

Good practices in facilitating the cross-border movement of inputs and components used for the manufacturing, distribution and administering of COVID-19 vaccines

Belgian Customs Administration

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Belgian Customs has procedures in place with the Federal Agency for Medicines and Health Products. A taskforce is installed to monitor closely and act accordingly on indicated risks and problems. Furthermore, there is regular contact with the private sector through the private sector consultative body that is called the National Forum.

Belgium implemented measures 6 and 10 successfully and indeed still maintains direct contact lines between public services (customs, drug agency, public service of Economy) and the producers/exporters. In addition, a bespoke IT dashboard system was developed to quickly register and monitor the exports as the Belgian administration was tasked to enforce the EU Export policy on COVID-19 vaccines (Regulation (EU) 2021/442 and Implementing Regulation (EU) 2021/521 related to the mechanism making certain products subject to the production of an export authorization).

From the start of the pandemic, the National Forum, Belgiums National Committee on Trade Facilitation (NCTF), held scheduled meetings with industry and logistics to mitigate the impact on the logistics and customs as much as possible. This open discussion was also held with the pharmaceutical sector to understand and respond to the needs of cross border movement of precursors and vaccines.

On a company level, customs was informed in advance on incoming shipments, which enabled customs to prepare controls, check licenses and minimize any delays in the import of export of the flows.