Evaluation of the European Customs Inventory of Chemical Substances (ECICS)

Fields marked with * are mandatory.

1 Introduction

Please note: In order to ensure a fair and transparent consultation process, only responses received through this online questionnaire will be taken into account and included in the report summarising the responses. Should you have a problem completing this questionnaire or if you require particular assistance, please contact TAXUD-DDS-ECICS@ec.europa.eu.

The general rules on personal data protection on the EUROPA website are accessible here.

Purpose of the consultation

ECICS, the European Customs Inventory of Chemical Substances is an information tool managed by the European Commission's Directorate-General for Taxation and Customs Union (DG TAXUD). ECICS allows users to:

- clearly and easily identify chemicals;
- classify them correctly and easily in the Combined Nomenclature; and
- name them in all EU languages for regulation purposes.

DG TAXUD has commissioned an evaluation to assess how well ECICS meets the needs of its users and whether it continues to be justified.

This open public consultation is your opportunity to contribute to the evaluation. The results will inform decisions on the future of ECICS. Please note that the consultation only covers the public website, not the secure (CCN/CSI) version of ECICS. A separate questionnaire for users of the secure version of ECICS will seek the views of its users (national customs authorities and laboratories).

Scope of the consultation

This questionnaire takes about 10 minutes to complete. It is structured as follows:

1. The first part of the survey asks for some background information about you, the respondent. This is in order to better understand your perspective, expectations and needs in relation to ECICS.

2. The second part of the survey is aimed at understanding how you use ECICS.

3. The third part looks at the benefits of using ECICS and asks about other options you could use to find the information contained in ECICS.

4. The last part section asks about how satisfied you are with ECICS, any difficulties you encounter and your views on how ECICS could be improved.

5. At the end of the questionnaire, you have the opportunity to upload a position paper or any other supporting documentation you consider relevant for the evaluation.

2 Personal data

* 2.1 Please note: The European Commission will prepare a report summarising the responses. Contributions received are thus intended for publication on the Commission's website.

Please choose between the following two options:

Note that, whatever option chosen, your answers may be subject to a request for public access to documents under Regulation (EC) N°1049/2001

○ **My reply can be published under my name/the name of the organisation on behalf of which I reply:** I consent the publication of all information in my contribution in whole or in part including my name or my organisation's name, and I declare that nothing within my response is unlawful or would infringe the rights of any third party in a manner that would prevent publication.

○ **My reply can be published provided that I/the organisation on behalf of which I reply remain anonymous:** I consent to the publication of any information in my contribution in whole or in part (which may include quotes or opinions I express) provided that it is done anonymously. I declare that nothing within my response is unlawful or would infringe the rights of any third party in a manner that would prevent the publication.

We would like to know who you are in order to better understand your views, expectations and needs in relation to the European Customs Inventory of Chemical Substances (ECICS). By answering these questions, you will help us to analyse the questionnaire results and put your experiences with ECICS into context.

2.2 Please indicate **your name, or the name of your company, organisation, or institution** for which you respond to this consultation.

2.3 In case we have questions regarding answers or remarks you provide, **can we contact you?**

○ Yes
○ No

2.4 Please indicate your email address (optional).

Your email address will not be published.

2.5 Please select whether you participate in this consultation as or on behalf of:

○ Business
○ Trade / business / professional association
○ Public authority, public institution, customs laboratory
○ International organisation
○ Private citizen
○ Other - please specify

2.6 Please specify

- ○ Academic institution
- ○ Non-governmental organisation
- ○ Not listed - please specify

2.7 Please specify

500 character(s) maximum

[text box]

2.8 Please indicate the **size of your business** in terms of current number of employees

- ○ **1 - 9** employees, including self-employed
- ○ **10 - 49** employees
- ○ **50 - 249** employees
- ○ **250 or more** employees

2.9 Which of the following best describes **your business' main economic activities**?

Tick all that apply

- ☐ **Importer and exporter** - Importers (including direct consumers) source products from exporters overseas, thereby initiating the import process. Exporters source EC products and commence the export process to allow for their sale in overseas markets.
- ☐ **Cargo and logistics provider** - This sector provides services to the public and industry service providers relating to the movement of goods and cargo, including freight forwarding, express carriers, logistics, warehousing and consolidation.
- ☐ **Carrier** - Includes the owners and operators responsible for the control of any vessel that transports people and goods from one port to another. This includes passenger and cargo airlines, and container and bulk shipping lines.
- ☐ **Customs broker** - Customs brokers arrange border clearance of goods on behalf of importers and exporters, and are responsible for clearing goods through customs and quarantine before they reach the Common market.
- ☐ **Port infrastructure** - Includes the owners and operators of infrastructure at European air and sea ports, as well as services related services, systems and facilities.
- ☐ **Manufacturer** / **producer** - Manufacturers and producers that are EU-based entities that produce goods for the EU-market that may also be exported.
- ☐ **Consultancy - customs.** Service providers of customs expertise.
- ☐ **Consultancy - chemicals.** Service providers of chemical expertise.
- ☐ **Other** - Please specify.
- ☐ **I don't know.**

2.10 Please specify which other type of activity would best describe your business

500 character(s) maximum

[text box]

2.11 Please specify the type of public authority or public institution

- ○ National customs administration (headquarters / central customs administration)
- ○ Local customs office
- ○ Customs laboratory
- ○ Other public authority or public institution

2.12 Is your organisation **registered in the Transparency Register**?

If your organisation is not registered, we invite you to register here. More information on the Transparency Register can be found here.

