs Office Delchevo	13	0
Customs House Gevgelija - Total	530	1
Customs Office Strumica	44	0
Customs Office Gevgelija	19	0
Customs Office Kavadarci	467	1
Customs House Skopje - Total	2275	55
Customs Office Skopje 1	456	39
Customs Office Skopje 2	983	2
Customs Office Skopje 3	62	0
Customs Office Skopje 4	266	13
Customs Office Airport	92	0
Customs Office Tetovo	29	1
Customs Office Free Zone	387	0
Customs House Kumanovo - Total	102	0
Customs Office Tabanovce Motorway	0	0
Customs Office Komanovo	102	0
TOTAL (all Customs Houses)	3499	77

Documentary and Physical Control during Customs Clearance

In 2025, customs controls on export and import were conducted on 23.12% of customs declarations. Irregularities were detected in 23.07% of the controlled customs declarations.

- documentary control of export and import was conducted on 9.53% of customs declarations. Irregularities were detected in 1.67% of the controlled declarations.
- physical control of export and import was conducted on 13.58% of customs declarations. Irregularities were detected in 38.1% of the controlled declarations.

Извршени контроли во патнички промет

Passenger traffic controls

In 2025, a total of 47,195 controls were carried out in passenger traffic.

A total of 8,159 passengers, 25,094 passenger vehicles, 2,257 buses, 11,390 trucks, 150 aircraft, 143 trains, 2 ships were controlled.

In 2025, of a total of 47,195 controls carried out, irregularities were identified in 2,042 cases (4.33% of the total controls). Compared to the controls in 2024, the total number of identified irregularities increased by 85.13%.

Type of irregularities in passenger traffic		
	2024	2025
Foreign currency misdemeanor reports	23	31
Customs misdemeanor reports	325	442
Criminal charges cases	33	67
IPR misdemeanor reports	46	48
On-the-Spot fines	676	1,452
Declaration of renunciation in favor of the state	/	2

In 2025, a total of 413 cases of seizure of various goods were recorded (410 cases in 2024)

Significant seizures	2025		2024	
	Cases	Quantity	Cases	Quantity
Drugs and psychotropic substances (kg)	9	318,48	5	41,26
Drugs and psychotropic substances (pcs)	48	36.726	45	66.337
Cigarettes (pcs)	40	1.311.079	54	300.495
Other tobacco products (kg)	14	314	11	1.356
Alcohol (litres)	4	71	4	142,5
Foreign currency	26	318.985 EUR	25	173.125 EUR 185.000 NOK 24.800 USD 4.000 CHF
Gold (kg and pcs)	10	3,773 kg 20 pcs	11	6,693 kg 30 pcs
Pharmaceuticals (pieces and kg)	21	9.966 pcs	9	13.306 pcs 1.695 kg
Supplements (pieces and kg)	9	3.347 pcs	9	4.399 pcs 10.604 kg

Operational matters Department (mobile Customs Teams)

DETECTED VIOLATIONS		
Type	2024	2025
Misdemeanor (customs and excise)	119	147
Crimes	18	28
Foreign currency misdemeanor	12	14
IPR	40	39
On-the-spot fines	4	43
TOTAL SEIZURES	193	271

In December 2025, the Mobile Team Unit was strengthened by two additional members - detection dogs, donated by the Korean Customs Service.

Their arrival, arranged under bilateral assistance and cooperation, was preceded by an assessment mission conducted by instructors from the Detection Dog Training Center of the Korean Customs Service. The mission evaluated compliance with standards for the care and management of customs detection dogs, daily operational activities, the relationship and trust between handlers and dogs, fitness training for detection, rest periods, transport conditions, nutrition, and veterinary supervision. The positive assessment was a prerequisite for the official handover of the dogs.

Within the first month of their deployment, the enhanced capabilities of the mobile teams led to a successful operation, during which a significant quantity of cocaine was detected and seized, with the assistance of one of the newly donated dogs from Korea.

Significant seizures

- 188,363 grams of marijuana were seized by a mobile team in cooperation with customs officers at the Bogorodica border crossing, in a freight motor vehicle with Macedonian license plates transporting waste paper from Kosovo to Turkey.
- 17,940 grams of silver jewelry and 180 bottles of perfume (100 ml each), with a total value of 1,179,789.42 denars, were discovered at the Bogorodica border crossing in a passenger motor vehicle with Kosovo license plates.
- Medicines and steroids were discovered at the Deve Bair border crossing in a freight vehicle with Kosovo license plates loaded with panels and sheet metal transported from Turkey to Kosovo. The seizure included 50 boxes of Gemtu 1000 mg medicine bottles 30 boxes of Danamax Methandrostanolone 10 mg steroid tablets, 145 packages of steroids in vials: Decamax D200 200 mg, Equimax B200 200 mg, Testomax E250 250 mg, Testomax C200 200 mg, Primomax P100 100 mg, and 19 Andromax Oxymetholone 25 mg tablets, with a total value of 675,662 denars.
- 16 branded women's handbags, with a total value of 2,220,768 denars, were found with a Macedonian citizen arriving from France at Skopje Airport.
- An Audi 5 passenger car and a NEOPLAN Cityliner bus were seized in two separate cases at the Tabanovce and Deve Bair police stations due to the discovery of specially constructed bunkers for smuggling goods.
- In nine separate cases, large quantities of gold and silver jewelry, coins, and industrial gold and silver were seized:
 - 200 grams of gold jewelry, with a total value of 600,000 denars, discovered in the personal luggage of a Swedish citizen at the Tabanovce – Autopat border crossing.
 - 5,392.7 grams of silver jewelry and 1,000 grams of silver bars, with a total value of 386,517 denars, found during a detailed inspection of a freight vehicle with Macedonian license plates at the Bogorodica Border Post.
 - 1,711.1 grams of gold jewelry, with a total value of 29,583,747 denars, found in a passenger's suitcase at Skopje Airport.

- 5 gold coins, 10 pieces of industrial gold, 7 silver coins, and 1 piece of industrial silver, with a total value of 1,758,771 denars, discovered during the inspection of a passenger motor vehicle with foreign license plates at the Pelince Border Post.
- 3,442 grams of silver jewelry, with a total value of 317,525 denars, found during the inspection of a passenger motor vehicle with Macedonian license plates at the Bogorodica Border Post.
- 589 grams of gold coins and jewelry, with a total value of 3,467,384 denars, discovered during a regular control of a bus at the Deve Bair Border Post.
- 308 grams of gold jewelry, with a total value of 1,846,389 denars, found during a personal luggage control and search of two passengers on a Turkish bus at the Bogorodica Border Post.
- 5 gold bracelets, with a total value of 346,049 denars, found during a passenger luggage inspection at the Stenje Border Post.
- 584 grams of gold jewelry, with a total value of 3,144,230 denars, found in a passenger motor vehicle with foreign license plates at the Jažince Border Post.
- 11 gold coins, with a total value of 417,662 denars, discovered during the inspection of a passenger on a bus at the entrance to the Bogorodica Border Post.

Other Seizures:

- 23,000 kg of Dioctyl Terephthalate (a chemical used in cable manufacturing), with a total value of 26,588 euros, discovered during a routine inspection of a freight motor vehicle at the Deve Bair checkpoint.
- 5,360 pieces of tattoo materials, discovered in a vehicle with Macedonian license plates at the Gevgelija Customs Office.
- 322 bottles of CORAGEN 20 SCI insecticides, with a total value of 987,595 denars, seized during a detailed inspection of a passenger motor vehicle at the Medzitlija Border Police Station.
- 78 kilograms of hookah tobacco, with a total value of 302,640 denars, found in a passenger motor vehicle during a control at the Blace Border Police Station.
- 5,472 pieces of medication, with a total value of 902,572 denars, seized during inspections.
- 171 boxes of cigarettes without excise stamps, with a total value of 230,850 denars, discovered within the interior of the country.

