

**WCO
Photo
Competition
2016**

Afghanistan

Seizure of medicine

Representatives from Customs and the Ministry of Health look at a stock of outdated medicines seized by the Customs enforcement team.





Angola

Passenger control

A passenger is checked using a body scanner, instead of being manually searched. The equipment provides for faster, more efficient control which is less invasive.



Australia

World first technology for traveller facilitation

A member of the Counter Terrorism Unit (CTU) observes departing travellers being processed through automatic gates called 'Departures SmartGate.' The technology uses facial biometrics to automate the manual checks normally conducted by Australian Border Force officers, allowing them to focus their efforts on travellers that present a higher risk. CTU officers are trained to identify and intercept suspicious people in Customs controlled areas who may present a threat to national security.

Azerbaijan

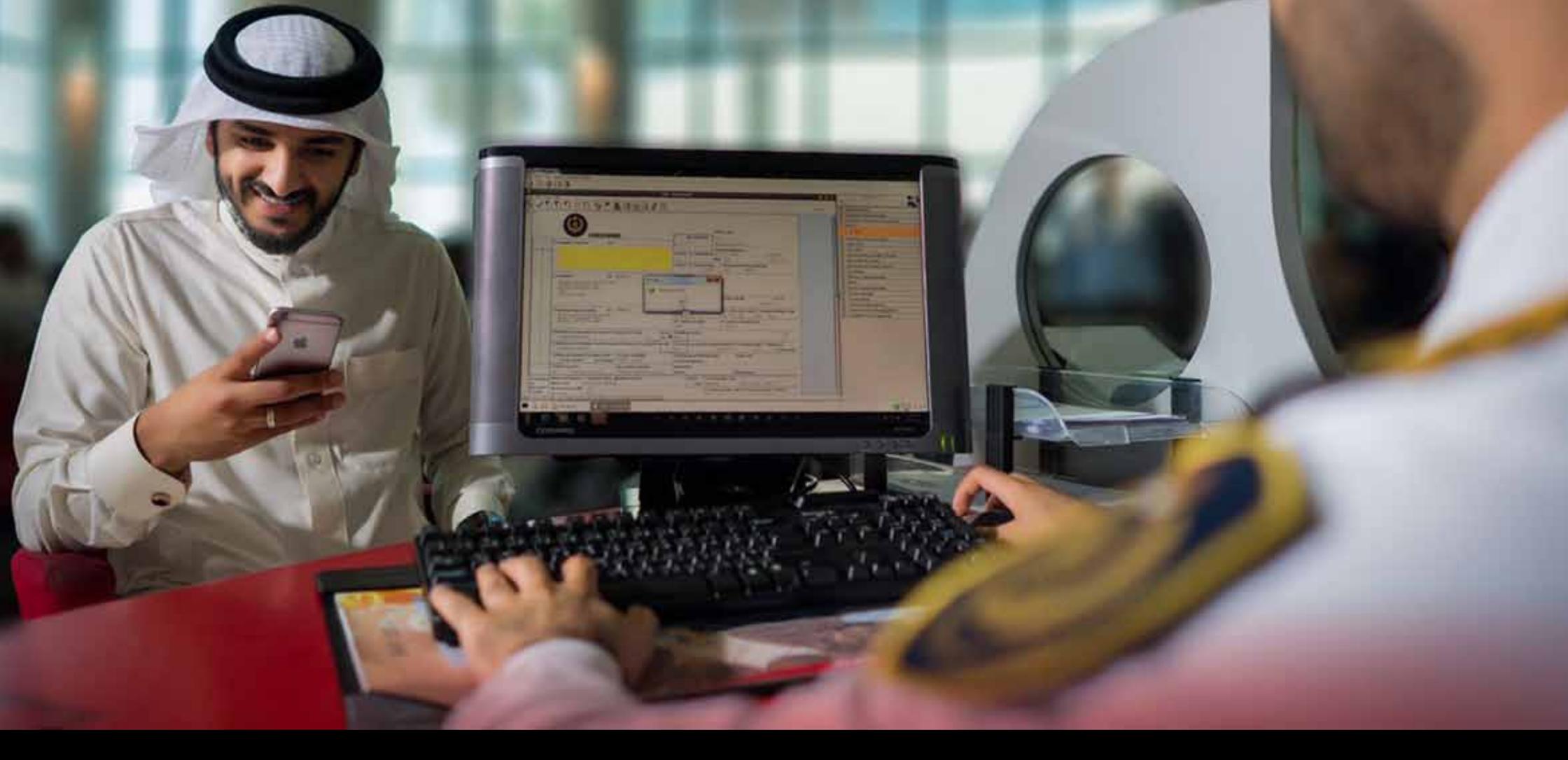
The era of paper is over! Long live innovation!



Bahrain



Digital Customs is Here



Belgium

Ship scanning

Despite all the technological and digital developments, inspecting a ship still requires human intervention. Here, a Customs officer from a search team checks a container ship at the Port of Antwerp.



MEDU

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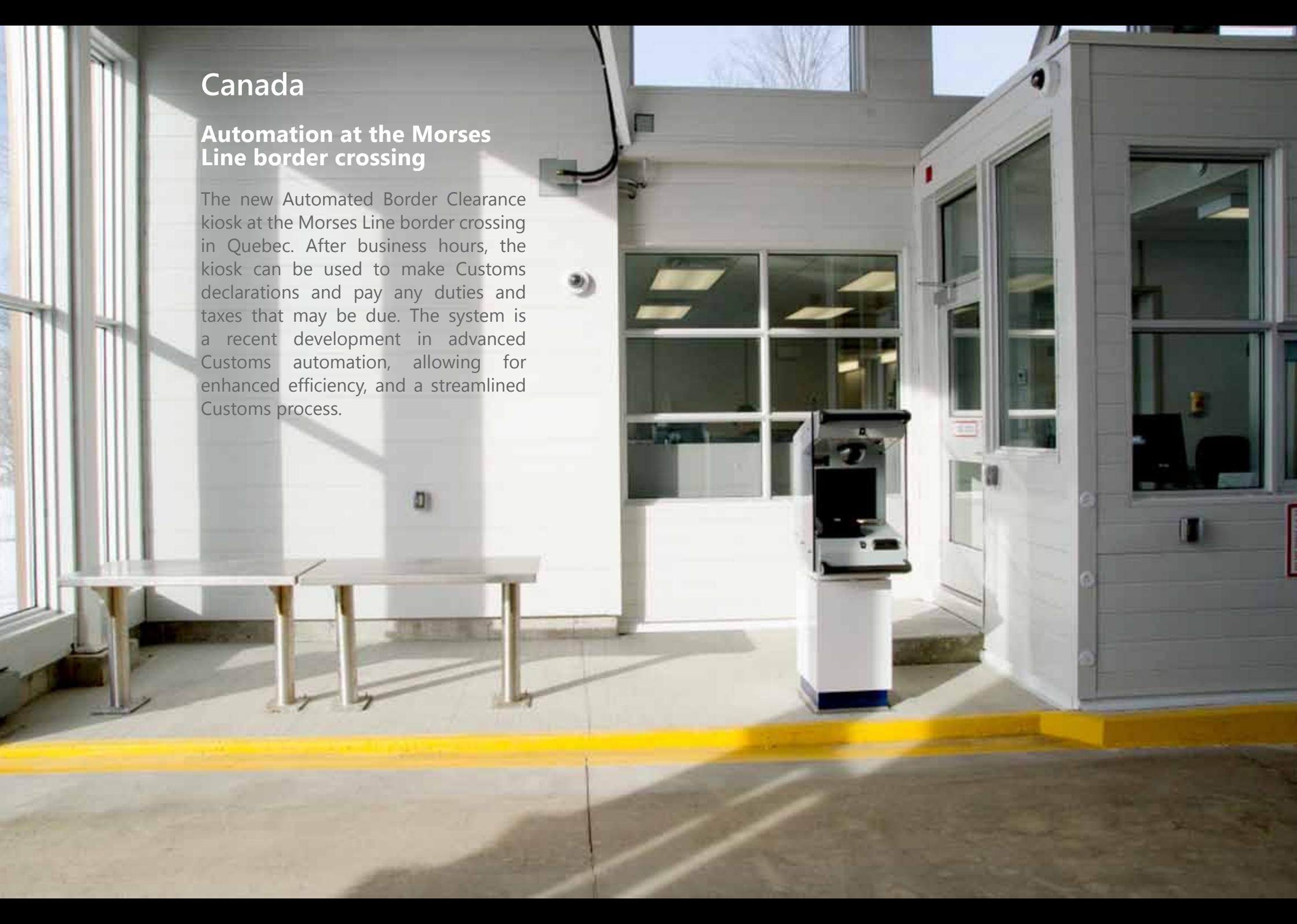
MAXGROSS

