



## 2021 16<sup>th</sup> Annual WCO PICARD Conference CALL FOR PAPERS 9 - 10 December 2021

The World Customs Organization (WCO) is pleased to announce that the 16<sup>th</sup> annual WCO PICARD Conference will take place from 9 to 10 December 2021. The Conference will take place either as a web-based event or in a hybrid format hosted in Brussels, depending on the evolution of the global health situation. The format of the Conference will be communicated to participants by early November. The WCO PICARD Conference is an international platform to foster dialogue between the Customs and academic communities. The Conference welcomes Proposals for Papers and Panels.

### Themes of the Conference

The COVID-19 pandemic is a protracted and global crisis that has impacted international trade and border management. The WCO has responded to and helped address this evolving situation at each stage of the crisis (see [COVID-19 - WCO updates](#)), a recent example being [the Resolution adopted by WCO Members in December 2020](#). In accordance with the WCO's theme for the year 2021 – “Customs bolstering Recovery, Renewal and Resilience for a sustainable supply chain” – the Conference is seeking original and evidence-based contributions measuring the economic impact of the crisis and drawing lessons for administrations and policy-makers since the outbreak in 2020, from the following different perspectives:

- 1) **Economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and Customs measures.** Submissions responding to the matters listed below would be appreciated:
  - How has the crisis impacted, locally and globally, trade practices and flows? Has regional trade been favoured or not by the crisis?
  - What has been the impact of fiscal and Customs measures on revenue collection, particularly the exemptions granted to goods used to respond to the pandemic?
  - What has been the impact of the crisis on e-commerce, in terms of volume and kinds of goods?
  - How can Customs administrations contribute to governments' actions and decision-making processes, including crisis monitoring and border controls? Has the crisis been an opportunity to develop new tools or techniques?
  
- 2) **Lessons learnt from the COVID-19 pandemic for Customs.** Submissions responding to the matters listed below would be appreciated:
  - What was the preparedness and response capacity of Customs administrations, given that Customs are already driven by speediness and risk analysis? Comparative analysis would be appreciated, particularly concerning borders where Customs cooperate with other State bodies.
  - What have been the effects of the crisis on Customs working and management practices? How have Customs administrations implemented distance working?
  - How has the crisis impacted cross-border cooperation and relationships with trade stakeholders?



- How has the sanitary crisis impacted other domains, such as border security, illicit trafficking or conflict with major regional changes (e.g. Brexit in Europe)?
- Is the crisis accelerating or re-orienting reforms and evolutions in Customs? Are these changes limited in time or permanent?

**3) Data analytics.** Customs process large quantities of data on a daily basis. The digital revolution, which continues to expand at a ferocious pace in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, is generating exponential opportunities in terms of data access, capture, aggregation and analysis. Submissions mobilizing Customs data with innovative analytical methods, responding to the matters listed below, would be appreciated:

- Analysis of data that can provide a robust foundation for pursuing the core Customs objectives of revenue collection, border security, collection of trade statistics, trade facilitation and integrity.
- Blending domain knowledge of Customs with open-source tools and even algorithms of data science that improve Customs performance, as driven by the WCO “BACUDA” project since 2019 and the “WCO Capacity Building Framework for Data Analytics” since 2020.
- Utilization of technologies that improve the quantity and quality of data.
- Introduction of novel technologies/data-collection techniques/data sources which have been under-utilized or unnoticed and have proved useful within Customs.

**4)** Although the main topics of the Conference are the COVID-19 pandemic and data analytics, **contributions that are related to other topics of interest for the Customs community would be appreciated**, including emerging technologies and digitalization, the circular economy and a greener approach to economic recovery, security, integrity, border management and cooperation with border agencies.

The Conference welcomes and encourages attendance and submissions from Customs professionals, as well as researchers from various academic disciplines, such as anthropology, criminology, economics, geography, history, international relations and international trade, law, mathematics and political science. The WCO Research Unit is particularly interested in developing interdisciplinary approaches and strongly welcomes Papers co-authored by Customs officials and academics.

## Submission process

Applicant submissions can include (1) Presentation Summaries of up to 1,000 words; (2) Papers of up to 9,000 words; or (3) Proposals for Panels. Papers will not have any inherent advantage over Presentation Summaries.

To respond to this Call for Papers, please submit Presentation Summaries, Papers or Panel Proposals by email to [picard2021@wcoomd.org](mailto:picard2021@wcoomd.org), no later than 31 August 2021, with the following details:

- Name, title, and biography (maximum 250 words) of researcher or researchers.
- Current position, organization, and country of researcher or researchers.
- Contact email and telephone.



- Proposed title of contribution.
- For Papers of more than 1,000 words, an abstract of no more than 300 words is required.

Submissions should be submitted in accordance with following requirements:

- Arial font size 11.
- Submissions should be in English or French.

Translation/interpretation will be provided at the Conference in English and French.

### **Important deadlines**

- Paper Submission Deadline: **31 August 2021**
- Notification to Authors: **8 October 2021**
- Conference Dates: **9 - 10 December 2021**

The WCO is particularly grateful for the support from:

- The Korea Customs Service for its donor support; and
- The PICARD Scientific Board Members, including Emmanuel Brunet-Jailly, Cyril Chalendard, Grégoire Rota Graziosi, Juha Hintsa, Jeffrey Snyder, and David Widdowson, for participating in the selection of papers.

If you have any questions or concerns, please email [picard2021@wcoomd.org](mailto:picard2021@wcoomd.org).

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