Investigative Controls

During several inspections, inspectors from the Investigations Department of the Customs Administration uncovered numerous cases of customs fraud, incorrect tariff classification, and undeclared imports intended to evade duties, involving amounts totaling several million denars. As a result, criminal charges were filed. Seized items at border crossings included large

quantities of hookah tobacco, photographic equipment, industrial tools, watches suspected of infringing intellectual property rights, perfumes, medicines, pyrotechnics, cigarettes, electronic cigarettes, as well as 129 kilograms of marijuana.

Preventing Unauthorized Entry/Exit of Illegal Migrants

In 2025, **37 illegal migrants** were detected entering the country and its interior across **8 separate cases**. For comparison, in 2024, 66 migrants were detected in 12 cases.

Criminal Charges Filed

In 2025, a total of **213 criminal charges** were filed against **443 individuals** and **160 legal entities** for the following crimes:

- Forgery of documents – 85 criminal charges against 87 individuals and 26 legal entities
- Smuggling – 40 criminal charges against 58 individuals and 7 legal entities
- Customs fraud – 39 criminal charges against 81 individuals and 61 legal entities
- Unauthorized production, possession, brokerage, and trading in weapons or explosives – 7 criminal charges against 8 individuals
- Unauthorized production and trafficking in narcotics – 7 criminal charges against 8 individuals
- Operating public transport without a license – 3 criminal charges against 3 individuals and 2 legal entities
- Evasion of excise duty – 1 criminal charge against 1 individual
- Abuse of official position and authority, Use of a document with false content, Unscrupulous work in the service, Customs fraud, and Forgery of an official document – 31 criminal charges against 197 individuals and 64 legal entities

For comparison, in 2024, 91 criminal charges were filed against 124 individuals and 47 legal entities, reflecting a significant increase in enforcement activities in 2025.

Misdemeanor procedures

Imposed and collected misdemeanor fines (per Customs Houses) 2025

Regional Customs House	Reports on customs misdemeanor	Imposed fines to individuals amount (in EUR)	Reports on customs misdemeanor against individuals	No. of individuals	Imposed fines to legal entities amount (in EUR)	Reports on customs misdemeanor against legal entities	No. of legal entities	Imposed fines to responsible persons amount (in EUR)	Reports on customs misdemeanor against responsible persons	No. of responsible persons	Total amount of imposed customs misdemeanor fines (in EUR)
Customs House Skopje	845	20.005,00	418	418	146.715,00	427	217	40.550,00	417	217	207.270,00
Customs House Bitola	350	10.248,63	278	239	16.776,00	72	72	4.543,00	72	72	31.567,63
Customs House Shtip	863	39.755,00	354	354	47.750,00	509	509	15.675,00	509	509	103.180,00
Customs House Kumanovo	102	4.945,00	24	24	13.365,00	78	78	4.360,00	78	78	22.670,00
Customs House Gevgelija	918	6.970,00	121	121	66.880,00	797	797	20.500,00	797	797	94.350,00
Total	3.078	81.923,63	1.195	1.156	291.486,00	1.883	1.673	85.628,00	1.873	1.673	459.037,63
	Executed fines for customs misdemeanor	Executed fines for customs misdemeanor from individuals amount in EUR	No. of fines for customs misdemeanor executed from individuals	No. of individuals	Executed fines for customs misdemeanor from legal entities amount in EUR	No. of fines for customs misdemeanor executed from legal entities	No. of legal entities	Executed fines for customs misdemeanor from legal responsible persons amount in EUR	No. of fines for customs misdemeanor executed from responsible persons	No. of responsible persons	Total amount of executed customs misdemeanor fines (in EUR)
Customs House Skopje	843	12.640,00	407	407	40.210,00	218	165	14.420,00	218	177	67.270,00
Customs House Bitola	384	9.268,63	266	219	13.225,00	59	59	3.612,00	59	59	26.105,63
Customs House Shtip	1.286	19.721,00	350	350	22.875,00	468	468	7.685,00	468	468	50.281,00
Customs House Kumanovo	192	2.480,00	24	24	6.700,00	90	90	2.163,00	78	78	11.343,00
Customs House Gevgelija	1.715	3.485,00	121	121	33.490,00	797	797	10.265,00	797	797	47.240,00
Total	4.420	47.594,63	1.168	1.121	116.500,00	1.632	1.579	38.145,00	1.620	1.579	202.239,63
Cases of initiated misdemeanor procedures due to failure to pay the fine on time	Cases	Cases against individuals	Cases against legal entities	Cases against responsible persons							
Customs House Skopje	253	76	177	177							
Customs House Bitola	22	12	10	10							
Customs House Shtip	45	4	41	41							
Customs House Kumanovo	0	0	0	0							
Customs House Gevgelija	0	0	0	0							
Total	320	92	228	228							

Note:

*The difference between the amounts of the imposed and collected misdemeanor fines arises because, under Article 264, item 8 of the Customs Law, if the perpetrator pays the fine within eight days of receiving and signing the misdemeanor payment order, they will pay half of the imposed fine.

If the payment deadline is not met, requests for misdemeanor proceedings are submitted to the Misdemeanor Procedure Department.

*The number of misdemeanor fines for individuals corresponds to the number of customs misdemeanor reports filed. For legal entities, the number of misdemeanor fines exceeds the number of customs misdemeanor reports filed, as separate payment orders are prepared for the legal entities themselves as well as for the responsible persons within those entities.

Regarding Issued and Collected Misdemeanor Payment Orders by Customs House, there is a discrepancy between the number of issued misdemeanor payment orders for legal entities and those issued for responsible persons within legal entities. This is primarily because some of these legal entities were deleted from the register of legal entities in the meantime.

Furthermore, the number of issued misdemeanor payment orders for legal entities does not correspond to the number of legal entities for which such orders were issued, as multiple misdemeanor payment orders may be issued for the same legal entity. The number of prepared reports on customs offenses is greater than the sum of the collection of misdemeanor payment orders and requests for initiating misdemeanor proceedings for failure to comply with the payment deadline because some misdemeanor payment orders still have a payment deadline.

Misdemeanor Procedures and Case Outcomes

Misdemeanor procedures are conducted by the Customs Administration's Misdemeanor Procedure Department – Misdemeanor Decision-Making Commission.

In 2025, a total of 1,301 cases were registered, marking a decrease compared to 2,031 cases in 2024. The higher number of cases in 2024 is mainly due to multiple proceedings involving the same offenders, many of which were later consolidated into single procedures.

During 2025, the Commission resolved 1,477 cases, including 1,460 cases through regular procedures and 17 through repeated procedures. Fines totaling €183,921 were imposed.

Of the resolved cases, 1,440 related to customs misdemeanors, 35 to foreign exchange misdemeanors, and 2 to excise misdemeanors.

Misdemeanor Procedures	Total 2025	
	2024	2025
In regular procedure	1780	1460
In retrial	18	17
Total resolved misdemeanor cases	1798	1477
Total amount of fines imposed in misdemeanor proceedings (in euros)	96.963	183.921

Participation in International operations and Actions

Customs officers actively participated in the following international operations:

- Operation STINGRAY (10–27 June 2025), organized by the WCO, targeted the illicit trade in nuclear and other radioactive materials.
- Operation STOP IV (12–30 May 2025), organized and coordinated by the WCO, focused on detecting counterfeit and substandard medicines, as well as consumer goods infringing intellectual property rights, particularly those posing risks to public health and safety.