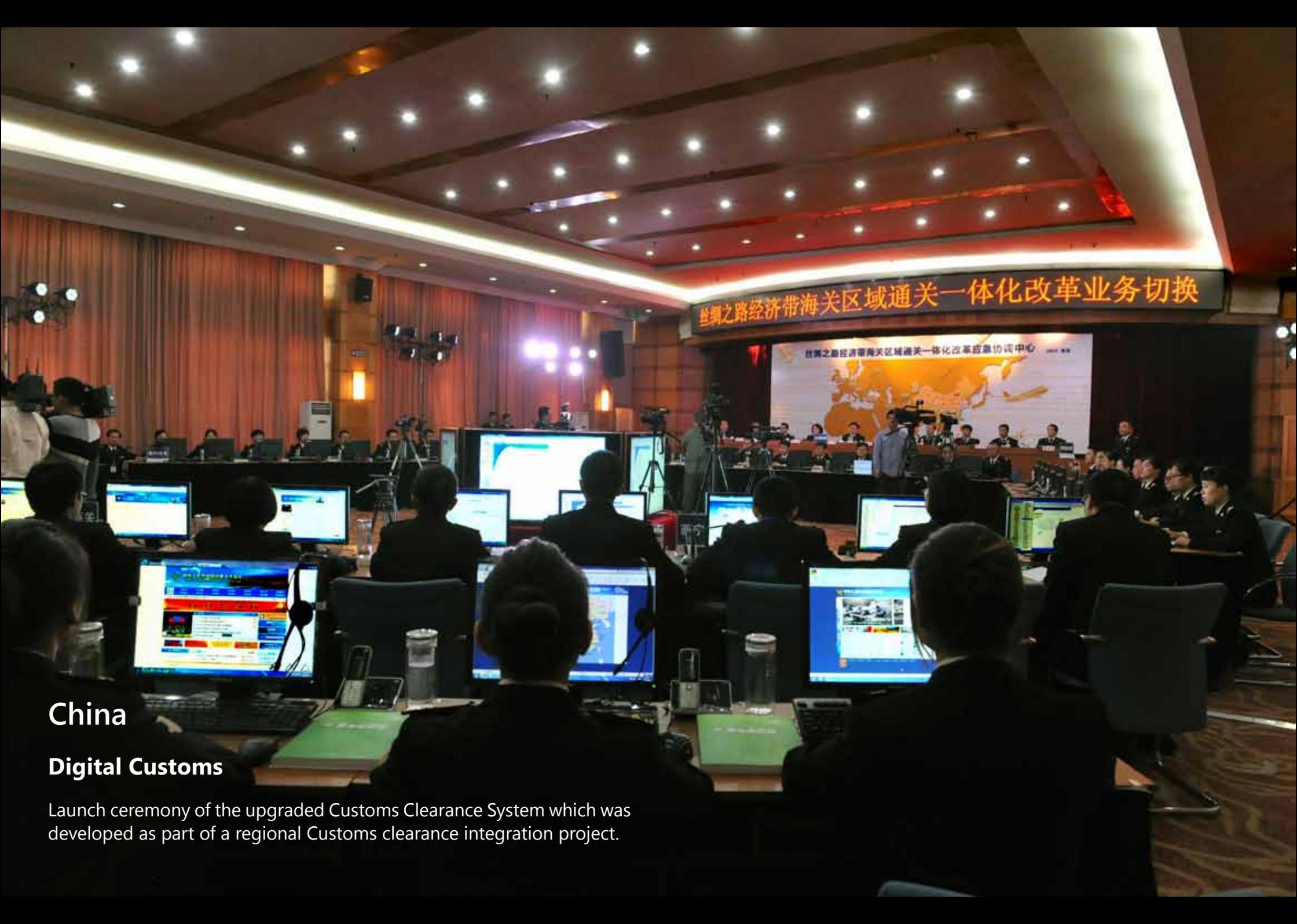
30.480	KGS
67.200	LBS
2.220	KGS
4.890	LBS
28.260	KGS
2.310	LBS
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Canada

Automation at the Morses Line border crossing

The new Automated Border Clearance kiosk at the Morses Line border crossing in Quebec. After business hours, the kiosk can be used to make Customs declarations and pay any duties and taxes that may be due. The system is a recent development in advanced Customs automation, allowing for enhanced efficiency, and a streamlined Customs process.





China

Digital Customs

Launch ceremony of the upgraded Customs Clearance System which was developed as part of a regional Customs clearance integration project.

Congo (Democratic Republic of the)

Seizure of 113 kilos of ivory tusks and two rhinoceros horns

Thanks to the scanners installed at Kinshasa international airport, 113 kg of ivory tusks as well as two rhinoceros horns were discovered in four suitcases belonging to Vietnamese citizens.





Czech Republic Times have changed

A Czech Customs officer today, sitting next to a member of the former Financial Guard as they looked 100 years ago. The objects on the table show the tools used by each one at the time, with the computer taking centre stage in the section dedicated to the present working environment.

Denmark

Customs using body scanner

At Copenhagen airport, Customs officers Peter Brandt Jensen and Suzanne J. Kristiansen analyse a picture taken by a body scanner of a man having ingested narcotics. Installed in 2013, the equipment is primarily used to prevent illegal drugs being smuggled into the country, rendering control procedures simple, easy, and less time-consuming for both Customs personnel as well as people being checked.



Dominican Republic

One grain, one idea, one action

Being an agricultural country par excellence, the Dominican Republic maintains an active level of international trade with the rest of the world. Importing raw materials, such as grains and other supplies for the agricultural and livestock industry, is especially crucial for the country. As a consequence, large vessels frequently visit the principal ports of the island, keeping the Customs service in constant action.





Dubai

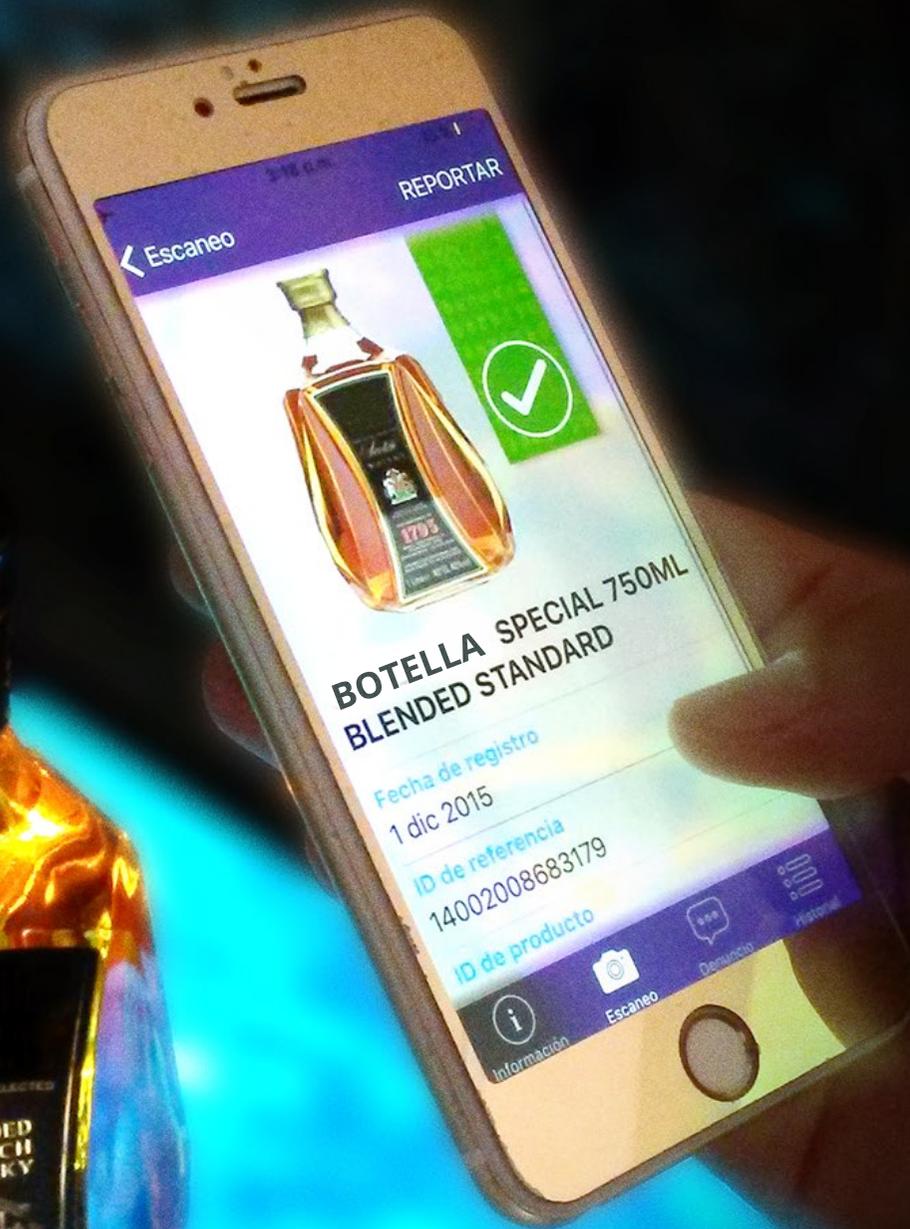
'Smart glasses': a digital breakthrough for inspection operations

The 90 minutes to 3 hours required to conduct inspections have become history. With the introduction of 'smart glasses' technology, the process can now be completed in 4 to 7 minutes, depending on the level of security risk involved. These glasses are equipped with an HD camera, Bluetooth, motion gesture, voice command, and other features. They are equally equipped with a new software application that connects them with the Customs operating system straightaway. The glasses instantly display, on a tiny screen (upper right-hand side of photo), the Customs declaration, its risk assessment results, and X-ray images of the shipment being inspected.