- ○ Yes
- ○ No

2.13 Please indicate your Register ID number

2.14 **Where do you live, where is the headquarters of your organisation** (main headquarters in the case of multinational companies), **or where is your public authority located?**

- ○ Austria
- ○ Belgium
- ○ Bulgaria
- ○ Croatia
- ○ Cyprus
- ○ Czech Republic
- ○ Denmark
- ○ Estonia
- ○ Finland
- ○ France
- ○ Germany
- ○ Greece
- ○ Hungary
- ○ Ireland
- ○ Italy
- ○ Latvia
- ○ Lithuania
- ○ Luxembourg
- ○ Malta
- ○ Netherlands
- ○ Poland
- ○ Portugal
- ○ Romania
- ○ Slovak Republic
- ○ Slovenia
- ○ Spain
- ○ Sweden
- ○ United Kingdom
- ○ China
- ○ India
- ○ Israel
- ○ Japan
- ○ Mexico
- ○ Russia
- ○ Switzerland
- ○ United States of America
- ○ Other - please specify

2.15 Please specify

500 character(s) maximum

2.16 My company or organisation operates in:

Tick all that apply

- ☐ EU-wide
- ☐ Austria
- ☐ Belgium
- ☐ Bulgaria
- ☐ Croatia
- ☐ Cyprus
- ☐ Czech Republic
- ☐ Denmark
- ☐ Estonia
- ☐ Finland
- ☐ France
- ☐ Germany
- ☐ Greece
- ☐ Hungary
- ☐ Ireland
- ☐ Italy
- ☐ Latvia
- ☐ Lithuania
- ☐ Luxembourg
- ☐ Malta
- ☐ Netherlands
- ☐ Poland
- ☐ Portugal
- ☐ Romania
- ☐ Slovak Republic
- ☐ Slovenia
- ☐ Spain
- ☐ Sweden
- ☐ United Kingdom
- ☐ China
- ☐ India
- ☐ Israel
- ☐ Japan
- ☐ Mexico
- ☐ Russia
- ☐ Switzerland
- ☐ United States of America
- ☐ Other (non-EU) - please specify
- ☐ I don't know

2.17 Please specify

500 character(s) maximum

3 Understanding how you use ECICS

We are interested in knowing for what purpose you use ECICS, what information you are looking for and how often you consult the database.

3.1 **How many people use ECICS** in your organisation?

If you are a private citizen, please select the first option
- ○ One person
- ○ 2-3 people
- ○ 4-5 people
- ○ 6-10 people
- ○ More than 10 people
- ○ I don't know

3.2 On average, **how often do you** or does the organisation which you represent **use ECICS**?
- ○ Every day
- ○ Several times a week
- ○ Once a week
- ○ 1-3 times a month
- ○ Less than once a month
- ○ I don't know

3.3 **How do you search** for a chemical substance in ECICS?

Select all that apply
- ☐ **By name or description** (for example DDT (ISO - International Organization for Standardization), clofenotane (INN - International Nonproprietary Name), 1,1'-(2,2,2-trichloroethane-1,1-diyl)bis(4-chlorobenzene) (IUPAC - International Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry Name))
- ☐ **By HS or CN code** - HS: the World Customs Organisation's Harmonised System nomenclature; CN: the EU's Combined Nomenclature for classifying goods
- ☐ **By CUS number** - Assigned by the European Union as an identifier to communicate with customs
- ☐ **By CAS RN** - The Chemical Abstracts Service Registry Number
- ☐ **By EC number** - The European Community number is a unique seven-digit identifier assigned to substances for regulatory purposes within the European Union
- ☐ **Other -** please specify
- ☐ **No opinion**/ **I don't know**

3.4 Please specify any other search criterion you would use.

500 character(s) maximum

3.5 For what purpose(s) do you consult ECICS?

Select all that apply

- [ ] To **identify the Combined Nomenclature (CN) code** (for a customs declaration related to the European Union)
- [ ] To **identify the Harmonized System (HS) code** (for a customs declaration not related to the European Union)
- [ ] To identify the **correct name of a product** (for example DDT (ISO - International Organization for Standardization), clofenotane (INN - International Nonproprietary Name), 1,1'-(2,2,2-trichloroethane-1,1-diyl)bis(4-chlorobenzene) (IUPAC - International Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry Name))
- [ ] To **translate the product** name
- [ ] To **identify the CUS** (Customs Union and Statistics) number assigned by the European Union as an identifier to communicate with customs
- [ ] To **find another identifier** (for example CAS RN, UN number)
- [ ] To identify **the chemical structure** of a product
- [ ] To obtain **physical or chemical information** on a product and its composition
- [ ] To understand **which regulations apply** to a specific chemical
- [ ] To find information about **hazardous substances**
- [ ] Other - please specify

3.6 Please specify what other information you are searching for.

3.7 Now, please **rank the five top tasks** for which you use ECICS most frequently (with '1' being the most frequent task, '2' the second most frequent, etc.)