- Operation ARMSTRONG XI (15–19 September 2025), conducted under the EMPACT FIREARMS initiative of EUROPOL, aimed at combating the illegal trade in weapons, weapon parts, and ammunition in postal and express consignments.
- Project GLOBAL SHIELD, organized by the WCO, focused on monitoring the movement (import, transit, and export) of chemicals, precursors, detonators, drones, and other components that could be used in the production of improvised explosive devices. During the project, SCO representatives presented the CENcomm system as a platform for information exchange and operational coordination.
- Operation DEMETER XI (6–26 October and 17–30 November 2025), organized by the WCO, targeted illegal shipments of plastic, electronic, and textile waste, as well as ozone-depleting substances and hydrofluorocarbons..

Protection of Intellectual Property Rights

To operationalize the Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) module within the Electronic Customs and Excise Documents Processing System (ECDDS), testing was conducted on the Economic Operator Management Module (MEOS) for submitting requests for customs action, as well as on the IPR protection module.

These modules will enable right holders to submit requests electronically and facilitate real-time communication with Customs Administration units regarding temporarily detained goods.

In cooperation with representatives of trademark right holders, 10 training sessions were organized in 2025, involving 192 participants. Customs officers were introduced to the latest counterfeiting trends. Trainings were held in Skopje, Gevgelija, Bitola, Kumanovo (CI Tabanovce), and at the Halk Bank training center in Skopje.

During 2025, 91 new requests for customs action were accepted, increasing the total number of active requests to 205, covering 1,230 trademarks.

Customs authorities detained 131,508 items in 82 cases on suspicion of IPR infringement. Violations involved 77 trademarks. For 36,726 items, right holders confirmed the infringement.

Structure of detained goods:

- 6,212 perfumes
- 7,004 pairs of footwear
- 6,248 clothing items

- 7,048 mobile phone accessories and gaming equipment (masks, holders, PlayStation joysticks)
- 2,147 children's products (toys, birthday candles, stickers)
- 852 accessories (jewelry, sunglasses, hairdressing scissors)
- 1,947 travel and fashion items (bags, backpacks, suitcases, wallets, belts, logo emblems)
- 1,318 household and personal items (watches, mirrors, tables, carpets)
- 2,000 units of washing powder
- 1,950 paper and textile labels

The counterfeit goods primarily originated from Turkey and China.

Other Prohibitions and Restrictions (2025)

Legal regulations related to trade policy measures are continuously monitored, particularly those concerning safety, protection of human, animal and plant health, environmental and nature protection, safeguarding of national cultural heritage, and control of dual-use goods. Guidance is regularly provided to ensure their consistent application in customs procedures.

In 2025, a procedure was initiated to establish a Prior Informed Consent (PIC) mechanism for certain chemicals, in line with amendments to the Customs Tariff. The changes introduce new tariff codes to implement the recommendation of the World Customs Organization and ensure alignment with the requirements of the Rotterdam Convention.

Currently, these tariff codes are not subject to control within the ITO customs system. In accordance with the Convention, export of such substances requires prior notification and control. To address this, coordination is ongoing with the relevant national authorities, including the Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management, and the Phytosanitary Administration.

Nature Conservation and Wildlife Trade Protection

Within the framework of the project **"Improving Capacities for Natura 2000 and CITES,"** activities continued in 2025 to support the implementation of EU nature protection legislation, including the Habitats Directive, the Birds Directive, and the CITES Regulation on international trade in endangered species of wild fauna and flora.

At the national level, a dedicated working group—comprising representatives of the Customs Administration and other competent institutions—was established under the CITES component. Its objective is to ensure full alignment of national legislation with EU regulations and the CITES Convention.

A draft Law on Transboundary Movement and Trade in Wild Species, along with the accompanying by-laws, has been prepared. In parallel, specialized software for issuing trade permits has been developed and will become operational following the adoption of the law.

Under the proposed legal framework, the Customs Administration will be responsible for controlling the cross-border movement of wild species, particularly in the context of international trade in endangered flora and fauna.

Introduction of the Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM)

The Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM) is a key EU environmental policy instrument designed to prevent carbon leakage and support the transition to a low-carbon economy. It forms part of the EU's broader objective to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and achieve climate neutrality by 2050, as established by Regulation (EU) 2023/956.

CBAM introduces a carbon pricing system for certain goods imported into the EU, reflecting the emissions generated during their production. Since 1 October 2023, a transitional phase has been in place, during which importers of selected products—such as iron, steel, aluminium, fertilizers, electricity, cement, and hydrogen—are required to report embedded greenhouse gas emissions.

As of 1 January 2026, the definitive CBAM regime will apply. Importers (authorised declarants) will be required to purchase and surrender CBAM certificates corresponding to the embedded emissions of imported goods. The price of these certificates will be linked to the EU Emissions Trading System (EU ETS).

The implementation of CBAM is expected to have a significant impact on the economy of North Macedonia, particularly on the iron, steel, and aluminium sectors, given their strong export orientation toward the EU and their contribution to national GDP.

In preparation for the full implementation of CBAM, the Government will need to adopt appropriate institutional and legal measures. Two main policy approaches are under consideration: Status quo scenario – no additional national measures; Government action scenario – introduction of a carbon pricing mechanism, supported by a monitoring, reporting, verification, and accreditation (MRVA) system.

To avoid double payment of carbon fees and support decarbonization efforts in third countries, the carbon fee paid in the EU can be offset if a similar fee is paid in the exporting country—here, the Republic of North Macedonia. Achieving this requires:

- Adoption of the Law on Climate Action;
- Drafting and adoption of bylaws for the Monitoring, Reporting, Verification, and Accreditation (MRVA) system;

- Establishment of organizational units within the Ministry of Environment, Forestry, and Fisheries for monitoring, reporting, and issuing greenhouse gas permits.

From the Customs Administration's perspective, it is crucial to determine whether a national carbon tax will apply only to domestic companies or also to importers. If importers are included, a legal and organizational framework for CBAM within the Customs Administration will be required, including assessment of staffing, resources, and operational changes.

CBAM is also linked to Chapter 29 – Customs Union in EU accession negotiations, overseen by the Ministry of Finance – Customs Administration. Proper harmonization of national legislation with the CBAM framework is therefore essential.

On 8 October 2025, the EU adopted Regulation (EU) 2025/2083, which simplifies and strengthens the implementation of CBAM. The new rules streamline administrative procedures for small importers, clarify methodologies for reporting and calculating embedded emissions, and update financial obligations and deadlines for CBAM certificates. They also introduce new thresholds that exempt small and low-volume importers from certain obligations, simplify monitoring, reporting, and verification processes, and confirm an interim reporting phase lasting until the end of 2025, with financial obligations and the issuance of certificates commencing in 2026–2027. Given these changes, urgent coordinated action by relevant institutions is recommended to evaluate the need, feasibility, financial, and organizational capacity for implementing a national carbon fee system and aligning it with CBAM requirements.

In accordance with the conclusion of the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia and based on information regarding the Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM), a Working Group for the Implementation of the Mechanism has been established. To monitor its implementation and upcoming introduction, the first meeting of the Working Group was held at the Ministry of Energy, Mining and Mineral Resources, focusing on the current situation, the regulatory framework, and national obligations related to CBAM, with particular attention to the implications for the electricity and industrial sectors. CBAM, as an EU regulatory instrument aimed at preventing carbon leakage and ensuring a level playing field, will enter full implementation on 1 January 2026, covering electricity, iron and steel, cement, aluminium, and fertilizers. Its implementation is divided into two phases: a transitional period (1 October 2023 – 31 December 2025) with quarterly reporting obligations but no financial charges, and full implementation from 1 January 2026, requiring the purchase of CBAM certificates.

With regard to electricity, a delayed application of CBAM is possible after the start of the formal verification process for the transposition of the Electricity Integration Package, and only if the following prerequisites are met:

- the process of merging the electricity markets is fully completed;
- the climate neutrality objective is clearly established;
- a long-term climate action strategy until 2050 is in place.