Ecuador

We are all Customs officers

The use of excise stamps on imported alcoholic drinks enables each citizen to verify, using a smartphone, whether the product he or she intends to buy has been legally imported. They just have to download a specific application, then scan the QR code on the excise stamps. If the consumer suspects that the product may be illegal, he or she may notify Customs of their suspicions and send them the GPS coordinates of the location of the goods. The technology implemented by the Ecuador Customs Service received an award in the 'best innovation and best design' category at the Tax Stamp Forum



Egypt

The Customs nebula



Estonia

Customs at the service of art

Technology used by Customs and the experience of its officers are sometimes needed at quite unexpected places. A Customs portable X-ray machine was used to determine the state of health of a nearly 100-year-old monument: a statue of an angel striving towards the sky, erected in memory of the crew members of the battleship Russalka who drowned in a shipwreck. To ensure that the monument is still standing firmly on its plinth, it was necessary to determine whether its fastenings have stood the test of time. This unusual request gave Customs the opportunity to test the potential of its X-ray equipment since the materials used to construct the monument were rather unusual – bronze and granite. This is not the first time that Customs has been put at the service of art: it was asked to scan the high altar of St. Nicholas' Church in Tallinn, one of the best preserved medieval altars from the Late Middle Ages in Europe, which was due to be restored.





Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

A break

A Customs officer takes a break with his partner, a Customs sniffer dog, in a parking lot near a border crossing point.

Hong Kong, China

A single e-lock for seamless transshipment operations

Hong Kong Customs and China Customs launched the 'Single e-Lock Scheme' in March 2016. Under the scheme, a single e-lock with GPS capability is applied to a container in transshipment, enabling each administration to monitor and safeguard the security of the cargo and to coordinate inspections, the objective being to avoid duplication of controls, streamline the clearance process, and expedite the flow of transshipment cargo.





Hungary

Using technology for improved revenue collection

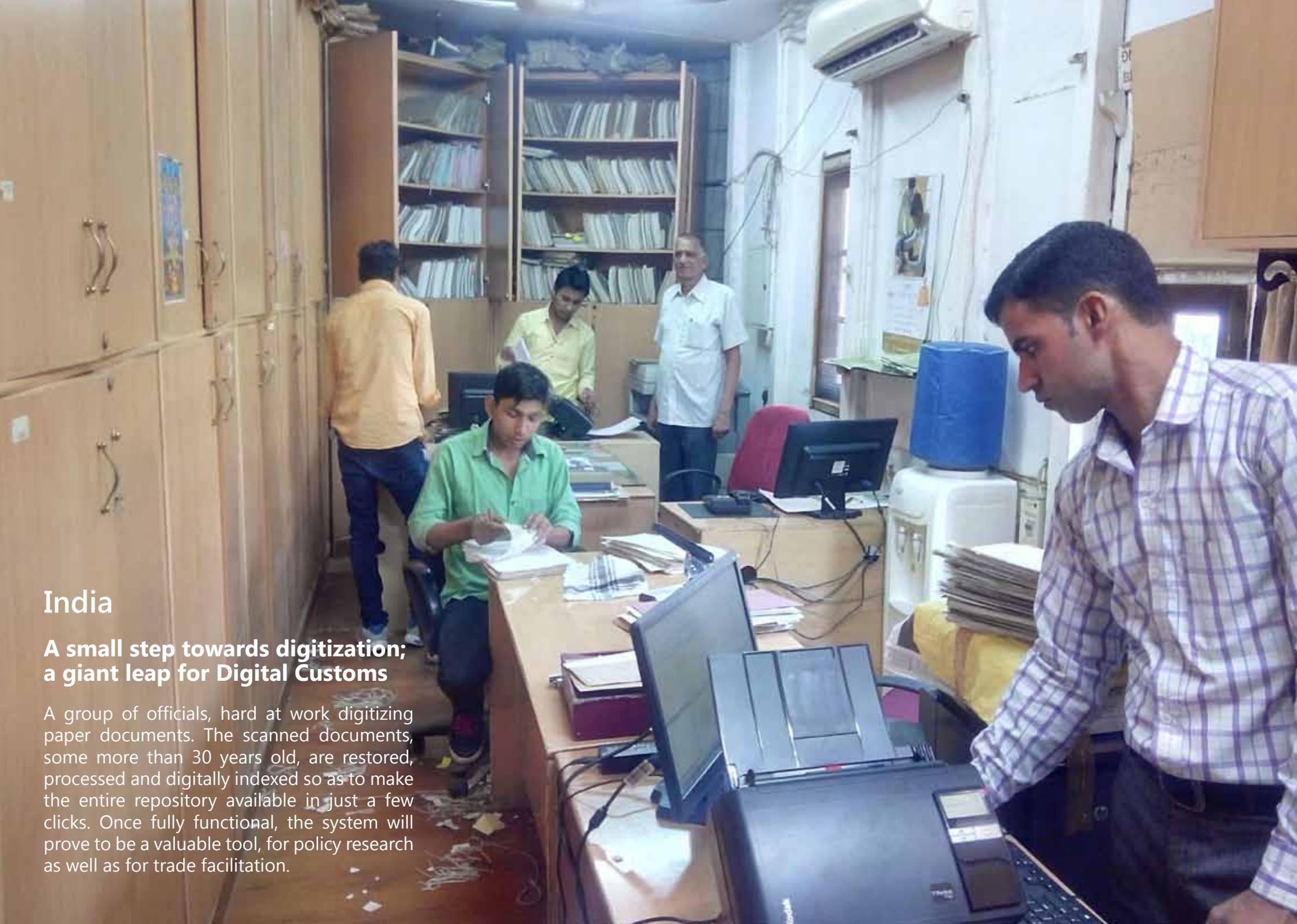
Since January 2015, all transport of goods by motor vehicles on public roads has to be reported via the Electronic Trade and Transport Control System (EKAER) operated by the Hungarian tax authority. The system has been successful in preventing value-added tax (VAT) fraud, one of the main objectives behind its implementation. VAT payable by traders from the Budapest Wholesale Market, for example, increased by 748 million Hungarian forints (HUF), while refunds decreased by 94 million HUF. Moreover, following more than 200 onsite inspections and the seizure of stocks or the freezing of fraudulent tax payers' assets, the State was able to recover a significant amount of unpaid tax.



Iceland

Looking towards the clouds

Information and communication technology (ICT) is an important aspect of Iceland Customs' work. Integrating ICT in day-to-day business is imperative to increasing and improving services put at the disposal of the general public and companies alike. Lately, Customs, in cooperation with other public bodies, has been looking towards 'cloud computing,' and how the technology can be used to increase security and efficiency.



India

A small step towards digitization; a giant leap for Digital Customs

A group of officials, hard at work digitizing paper documents. The scanned documents, some more than 30 years old, are restored, processed and digitally indexed so as to make the entire repository available in just a few clicks. Once fully functional, the system will prove to be a valuable tool, for policy research as well as for trade facilitation.



Ireland

Scanning for contraband

Italy

E-Customs: quicker and cheaper trade, safer borders

The laptop in the foreground illustrates the current situation in which Customs makes extensive use of information technology (IT). In the background, two stamps on top of a stack of paper documents and a tail of toy trucks and cars waiting in front of a stop sign reflect the past where Customs was required to stamp or check a plethora of paper documents which was a time-consuming activity that hampered trade and travellers.



IMPROVING CUSTOMS WITH TECHNOLOGY

A Customs officer at an importer's premises utilizing a computer tablet as a part of the examination and release of goods process. It illustrates the fact that the use of information and communication technology (ICT) and risk management has been a critical component of the reform and modernization of Customs processes. A major project in this area has been the implementation of ASYCUDA World as Customs' web-based interface, leading to significant improvement in processing times, cost reductions, improved transparency and predictability, better utilization of human resources, and overall, enhanced trade facilitation.



Korea

The 4th generation of Korea's electronic clearance system is born

Launch ceremony of the 4th generation of UNI-PASS, Korea Customs Service's electronic clearance system, in June 2016. This upgraded version of the system enables users to use mobile phones to conduct onsite tasks, and uses 'big data' for better information analysis. The system, like its predecessor, will be promoted worldwide for other countries to adopt.

4세대 국가관세종합정보망 개통 기념식

Opening Celebration





Lesotho

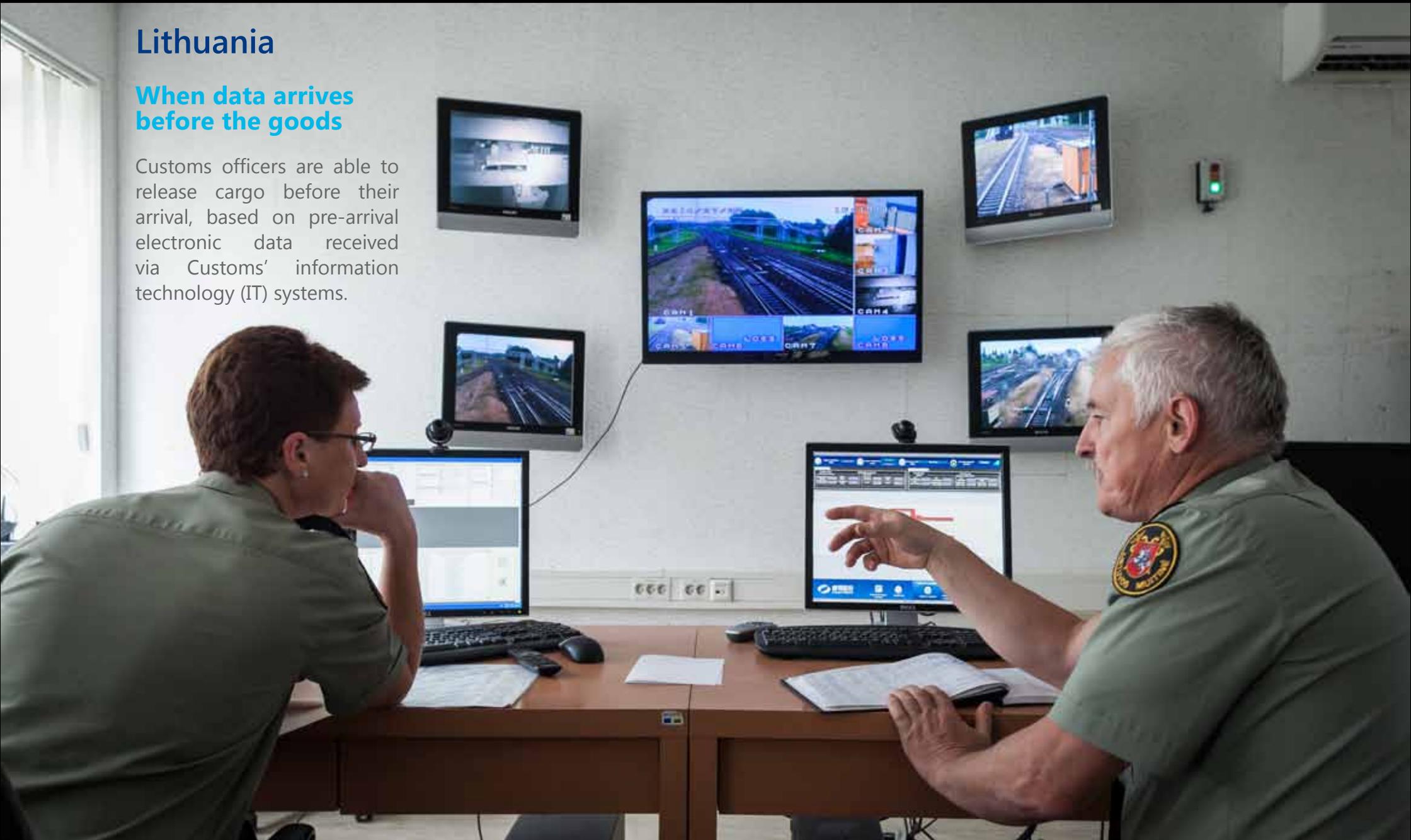
Inspection

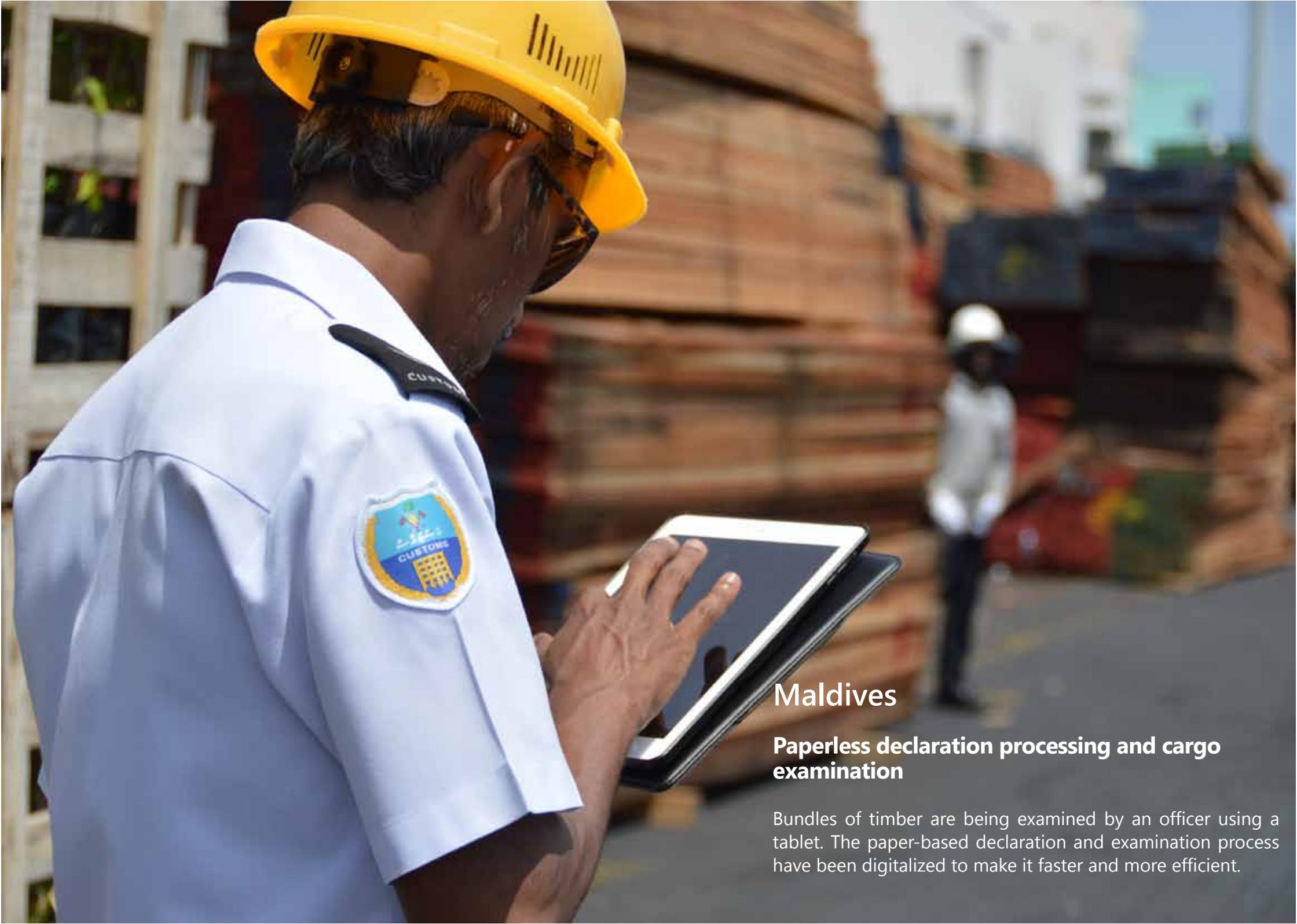
Anti-Smuggling Unit officers stop a truck carrying live animals at one of the country's major commercial border posts, namely Van Rooyen's Gate, to check whether the documentation received corresponds with the consignment.

Lithuania

When data arrives before the goods

Customs officers are able to release cargo before their arrival, based on pre-arrival electronic data received via Customs' information technology (IT) systems.





Maldives

Paperless declaration processing and cargo examination

Bundles of timber are being examined by an officer using a tablet. The paper-based declaration and examination process have been digitalized to make it faster and more efficient.

Mauritius

Harnessing the power of camera surveillance

Customs has an active network of surveillance at the port, both in terms of camera logistics and human resources. After having, inter alia, successfully digitalized the submission of Customs declarations and implemented electronic payment, the Mauritius Revenue Authority (MRA) is determined to offer better services to taxpayers through the digitalization of its operations.