If these conditions are met, a transition period of 18 months would apply, during which North Macedonia would be exempt from CBAM obligations for electricity, a carbon tax methodology would be developed with priority for electricity and iron, and the State Statistical Office would begin publishing emission factors in energy balances.

Key conclusions from the meeting emphasized that postponement of CBAM should not be expected and institutions must focus on timely preparation, including finalizing and adopting the Law on Climate Action, developing and implementing the MRVA package in line with the Reform Agenda, and establishing the methodology for carbon compensation.

From the perspective of the operational implementation of the Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM), the importance of establishing a functional Monitoring, Reporting, Verification, and Accreditation (MRVA) system was emphasized, as well as the need to develop IT systems and registries, clearly define the role of customs authorities, and specify the competencies of institutions depending on the nature of the Mechanism (whether as an import duty or a national instrument).

Organizational and Infrastructure Development and Modern Human Resources Management

Professional and Efficient Public Administration

Capacity Building Project with Assistance from the US Treasury

The Capacity Building Project, supported by expert assistance from the US Treasury and involving the Ministry of Finance, the Customs Administration, the Public Revenue Office, and the Financial Intelligence Unit, resumed activities on 16 June 2025 after a six-month pause, in line with the adopted Action Plan. The project focuses on strengthening institutional capacities for efficient controls, proper application of regulations, and risk management in customs operations—key areas that contribute to the reduction of the shadow economy and corruption, which remain top priorities for the Customs Administration.

The first consultative meetings were held in June 2025. Following the 2025 work plan, activities continued in the second half of the year, with meetings led by US Treasury-OTA experts addressing IT infrastructure and human resources within the Customs Administration. In October 2025, a workshop was organized for customs officers from the Department for Control of Trade Companies, focusing on methods and procedures for post-clearance controls, as well as sharing expert best practices to enhance performance. In December 2025, management training was provided to middle-level managers (heads of customs offices) to support the establishment and implementation of a competency-based human resources management program, including training, development, and professional growth initiatives.

To ensure the continuity of activities under the US Treasury Capacity Building Project, a plan of activities for 2026 was prepared and submitted before the end of 2025. Following its adoption and signing, the planned activities will be implemented throughout 2026.

At the end of 2025, the Customs Administration employed 1,266 staff members. Of these, 2 hold official positions (Director and Deputy Director), 1,259 are customs officers under the Law on the Customs Administration, and 5 have the status of workers under the Law on Labor Relations.

Regarding educational qualifications, 5 employees are PhD holders, 75 have master's degrees, 726 have higher education, 5 have additional higher education qualifications, 452 have secondary education, and 3 have other types of education. This indicates that 63.66% of employees hold higher education degrees.

In terms of gender representation, of the total workforce, 927 are men and 339 are women.

Recruitment

In 2025, the Customs Administration hired 128 employees on fixed-term contracts and 18 employees on indefinite-term contracts through public announcements conducted via the Public Administration Agency. During the same period, 20 customs officers received temporary promotions, and an internal announcement within the Customs Administration resulted in 159 permanent promotions for customs officers.

Disciplinary Procedures

In 2025, a total of 89 disciplinary procedure proposals were submitted and processed within the Customs Administration. Of these:

- 14 procedures were stopped due to dismissal;
- 21 procedures were stopped on other grounds;
- 13 resulted in dismissal decisions;
- 17 were stopped due to undetermined liability.

Regarding financial penalties, the following fines were imposed:

- 7 decisions for a 15% salary reduction over 6 months;
- 1 decision for a 15% salary reduction over 4 months;
- 10 decisions for a 15% salary reduction over 3 months;
- 6 decisions for a 15% salary reduction over 2 months.

Termination of Employment

In 2025, the Customs Administration issued the following decisions regarding termination of employment:

- 26 decisions due to retirement or disability;
- 11 decisions due to dismissal from the Customs Administration;
- 5 decisions following the death of an employee;
- 8 decisions at the request of the employee

Training

In 2025, the Customs Administration conducted **200 training sessions**, with a total of **2,391 customs officers participating**. Based on the number of participants and the duration of the trainings, an average of 13 hours of training per employee was provided.

A total of 657 employees attended at least one training, representing 51.9% of the total workforce.

To enhance knowledge and skills in customs operations, officers participated in training on topics including:

- Protection of intellectual property rights;
- Integrity;
- Financial investigations;
- Customs valuation of goods;
- Use of the Risk Analysis and Data Warehouse System;
- And other relevant areas.

Implementing Measures to Prevent Misconduct and Corruption

The Customs Administration is committed to strengthening capacities and supporting all employees in fulfilling obligations arising from integrity standards. This ensures that work is performed legally, independently, impartially, ethically, responsibly, and transparently. To address risks that threaten institutional integrity, the Administration implements measures to prevent inappropriate and corrupt behavior and develops robust systems of rules and control.

In 2025:

- Strategy for Integrity and Combating Corruption in the Customs Administration 2025–2028 and its Action Plan for implementation was adopted;
- State Commission for the Prevention of Corruption questionnaire on the implementation of the integrity system for 2025 completed;
- Participation in the International Anti-Corruption Day organized by Transparency International – Macedonia;
- Campaign “Giving Bribery is Not a Solution” was conducted by distribution of updated leaflets in all customs offices and posts;
- The regular “STOP CORRUPTION” campaign continued to raise awareness about the dangers of corruption.

Introducing a Body Camera System for Customs Officers at Border Crossings

With a donation from the Embassy of the United States of America through the ICITAP program, customs officers at border crossings will be equipped with body cameras operating 24 hours a day. These cameras enable real-time recording of evidence, and the recordings can be shared with other law enforcement agencies to support broader investigations or proceedings. In the first phase, the procedure for providing 30 body cameras along with all necessary equipment for transmitting, storing, and playback at a central location is nearing completion.

In 2025, based on the Activity Plan of the Professional Responsibility Sector, a total of **75 internal investigations were conducted**. These were based on complaints regarding illegal or unprofessional conduct, information received via the open customs hotline 197, as well as reports submitted directly by heads of organizational units and employees of the Customs Administration. Of these investigations, **25 reports confirmed irregularities** in the conduct of customs officers.

In addition, **54 internal controls** were carried out to assess compliance with legal provisions, by-laws, and operational instructions of the Customs Administration, with **26 reports confirming irregularities** in officers' conduct.

2025/month	Internal investigations	Irregularities	Internal controls	Irregularities
January	4	4	5	3
February	11	5	5	0
March	10	4	2	1
April	11	3	5	2
May	4	0	5	3
June	3	0	5	3
July	4	4	6	3
August	7	1	5	3
September	6	1	5	2
October	3	1	6	4
November	6	1	3	2
December	6	1	2	0
Total:	75	25	54	26

In accordance with the obligations requiring officials of the Customs Administration to submit asset declarations to the Professional Responsibility Sector upon entering into or terminating employment, the following was recorded in 2025: 116 customs officers submitted asset declarations, 39 officers submitted forms reporting changes in property status, and 116 officers submitted declarations of interests.

2025/month	Asset declarations	changes in property status	declarations of interests
January	7	5	1
February	10	3	7
March	12	4	3
April	3	7	0
May	2	5	0
June	14	1	16
July	44	2	44
August	48	2	42
September	3	2	3
October	0	1	0
November	1	5	0
December	4	2	0
Total:	148	39	116

The Register of risk points in customs operations susceptible to corruption was revised and developed separately for each of the four quarters of 2025. A Register of the most common errors in customs operations for 2024 was also compiled. These registers serve as valuable tools for ongoing and effective internal controls, ensuring compliance with customs regulations and supporting the prevention of corruption.