A man wearing a white long-sleeved shirt, blue jeans, and a light-colored cowboy hat is working in an agave field. He is holding a long wooden staff. In the foreground, a hand holds a smartphone displaying a QR code. Behind the phone are several bottles of tequila. To the right, there is a large stack of agave hearts. The background shows a vast field of agave plants under a clear sky.

Mexico

Using technology to protect consumers

Today, each individual who buys a bottle of Mexican Tequila can quickly learn where the tequila it contains comes from, who produced it and when it was bottled, and verify that it is a genuine product made out of agave tequilana weber (blue agave) grown in the State of Jalisco. Using a mobile phone having a QR Code reading application, an individual can simply scan the tag placed on the bottle and information necessary to evaluate the quality of the beverage will show on the phone screen. The development of this technology, which brings producers closer to the final buyers, required strong coordination between producers, Customs authorities, and distributors on a global scale.



Myanmar

Digital Customs

Three Customs officers are assigned to the CCTV control room at the Administration's Headquarters.

Norway

Beyond borders

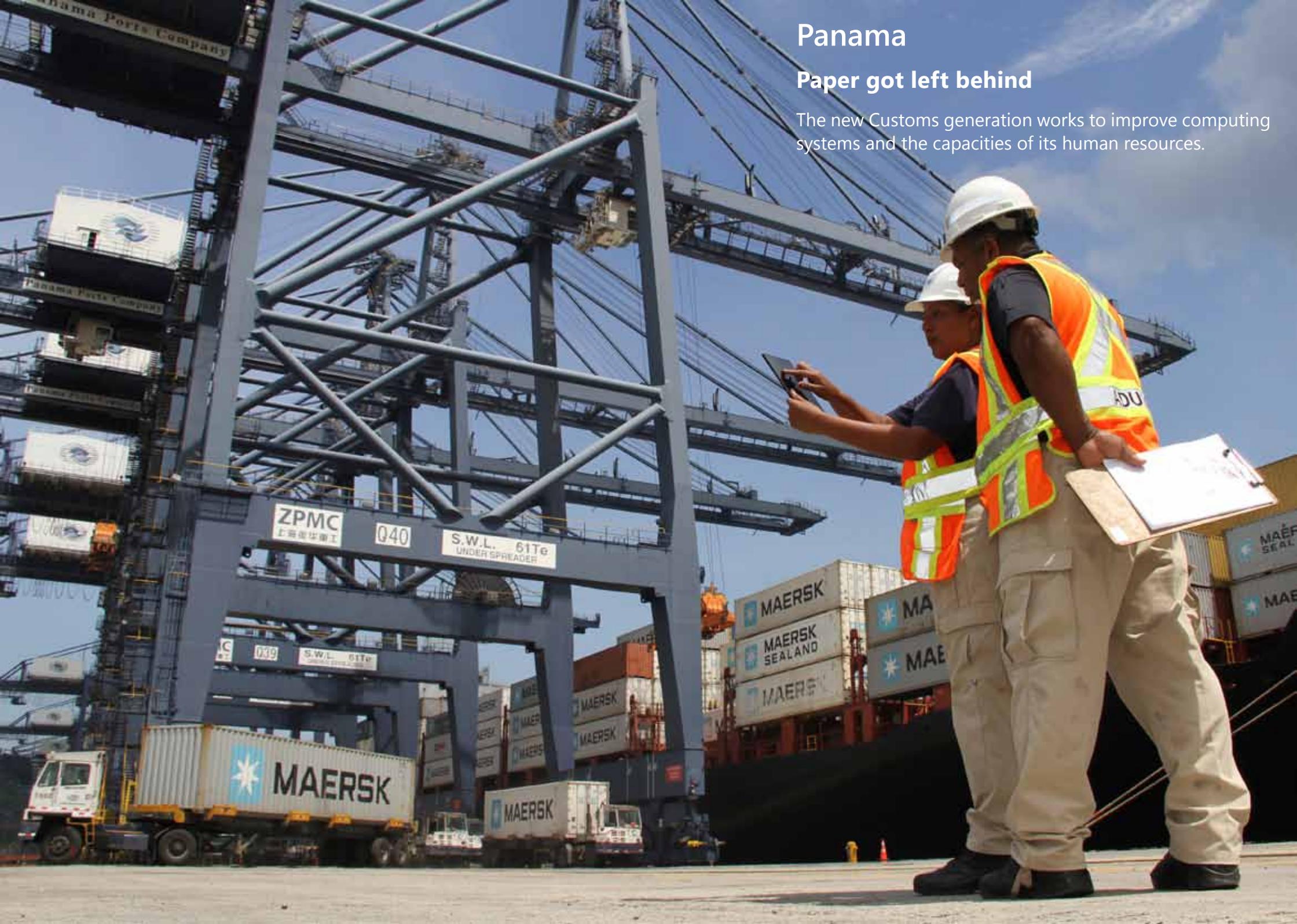
A van concealed deep in the woods after smugglers realized that Customs officers were on their tail. The assembled photos show the storyline of what happened, from the tracking and discovery of the van, to the counting and reporting of the goods found inside it.



Panama

Paper got left behind

The new Customs generation works to improve computing systems and the capacities of its human resources.

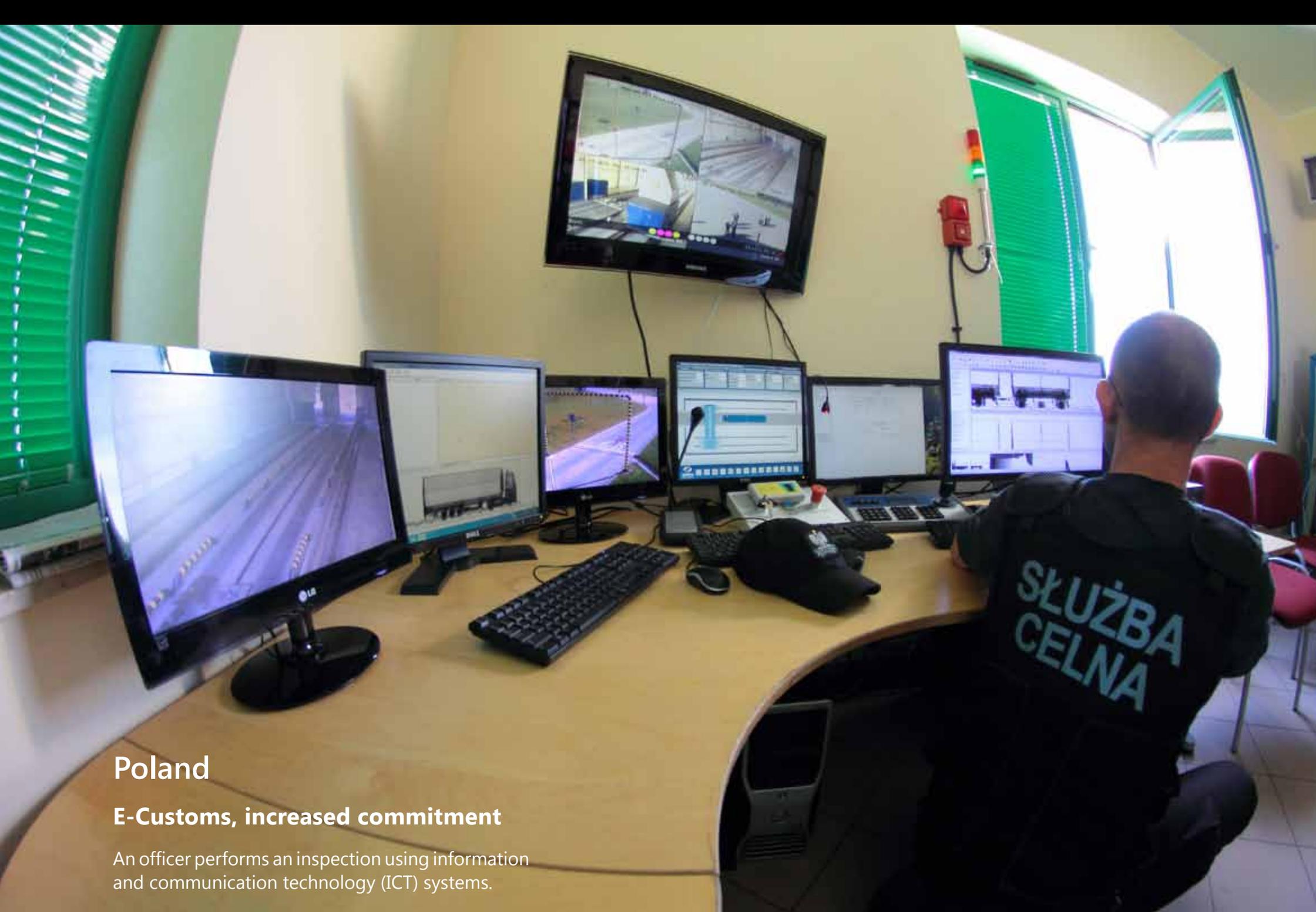




Paraguay

Riverine crane

The Paraguay River is one of the country's main communication channels. Through it, consumer goods arrive in the national territory. This old crane is a picture of the past, and reminds us what things were like before the arrival of technology.



Poland

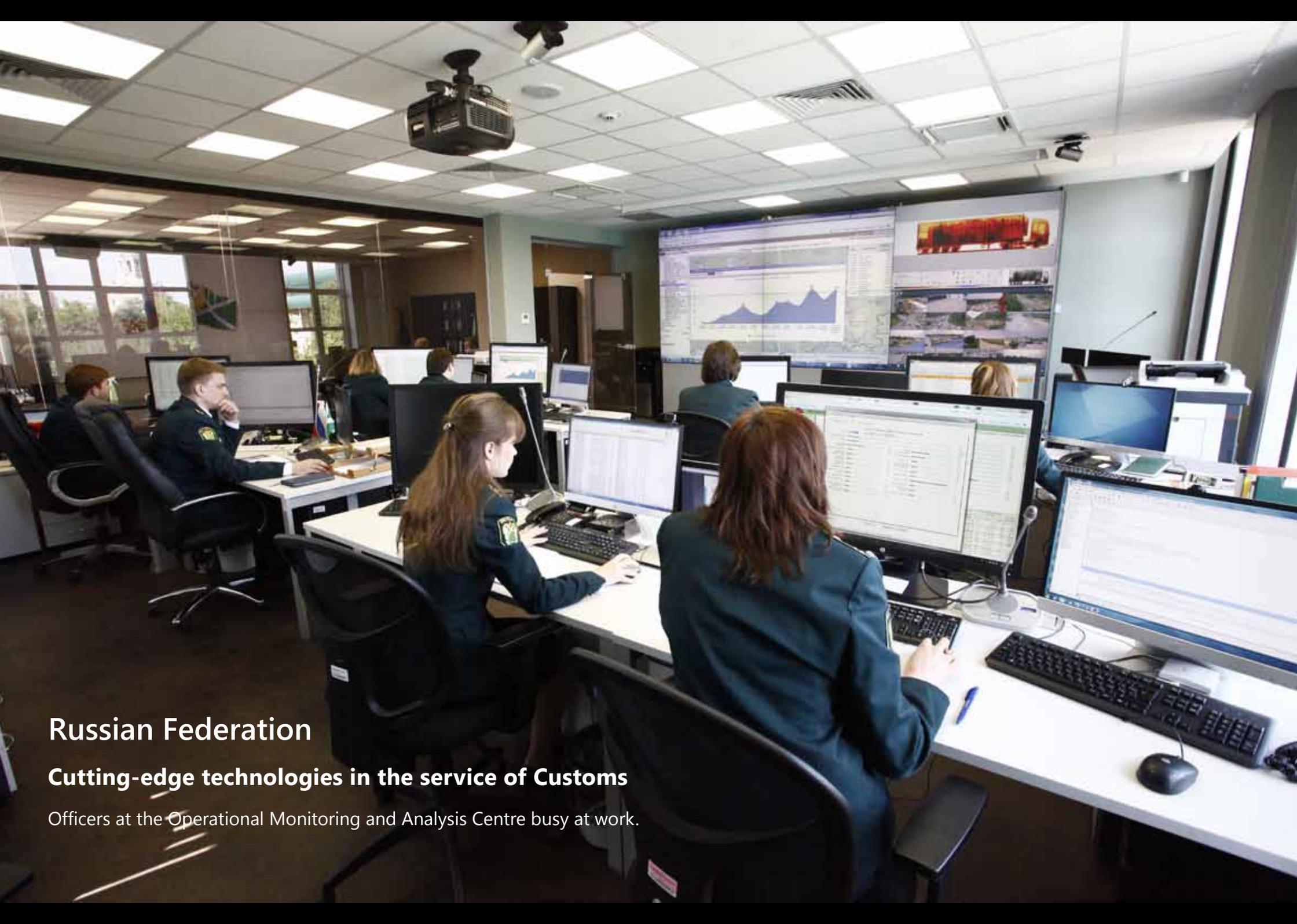
E-Customs, increased commitment

An officer performs an inspection using information and communication technology (ICT) systems.

Romania

Having fun during the transition towards digitalization





Russian Federation

Cutting-edge technologies in the service of Customs

Officers at the Operational Monitoring and Analysis Centre busy at work.

Saudi Arabia

Digital Customs on the move

In constant pursuit of developing services that suit the needs of its clients, Customs has completed the digitalization of all its activities. All Saudi ports are linked to each other as well as to ports in neighbouring countries, and the system is managed by a Central Information Centre and Control Room located at Customs' Headquarters.



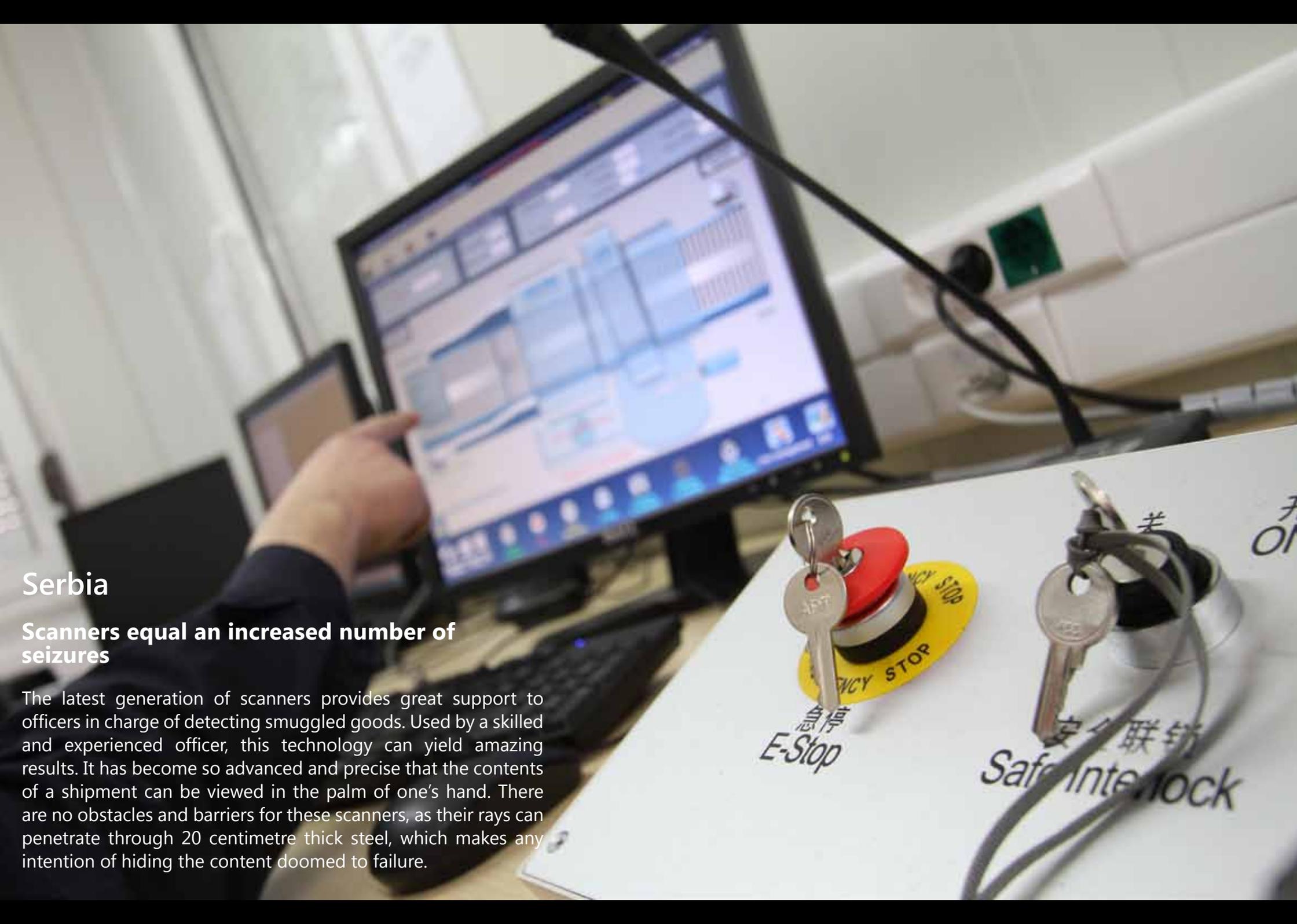
Saudi Customs



Serbia

Scanners equal an increased number of seizures

The latest generation of scanners provides great support to officers in charge of detecting smuggled goods. Used by a skilled and experienced officer, this technology can yield amazing results. It has become so advanced and precise that the contents of a shipment can be viewed in the palm of one's hand. There are no obstacles and barriers for these scanners, as their rays can penetrate through 20 centimetre thick steel, which makes any intention of hiding the content doomed to failure.