Modernization of the infrastructure at border crossings

Security and modernization of the infrastructure remains a national priority, to increase the safety of citizens, a stronger economy and shortening the time for transport and logistics. In this direction, activities are being undertaken to:

1. Improving the quality of services and working conditions of economic operators and customs officers by improving the infrastructure at border crossings;
2. Introducing an automated system for managing the terminals at border crossings;
3. Replacing the old and installing new equipment (new scales, aggregates, ramps);
4. Improving the energy efficiency of facilities;
5. Replacing the existing cooling and heating systems in facilities with new ecological ones;
6. Installing equipment - energy-generating panels at Customs Administration facilities;

Ongoing projects for reconstruction of border crossing points and terminals:

Projects supported by the Instrument for pre-accession assistance (IPA)

- **Construction of the border crossing point Markova Noga** (funded under IPA 3 national programme – 2021, under Action document of National IPA for 2021 “EU for Prespa”)

For the project’s implementation, the necessary project documentation has been prepared, and a construction permit has been obtained. These documents have been handed over to UNDP, which has been entrusted by the EU with the responsibility of implementing the project. UNDP has published a tender to select a construction company - contractor and a consulting company for construction supervision. Contracts with the most favorable bidders are expected to be signed in February 2025, and the project implementation is scheduled to begin in March 2025. The value of the donation for this project is 2.1 million euros. An event marking the start of construction was held on 12 March 2025. According to the agreement, the new crossing is scheduled to be completed by the end of 2026, followed by a one-year warranty period.

- **Reconstruction and modernization of the border crossing point (BCP) Delchevo with Bulgaria and automation of customs terminals** (financed under IPA 3 National Programme – 2021 - Grant)

The Customs Administration and the Delegation of the European Union signed a Grant Agreement in March 2024 for a total of 4.2 million euros. Part of these funds, amounting to 2.2 million euros, will be allocated for the reconstruction and modernization of the Delchevo border crossing, including the renovation of the administrative building, reconstruction and upgrade of the terminal building, reconstruction of road infrastructure at the border crossing, and construction of a wastewater treatment plant, with the aim of improving the conditions and capacities of the border facilities. The border crossing will undergo significant reconstruction, providing better working conditions for customs and police officers and directly enabling more efficient and timely implementation of customs procedures, in line with European standards. As part of the project, external consultants were engaged to prepare the tender documentation, after which a public procurement procedure was initiated to select contractors and oversee construction works. The evaluation of submitted bids for the selection of economic operators to implement the planned procurements is currently underway.

The remaining 2 million euros are intended for the modernization of state-owned customs terminals through the introduction of modern equipment and technology to improve the implementation of customs procedures. This component will include the upgrading of equipment at nine border crossings in the Republic of North Macedonia, as well as the integration of these components and elements with modern customs solutions.

As part of this component, a direct impact on efficiency and reduced processing time for customs procedures is expected. Tender documentation for the procurement of equipment, including digital scales, ramps, and cameras, has been prepared, and the procurement is expected to be announced in the near future.

- **Establishment of a new border crossing Strumyani -Berovo (Klepalo) - (financed under IPA 3 Cross-Border Cooperation Programme with the Republic of Bulgaria for 2021)**

In November 2023, the implementation of the strategic project for the construction/rehabilitation of the Strumjani – Berovo (Klepalo) border crossing began. This is a joint project between Bulgaria and North Macedonia, aimed at improving connectivity between the two countries, facilitating trade, and promoting tourist exchange. The value of the project for the Macedonian side is 3.6 million euros.

The operation of the new border crossing will increase traffic flow between the two countries, stimulate regional economic development, and provide direct access to the Struma motorway, an important part of the Trans-European Transport Network. The

project is funded through the IPA III Cross-Border Cooperation Programme with the Republic of Bulgaria (2021–2027) and will be implemented in two phases.

In the first phase, expected to be completed by 2026, preparatory activities will be carried out, including planning, design, and selection of contractors. A consulting firm has been selected for design, and another consulting firm will conduct a review of the project documentation in accordance with the procurement plan.

In the second phase (2027–2029), the construction of infrastructure at the border complex will be carried out. On the Bulgarian side, a new crossing and road infrastructure will be built, while on the Macedonian side, existing structures and facilities will be reconstructed and modernized.

The funds approved for the project will be jointly used with the Regional Administration of Blagoevgrad, Bulgaria. The total value of the joint grant is approximately 9 million euros, with the share of the Customs Administration of North Macedonia being about 3.6 million euros.

World Bank–Supported Projects

- **Deve Bair Border Crossing Reconstruction Project** (funded through a World Bank loan) The reconstruction of the administrative building will provide modern working conditions for customs and police officers, with additional benefits for staff from the State Agricultural Inspectorate, the Border Phytosanitary Inspectorate, and the Food and Veterinary Agency. Import, export, and transit procedures will be consolidated in a single location, facilitating operations for economic operators and contributing to a shorter processing time. Construction activities are currently underway and are expected to be completed by March 2026.
- **Kjafasan Border Crossing Equipment and Modernization Project** (funded through a World Bank loan)

Construction works for the new facility have been completed, providing better accommodation conditions for forwarding agents at this border crossing. These activities aim to speed up customs procedures and reduce costs for economic operators. The project is pending official technical acceptance for finalization.

Work Process Control

Internal Audit

Particular emphasis is placed on the implementation of recommendations from both the Internal Audit and the State Audit Office, as well as on establishing an efficient system for tracking and executing these recommendations. Additionally, a system of accountability has been reinforced to ensure that corrective measures are effectively applied.

Internal audits 2025	
Final Audit Report and recommendations given with deadlines for implementation	13
Findings	53
Recommendations given	59

Realization of recommendations 2025	
Status of given recommendations:	
Executed	40
Unimplemented	1
Pending	9
Partly executed	4
Recommendations for which the deadline has not expired	5

In 2025, the Customs Administration conducted **13 internal audits**, resulting in **53 findings** and **59 recommendations** aimed at improving operational efficiency. The audits covered a wide range of areas, including: implementation of recommendations from internal audits conducted in 2024, revenue collection at customs terminals, functionality of ICT systems within the Customs Administration, execution of import customs procedures, risk management processes, securing customs debt through guarantees, the annual inventory for 2024, monitoring implementation of public procurement contracts, selective controls during customs procedures, public procurement procedures, operation of the Units for Supervision of Holders of Authorizationa (USHA), collection of excise duties on intermediate products and spirits, and ongoing projects implemented through the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA).

For comparison, in 2024, the Customs Administration conducted 14 internal audits, which identified 64 findings and resulted in 64 recommendations for improving operations.

Additionally, a representative of the Customs Administration participated in the AD HOK Audit of the internal control system for the implementation of activities under the “Reform Agenda of North Macedonia 2024–2027”, within the framework of the Western Balkans Reform and Growth Instrument, Policy Area 4: Private Sector Development and Business Environment. This audit included the Ministry of Economy and Labor, the Commission for Protection of Competition, the Agency for Innovation, Scientific and Technological Development and Entrepreneurship, the Ministry of Transport, and the Customs Administration, conducted under authorization from the Ministry of Finance of the Republic of North Macedonia.

Customs Hotline 197

The Customs hotline (197) received a total of 5.659 calls in 2025.

Most of the calls refer to issues related to the functioning and condition of border and internal customs offices. Among them, the calls classified in the category J (information about bribery extortion) – 49 calls, R (information about a complaint about a delayed customs procedure or a stoppage at border crossings) – 1356 calls and S (information about technical problems during implementation of the customs procedure) – 109 calls.

As a result of processing the received calls on the Customs hotline of A and C (information on smuggling) - 72 calls, controls were carried out by border and internal customs offices, as well as by mobile teams, while the relevant units carried out processing, analysis and investigation from the domain of their operation.