Singapore

Ever ready, ever vigilant

You can try to hide, but we can see through you.



South Africa

A scanning success story

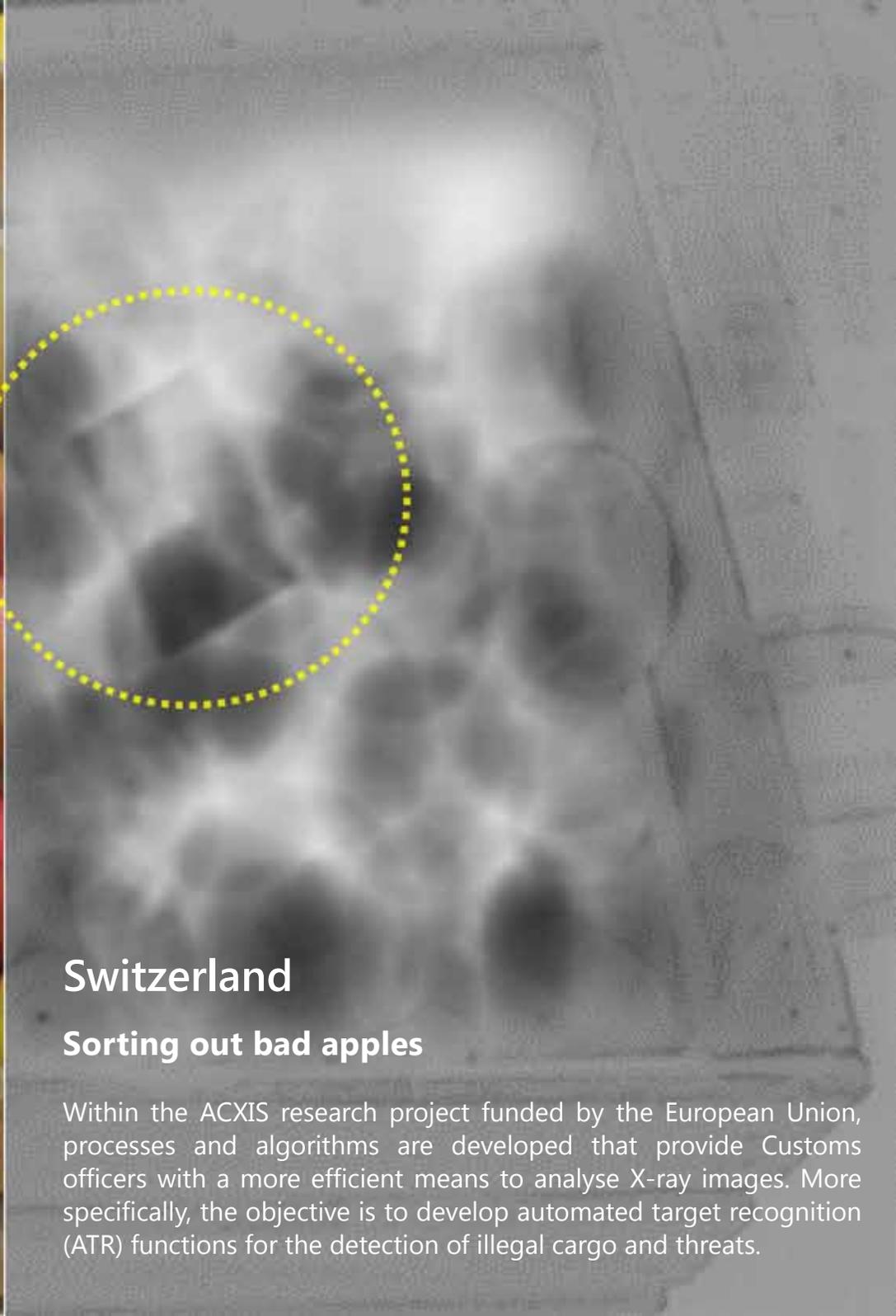
A new high-tech cargo scanner being installed at Cape Town harbour, the second of two such scanners in the country. The cargo scanner is fully integrated into the Customs case management system (CMS) – a first for South Africa. This automated process allows scan instructions to be sent from the CMS, and scanned images to be automatically uploaded into each case for further processing and future reference. Digitizing the cargo inspection process has improved operational efficiency, enhanced auditability, and increased inspection throughput considerably. Since it was introduced in July 2015, the Cape Town scanner has conducted over 2000 scans with considerable successes in the detection of illicit or wrongly declared goods.

Sudan

Progress

The Gate of Sawakin, the first port of the Republic of Sudan situated in the east of the country, and constructed in the last decade of the 19th century. This image of the past contrasts with the image of a drone, one of the modern technologies now used by Customs to combat smuggling.