Free access to public information

In 2025, the Customs Administration received 13 requests for access to public information in accordance with the Law on Free Access to Public Information (12 in 2024). All requests were answered within the legally prescribed deadline and in the format and manner requested by the applicants.

INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES AND NOTABLE EVENTS

International cooperation

Bilateral cooperation

- ❖ **Meeting with the Attaché for Internal Security at the Embassy of France (9 January 2025)**

Confirmed mutual interest in strengthening cooperation and undertaking joint actions in combating organized crime. It was agreed that the Customs Administration will be included in future joint trainings alongside the Police and the Public Prosecutor's Office, focusing on financial investigations, prevention of money laundering, confiscation of assets, and the use of seized property for the benefit of the state. Cooperation will also be enhanced in the area of information exchange to ensure a more effective fight against cross-border organized crime.

- ❖ **Meeting at the Advanced Training Center of the Customs Administration of the Republic of Croatia (17 January 2025)**

At the Advanced Training Center of the Customs Administration of the Republic of Croatia, the directors of the two customs administrations, Boban Nikolovski and Mario Demirović, agreed to further strengthen cooperation and intensify joint efforts in combating and suppressing cross-border organized crime in the region.

Follow-up trainings with Croatian experts are planned, during which practical experience will be shared in the use of video surveillance systems and license plate recognition technologies. Cooperation will also be strengthened in the area of information exchange for investigative purposes.

- ❖ **Meeting with the Ambassador of the United States of America (8 March 2025)**

During the meeting with Angela Ageler, the Customs Administration presented the significant results achieved over the previous eight months, particularly in revenue collection for the state budget, crime suppression, and protection of citizens.

The operations of the Duty Operations Center were showcased, including a practical demonstration of the use of equipment donated by the United States for control and enforcement purposes.

- ❖ **Meeting with a high-level delegation of the Customs of the Republic of Korea (13 March 2025)**

Progress in the implementation of the project for establishing a new Risk Analysis System and Data Warehouse, financed through a grant from the Republic of Korea, was discussed.

The importance of this project for strengthening analytical capacities and enhancing the effectiveness of customs risk management was emphasized.

❖ ***Meeting with the Minister of Trade of Turkey and Directors of the Directorates for Customs and Customs Control and Investigations in Ankara (May 5, 2025)***

The Director of the Customs Administration, Boban Nikolovski, participated as part of the delegation led by the Minister of Finance, Gordana Dimitrieska-Kochoska.

It was agreed to sign memorandums of cooperation, establish direct communication channels between customs departments responsible for control and investigations, exchange information in real time, and develop joint risk profiles for specific categories of goods.

Joint trainings will be organized, focusing on handling intelligence information, strengthening analytical capacities, and exchanging best practices in the use of video surveillance systems and ICT solutions.

Regular expert-level meetings are also planned to enhance capacities for detecting customs fraud and effectively preventing corruption.

❖ ***Meeting with the Deputy Chief of Mission at the US Embassy in Skopje (19 May 2025)***

During the meeting with Nicole Varnes, the important role of the Customs Administration in maintaining security and contributing to economic development—particularly in attracting foreign direct investment—was reaffirmed.

It was noted that the next 18 months will be crucial for implementing the reform agenda towards full membership in the European Union. In this context, the Customs Administration will play a key role, while also facing increased expectations to deliver tangible results in the areas of economic performance, security, and the fight against corruption.

The Customs Administration was commended for its team-based achievements and enhanced cooperation at both national and international levels. Continued support from the United States in achieving strategic objectives was reaffirmed.

❖ ***Bilateral meeting with the Customs of Montenegro in Podgorica (4 September 2025)***

At the meeting between the Director of the Customs Administration of North Macedonia, Boban Nikolovski, and the Director of the Customs Administration of Montenegro, Maja Vučinić, attended by expert teams from both institutions, experiences were exchanged regarding the digitalization of customs processes and the harmonization of customs legislation with that of the European Union.

Both sides expressed their commitment to establishing systematic and long-term cooperation aimed at strengthening regional security and enhancing the competitiveness of their economies.

Particular emphasis was placed on Montenegro's progress in digitalizing customs procedures, as well as on opportunities to apply best practices in North Macedonia's EU harmonization process.

Concrete follow-up steps were agreed, including: deepening cooperation through the implementation of the SEED+ system for electronic data exchange, establishing direct contact points between control and investigation units for real-time information exchange, and conducting comparative reviews of customs procedures to improve efficiency and facilitate trade.

❖ **Bilateral meeting with the Customs of Serbia in Belgrade (10 September 2025)**

During the bilateral meeting between the Director of the Customs Administration of North Macedonia, Boban Nikolovski, and the Director of the Customs Administration of Serbia, Dragiša Petrović, the benefits of ongoing cooperation were reaffirmed. These include the implementation of joint border controls based on the "one-stop" model, mutual recognition of Authorized Economic Operators (AEO), exchange of data, and mutual recognition of weighing certificates for freight vehicles.

The two sides agreed to further deepen cooperation in the implementation of new customs IT systems, in line with obligations arising from the EU integration process. Additional measures include the establishment of contact points for faster and more effective real-time exchange of operational and intelligence information, further facilitation of customs procedures in accordance with the Regional Common Market Action Plan, and continued implementation of one-stop control procedures at the Tabanovce border crossing.

Cooperation will also be strengthened through the organization of joint trainings, workshops, and expert-level consultations.

❖ **Meeting with the Economic Attaché of the U.S. Embassy (19 September 2025)**

At the meeting with the Economic Attaché of the United States Embassy, Barnabas Birkland, and Economic Advisor Jordan Damchevski, the strong and constructive cooperation between the Customs Administration and the Embassy was reaffirmed.

Both sides expressed a shared interest in further deepening cooperation in areas of mutual priority, including the implementation of effective trade policies aimed at increasing trade volumes and attracting new investment from the United States.

Discussions also focused on supporting economic transformation through improved trade policy, as well as strengthening joint efforts in combating crime and corruption.

❖ Promotion of the Risk Analysis System and Data Warehouse (16 December 2025)

The Risk Analysis System and Data Warehouse, established within the framework of a project implemented with financial and expert support from the Republic of Korea, were officially promoted at a ceremonial event held at the Customs Administration, in the presence of senior representatives of the Korean Customs Service.

The Risk Analysis System is of strategic importance, as it enhances the risk analysis process and enables more targeted selection and concentration of controls on high-risk shipments, while simultaneously facilitating and accelerating legitimate trade.

The system integrates comprehensive data on imports, exports, and transit operations, as well as excise goods, records of seizures, and misdemeanor and criminal cases. These datasets are analyzed using advanced artificial intelligence tools, enabling more efficient identification of irregularities and potential risks.

In addition, the system generates alerts for shipments with declared values that deviate from market benchmarks or fall below average import values, supporting customs officers in identifying potential cases of customs fraud and conducting targeted inspections.

On this occasion, two detection dogs donated by the Korean Customs Service were also ceremonially handed over.

Joint Declaration on Customs Cooperation Signed with the Ministry of Trade of Turkey – Joint Fight against Organized Crime and Acceleration of Legitimate Trade

On 17 July 2025, the Director of the Customs Administration, Boban Nikolovski, and the Deputy Minister of Trade of the Republic of Turkey responsible for customs policies, Sezai Uçarmak, signed a Joint Declaration on Customs Cooperation between the Customs Administration of the Republic of North Macedonia and the Ministry of Trade of Turkey.

Through this Declaration, both parties committed to strengthening joint actions in combating organized crime and accelerating the flow of legitimate trade.

The Declaration provides for the development of joint risk profiles, establishment of direct real-time communication channels, exchange of intelligence information, and participation in coordinated operational activities aimed at detecting and preventing criminal networks.

It also foresees simplification of customs procedures, exchange of expertise, and mutual support in the implementation of international customs conventions and standards. Furthermore, both sides committed to promoting Authorized Economic Operator (AEO) programs and enhancing cooperation across all areas of customs operations.

Memorandum of Understanding on Electronic Data Exchange Signed with Bulgaria

On 17 December 2025, at the headquarters of the European Commission in Brussels, the Director General of the Customs Administration Boban Nikolovski, and the Director of the National Customs Agency of the Bulgaria Georgi Dimov, signed a Memorandum of Understanding enabling electronic data exchange between the two administrations. The objective of the Memorandum is to facilitate legitimate trade and strengthen the prevention and detection of customs fraud, thereby contributing to increased competitiveness of the Macedonian economy within the European Union market.

Cooperation with International Organizations

OSCE Mission in Skopje

On 24 June, during a meeting with the Head of the OSCE Mission in Skopje, Ambassador Kilian Wahl, and the Head of the Department for Security and Community Support, Edward Anderson, mutual interest in further strengthening cooperation was reaffirmed. The focus is on establishing effective, efficient, and well-coordinated border management, ensuring open yet secure borders, and enhancing the fight against crime and corruption.

The support provided by the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe is of particular importance to the Customs Administration, especially in achieving a balance between facilitating trade and accelerating cross-border movement of goods, while at the same time strengthening border and national security through effective controls.

The OSCE, through its activities, contributes to improving institutional interoperability and building capacities, with the aim of ensuring a coordinated and effective response to organized crime.

Cooperation will be further intensified through specialized training programs aimed at enhancing the capacities of customs officers. Future joint activities between the Customs Administration and the OSCE Mission in Skopje will be implemented in close coordination with other relevant national institutions.

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)

As part of the Hermes 2 Project, which aims to prevent the proliferation of firearms and explosives through postal items in the Western Balkans, a scanner donated by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime was put into operation in December. The scanner is capable of screening hundreds of postal items per minute using advanced artificial intelligence for the

detection of firearms, explosives, and narcotics. During inspections, special attention is given to weapon components transported via postal shipments. In parallel, legal amendments are being developed to enable the use of special investigative measures, further supporting the detection and prosecution of these crimes.

Regional Cooperation

❖ **Regional Conference “Create, Integrate, Enable Growth” in Bečići (26–28 January 2025)**

During the conference, the CEFTA Secretariat Contracting Parties presented projects under the Growth Plan, as well as the overall policies of customs administrations in the area of trade facilitation, highlighting ongoing reforms to accelerate EU integration.

Special emphasis was placed on further digitalization of customs operations and harmonization with European Union systems.

Within the conference framework, the final meeting of the Steering Committee for the projects “Support for Regional Economic Integration” and “EU for Business: Fostering a Common Regional Market through Quality Infrastructure and E-Commerce”, funded by the European Union and GIZ, was held.

The meeting presented project achievements in the areas of e-commerce support, Authorized Economic Operator (AEO) programs, and risk management, as well as CEFTA’s support for deeper regional economic integration and alignment with EU legislation.

❖ **29th Subcommittee on Customs and Rules of Origin of Goods within CEFTA (11 June 2025, Tirana)**

The CEFTA Contracting Parties were briefed on the Work Program of the Subcommittee Chair, largely aligned with the Action Plan 2025–2028 for establishing the Common Regional Market in the Western Balkans, the CEFTA Agreement, and relevant additional protocols.

Key agenda items included:

Presentation of the draft CEFTA Risk Management Strategy (2025–2028), its implementation roadmap, and the Action Plan.

Approval of two draft texts: the amendment establishing a CEFTA Working Group on AEO, and the establishment of a CEFTA Advisory Body on Customs Cooperation and on Classification according to the Customs Tariff and Rules of Origin.

Discussion of the SEED+ system project, with strong commitment expressed for its implementation and readiness to participate in developing new functionalities.

Review of progress from the Studies on the Measurement of the Time of Release of Goods conducted by the contracting parties’ customs authorities, noting positive results and encouraging continued use of the tool.

High-level Conference of the Directors General of Customs Administrations of the Western Balkans and EU Member States (12 June 2025, Tirana)

- ❖ **Conference, on “Customs Administration Partnership for a Connected Europe – Strengthening Customs Cooperation for Better Connectivity”,** was organized by the Customs Administration of Albania, the Customs Agency of Italy, the CEFTA Secretariat, the SEED+ Project, and the Transport Community. Director Boban Nikolovski participated as a speaker in the first panel on “Customs Cooperation between the Western Balkans and EU Member States”, highlighting operational successes and challenges in data exchange and regulatory harmonization. A joint statement was adopted within the framework of the conference, advocating for strengthened customs partnerships across the region.

- ❖ **Three-day Regional Workshop on the Single Window System for Customs Administrations in the Western Balkans (10–12 September 2025, Skopje)**

The workshop was organized by the Trade Law Development Program of the U.S. Department of Commerce, in coordination with the Customs Administration, the European Commission, the Ministry of Finance of Poland, and the Financial Administration of Slovenia.

In his opening remarks, Deputy Director of the Customs Administration, Mustafa Dauti, highlighted the National Single Window System project, implemented with support from the World Bank for Trade and Transport Facilitation in the Western Balkans, as a key pillar for building a more transparent, efficient, and interoperable customs environment.

He emphasized that by enabling the submission of all documents through a single entry point, the system reduces administrative burdens, increases compliance, strengthens trust between the public and private sectors, improves coordination between border institutions, and fosters a more favorable business climate.

- ❖ **Informal Meeting of Directors General of Customs Administrations, organized by the CEFTA Secretariat (18 December 2025, Brussels)**

The meeting brought together Directors General and representatives of the CEFTA Secretariat and the Transport Community to discuss the next steps in implementing the Memoranda of Understanding signed on 17 December in Brussels, as part of the Green Belt Initiative, and to explore further expansion and deepening of CEFTA–EU cooperation at the strategic level.

Three bilateral operational agreements were signed, strengthening customs cooperation between the administrations of Albania, Moldova, and North Macedonia with Greece, Bulgaria, and Italy.

The agreements aim to reduce waiting times at border crossings, facilitate the movement of goods, and enhance operational cooperation. These efforts are part of the EU Growth Plan for Moldova and the EU–Western Balkans Green Belt Initiative, led jointly by the Transport Community and CEFTA.

Improving Connectivity with Neighboring Countries through Modernized Border Crossings

❖ **Reconstruction of the Markova Noga Border Crossing (started 12 March 2025)**

The reconstruction of the Markova Noga Border Crossing in the Prespa region began with the construction of the Customs Administration's new administrative building. The project is financed by the European Union with €1.93 million, while the Customs Administration contributes €170,000 from the national budget to equip the facilities.

❖ **Director Boban Nikolovski and Minister of Finance Gordana Dimitrieska Kočoska inspected the Blace – Elez Han border crossing to assess and enhance daily control measures for passenger and goods movement (12 April 2025)**

During the meeting with the Kosovo delegation, led by Director of Kosovo Customs Administration Agron Lugaliu, Deputy Minister of Finance and Labor Agon Dobruna, and Director of Borders Fahri Gashi, discussions focused on introducing a single-stop border system. This system aims to accelerate passenger flow, improve control efficiency, and enable joint action to prevent smuggling.

World Customs Organization (WCO)

International Customs Day 2025

The International Customs Day, traditionally celebrated on 26 January, was observed in 2025 under the slogan "Customs Delivers on Its Commitments to Efficiency, Security and Prosperity." On this occasion, 20 customs officers were formally recognized by the World Customs Organization Secretary General for their achievements and contributions. The awards highlighted their success in combating crime and preventing illegal trade, digitizing customs processes and implementing IT systems in accordance with European Union standards, facilitating trade and strengthening the competitiveness of the Macedonian economy, developing the National Single Window System, protecting financial interests, and ensuring

efficient revenue collection. The ceremonial event was held at the Customs Administration headquarters on 30 January 2025.