Switzerland

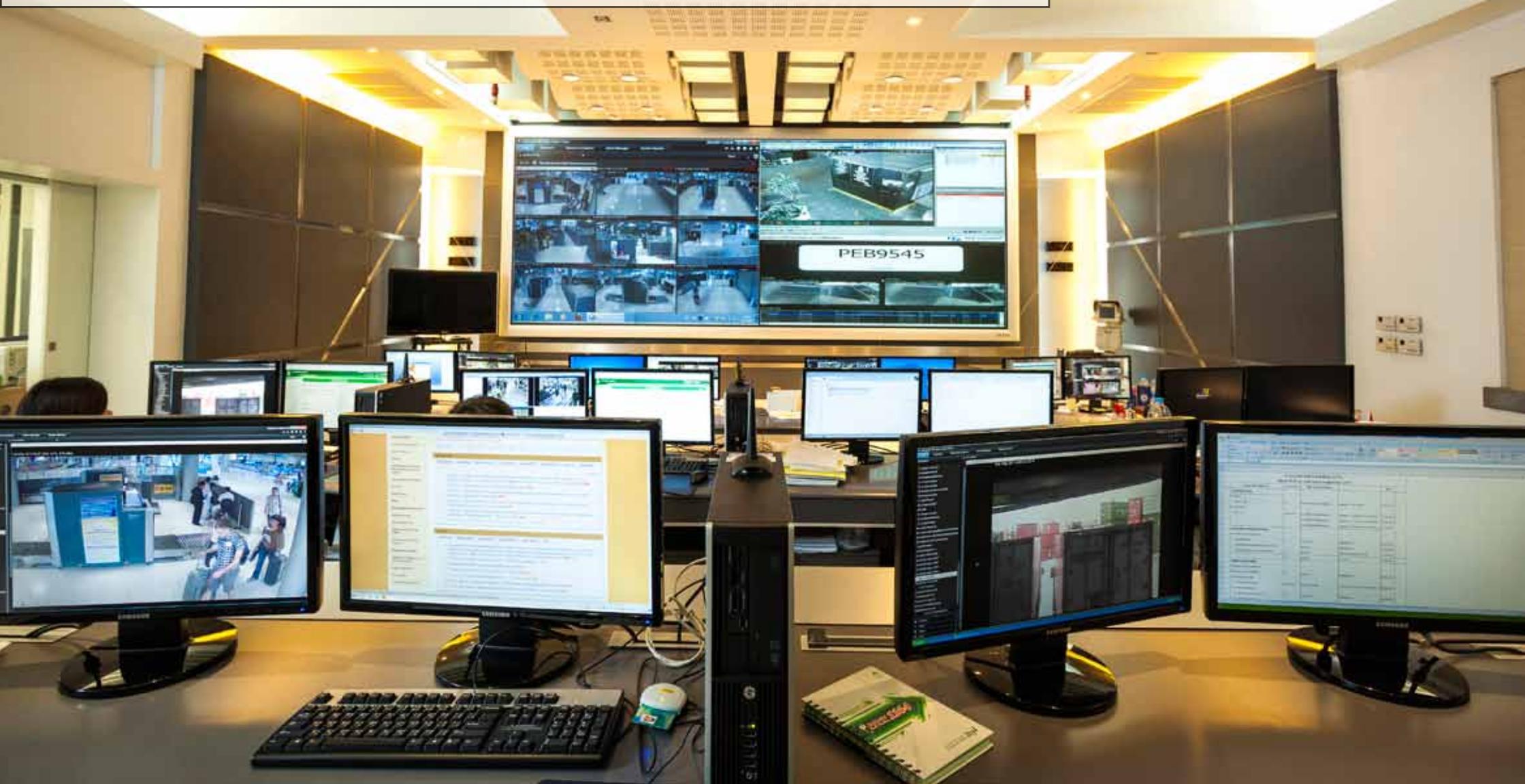
Sorting out bad apples

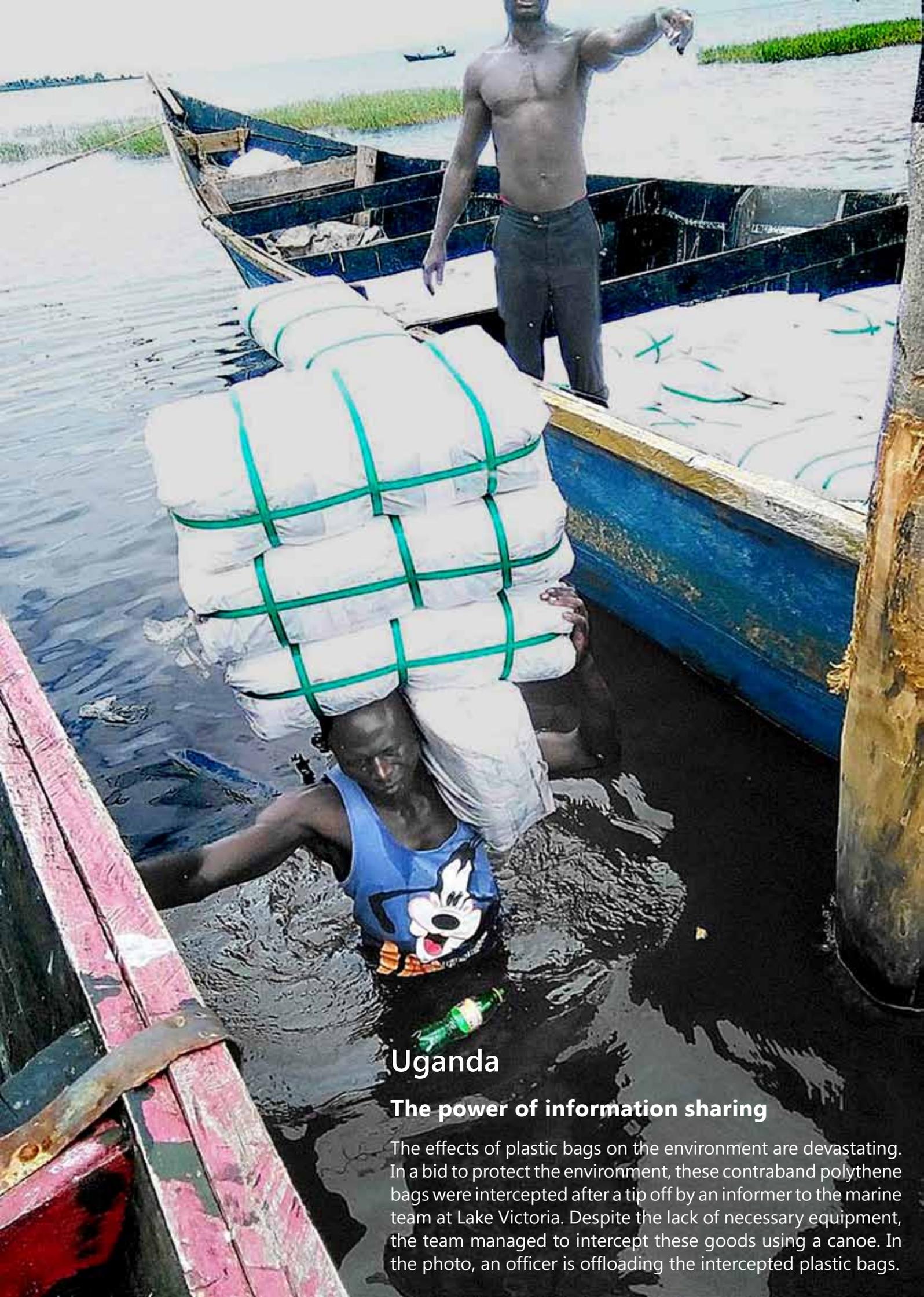
Within the ACXIS research project funded by the European Union, processes and algorithms are developed that provide Customs officers with a more efficient means to analyse X-ray images. More specifically, the objective is to develop automated target recognition (ATR) functions for the detection of illegal cargo and threats.

Thailand

Progressive implementation of Digital Customs

The CCTV Centre is the place where Customs operations nationwide can be monitored. This kind of visibility assists Customs executives in taking decisions aimed at improving the service and controls. Currently, the project to upgrade the CCTV System from analog to a full HD digital one is underway. It also includes the development of a Licence Plate Recognition System and a Vehicle Information System.

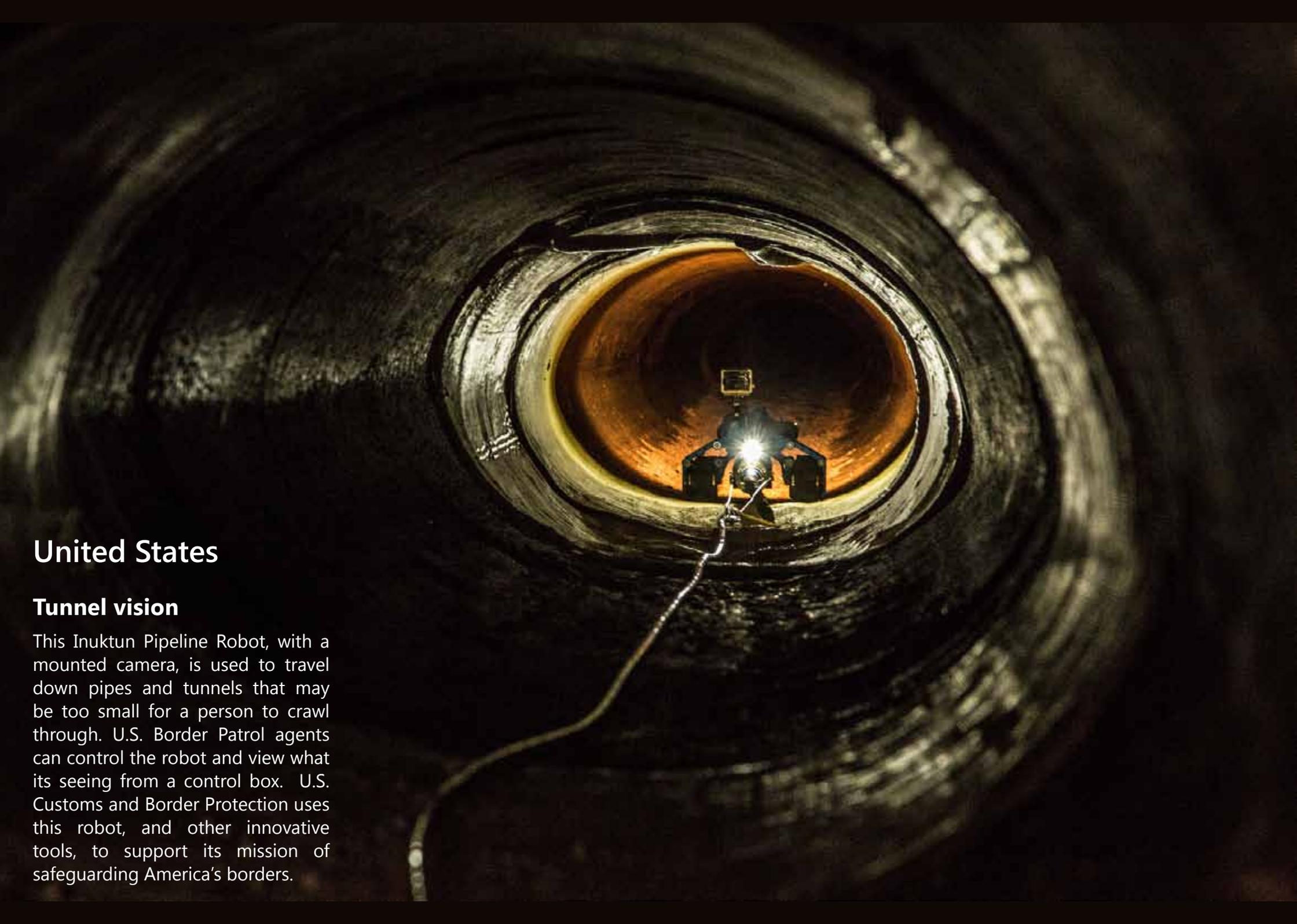




Uganda

The power of information sharing

The effects of plastic bags on the environment are devastating. In a bid to protect the environment, these contraband polythene bags were intercepted after a tip off by an informer to the marine team at Lake Victoria. Despite the lack of necessary equipment, the team managed to intercept these goods using a canoe. In the photo, an officer is offloading the intercepted plastic bags.



United States

Tunnel vision

This Inuktun Pipeline Robot, with a mounted camera, is used to travel down pipes and tunnels that may be too small for a person to crawl through. U.S. Border Patrol agents can control the robot and view what its seeing from a control box. U.S. Customs and Border Protection uses this robot, and other innovative tools, to support its mission of safeguarding America's borders.