Annual Session of the Customs Cooperation Council of the World Customs Organization

A delegation of the Customs Administration led by Director Nikolovski attended the annual session of the Customs Cooperation Council of the World Customs Organization, which was held from 26-28 June at its headquarters in Brussels.

The WCO, as a global international center of customs expertise, has a leading role in the development, promotion and implementation of modern customs systems and procedures, and the Council, which is composed of the directors of the customs administrations of the member states, is the highest governing and management body.

At the session of the Customs Cooperation Council, views were exchanged on key topics and issues in the field of customs operations. The reports prepared by the organization's committees responsible for capacity building, tariff-related regulations, trade issues, law enforcement and facilitation of customs procedures and trade processes were also adopted.

In terms of establishing common policies within the global family of customs services, delegates also discussed the SAFE framework of standards, e-commerce, the WCO Action Plan on Vulnerable Borders, gender equality and integrity of customs officials, as well as further strategic activities and improvements to the Harmonized System framework.

Inter-institutional Cooperation

Modern challenges such as organized crime, drug trafficking, money laundering, and illegal migration require an integrated approach and close inter-institutional cooperation. No single institution can effectively address these complex forms of crime alone. Therefore, communication and coordination between institutions are key factors in building an effective national security system.

Institutional cooperation is achieved through the exchange of information, joint operational activities, coordinated investigations, and the use of shared databases. The roles of the Customs Administration, Police, financial institutions, the Prosecutor's Office, and specialized agencies for combating corruption and organized crime are particularly significant.

❖ Meeting with the Food and Veterinary Agency (22.08.2025)

Ensuring fair economic competition through the detection of customs fraud in the food sector, enhancing the safety of imported food through a joint and coordinated approach between the Customs Administration and the Food and Veterinary Agency, and facilitating legal trade through the harmonization of the institutions' working hours were the key outcomes agreed

upon at the meeting between Customs Administration Director Boban Nikolovski and Food and Veterinary Agency Director Oliver Milanov.

Prior to the meeting, trainings were conducted on the control of food imports and exports, as well as the import and export of pets, using real-life scenarios to enhance efficiency and preparedness.

❖ **Customs and the Central Registry Agree on E-Exchange of Data on Customs Debt (16.10.2025)**

The Customs Administration and the Central Registry have agreed to implement a digital exchange of data on customs debt.

Customs Administration Director Boban Nikolovski and Central Registry Director Anita Stamnova signed the Agreement on Cooperation and Exchange of Documents in Electronic Form.

Intensive collaboration between the two institutions enabled the digital integration of their systems. Since November, the Central Registry has been receiving customs debt information automatically through the interoperability system, allowing companies and citizens to access it electronically. Previously, seven to nine thousand certificates were issued annually in paper form, with applicants waiting several days for processing.

Cooperation with the Business Community

Dialogue with the business community is essential for improving the business environment and enhancing the competitiveness of the Macedonian economy. In this context, fostering strong partnerships is of great importance.

Meetings with company representatives are held continuously to assist them in customs procedures. The goal is to enable fair and competitive trade while ensuring compliance with laws, thereby promoting greater security, prosperity, and economic stability.

Key Events

- ❖ 31 January, Director General Boban Nikolovski, as a member of the National Export Council of the Economic Chamber of Macedonia, attended the "Export Day" event alongside Prime Minister Hristijan Mickoski, Minister of Finance Gordana Dimitrieska Kočoska, and Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Transport Aleksandar Nikoloski.
- ❖ 18 February, The second meeting of the Advisory Body, which includes representatives from the business community, was held. During the meeting, the

Strategy for the Development of the Customs Administration and the 2025–2027 Action Plan were presented. Members of the Advisory Body praised the successful implementation of the New Transit System (NCTS) – Phase 5, which is fully compliant with the new legal requirements of the Convention on a Common Transit Procedure.

- ❖ 23 September, At the traditional meeting with carriers, Director Nikolovski highlighted key achievements, including a revenue increase of €65.5 million as of August, accelerated transport, facilitation of legal trade, and enhanced security of imported and exported goods through improved ICT systems aligned with European Union standards. Customs procedures have been further expedited by aligning the shifts of the Food and Veterinary Agency with those of the Customs Administration. Strengthened cooperation with the Ministry of Transport has also accelerated the implementation of key infrastructure projects, including the New National One-Stop Shop.

Transparency and Public Relations

Transparency in the work of the Customs Administration is a cornerstone for building public trust. Public relations support this trust through open, clear, and responsible communication.

These two principles are vital as they enable two-way communication with citizens, promote accountability, and help build a positive image of an institution that ensures safety, security, and economic growth by improving business conditions and facilitating trade and transport.

The staff responsible for public relations within the Customs Administration play a key role in establishing and maintaining transparent communication with the public. Through regular press releases submitted to the media, the public is kept timely and accurately informed about the institution's activities, measures, and results. These press releases are not only shared with traditional media but also published on the official website of the Customs Administration and on its social media platforms, including Facebook and Instagram.

This multi-channel approach ensures broader audience reach, better accessibility of information, and increased interaction with citizens, aligning with modern principles of e-transparency and digital communication in the public sector.

14 April – Customs Administration Day Celebrated

The anniversary of Customs Administration Day was celebrated in the presence of fellow customs officers, as well as representatives of institutions and chambers of commerce with which the Customs Administration cooperates daily.

During the celebration, key achievements were highlighted, including a €13.6 million increase in revenue collection in the first quarter of this year compared to the same period last year. The fight against illegal activities was also emphasized, with 102 criminal charges filed from November 2024 to April 2025, surpassing the total of 85 charges filed over the three-year period from 2020 to 2023. Additionally, 143 cases of seizures were recorded in the first quarter, representing a 77 percent increase compared to 81 cases in the previous year.

An overview was presented of current investments totaling €24.4 million, supported by the World Bank, the Republic of Korea, the European Union through grant funds, and the national budget. The ceremony, held at the Customs Administration premises, provided an opportunity to express gratitude to distinguished customs officers and close associates, with plaques and letters of appreciation awarded in recognition of their exceptional contributions.

As part of the holiday tradition, a blood donation campaign was also organised to mark the occasion.

Trade Union Activities

The Independent Trade Union of the Customs Administration and the trade union organization UPOZ actively work to improve the rights of employees, recognizing that fair working conditions and a positive social climate are essential for quality and dignified work within the Customs Administration.

In the first quarter of 2025, the Independent Trade Union provided solidarity assistance to its members and, where applicable, to their immediate family members during long-term illness or under other circumstances requiring support. Activities were also organized to mark International Women's Day, demonstrating the unions' commitment to inclusivity and employee well-being.

In May 2025, the Independent Trade Union organized a trade union excursion to Cavtat, Republic of Croatia, aimed at fostering social interaction among union members and other Customs Administration employees. This initiative contributed to improving the social climate and strengthening the cohesion and continuous development of all staff within the Administration.

Humanitarian Activities

The trade union organization at the Customs Administration, UPOZ, donated funds to the families of the tragic victims of the fire in Kocani, following the suggestion of women members who, this year, chose to forgo their customary gifts for International Women's Day.

In the first quarter, trade union organizations also provided financial assistance for the medical treatment of a patient abroad.

Activities to mark Customs Administration Day on 14 April included organizing a humanitarian campaign to support the victims of the major accident in Kocani, demonstrating the Customs Administration's ongoing commitment to social responsibility and solidarity with affected communities.