	1st most frequent task	2nd most frequent task	3rd most frequent task	4th most frequent task	5th most frequent task
To **identify the Combined Nomenclature (CN) code** (for a customs declaration related to the European Union)	◉	◉	◉	◉	◉
To **identify the Harmonized System (HS) code** (for a customs declaration not related to the European Union)	◉	◉	◉	◉	◉
To **identify the correct name** of a product (for example DDT (ISO - International Organization for Standardization), clofenotane (INN - International Nonproprietary Name), 1,1'-(2,2,2-trichloroethane-1,1-diyl)bis(4-chlorobenzene) (IUPAC - International Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry Name))	◉	◉	◉	◉	◉

To **translate** the product name	◉	◉	◉	◉	◉
To **identify CUS numbers** (Customs Union and Statistics number) assigned by the European Union as an identifier to communicate with customs	◉	◉	◉	◉	◉
To **find another identifier** (for example CAS RN, UN number)	◉	◉	◉	◉	◉
To **identify the chemical structure** of a product	◉	◉	◉	◉	◉
To obtain **physical or chemical information** on a product and its composition	◉	◉	◉	◉	◉
To **understand what regulations apply** to a specific chemical	◉	◉	◉	◉	◉
To find **information about hazardous substances**	◉	◉	◉	◉	◉
Other - please specify	◉	◉	◉	◉	◉

3.8 Please specify the "other" task(s) you use ECICS for

500 character(s) maximum

3.9 Which **type(s) of products** contained in ECICS are you interested in?

Select all that apply

- [ ] Pure and defined chemicals
- [ ] Mixtures, preparations and consumer products (products containing several compounds or ready to use or in doses…)
- [ ] Natural substances, plant extracts
- [ ] Minerals and ores
- [ ] Bio-chemicals, proteins, DNA
- [ ] Polymers
- [ ] INN pharmaceuticals and their salts and esters
- [ ] Intermediate compounds used in the manufacture of pharmaceuticals
- [ ] ISO pesticides and other plant protection products
- [ ] Colour Index dyes and pigments
- [ ] Narcotic and psychotropic substances and their precursors
- [ ] Toxic/dangerous chemicals controlled under the Chemical Weapons Convention
- [ ] Ozone-depleting substances
- [ ] Chemicals subject to the international prior informed consent (PIC) procedure
- [ ] Other products subject to import/export controls
- [ ] Other, please specify

3.10 Please specify

500 character(s) maximum

4 Satisfaction with ECICS and areas for development

4.1 To what extent **are you satisfied with ECICS** in terms of...

	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied	No opinion/ I don't know
the **coverage** of chemicals?	○	○	○	○	○
the **content** i.e. the tariff classification and the various types of data (names, identifiers etc.) provided?	○	○	○	○	○
the **accuracy / reliability** of the data?	○	○	○	○	○
the **frequency of updates**?	○	○	○	○	○
the **user interface** / ease of navigation?	○	○	○	○	○
the **speed of the website** (time taken to load search results)?	○	○	○	○	○
the **guidance** on how to conduct searches and other explanatory information?	○	○	○	○	○

4.2 To what extent **do you agree** with the following statements?

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	No opinion/ I don't know
"**ECICS saves me / my organisation time** on chemical classification tasks"	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙
"Overall, **ECICS meets my / my organisation's needs** in terms of being able to correctly classify chemicals for customs purposes".	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙

4.3 If the content and interface of ECICS were to be improved, which of the following would you most prefer?

Please choose up to 5 options you consider the most relevant and rank them in order of preference:

'1' being your most preferred option, '2' your second most preferred option etc.

	1st most preferred	2nd most preferred	3rd most preferred	4th most preferred	5th most preferred
Improve the coverage of chemicals (number of entries available)	○	○	○	○	○
Tariff classification in ECICS to be **legally binding**	○	○	○	○	○
Provide chemical names in **more languages**	○	○	○	○	○
Add **links to other databases** such as REACH	○	○	○	○	○
Add **links to legal acts**	○	○	○	○	○
Provide regulatory information on a product (Is there any restriction or ban? Do I need an authorisation or a license? Where can I find more information?)	○	○	○	○	○
Provide **safety information** related to handling chemicals	○	○	○	○	○
More frequent updates of the information in ECICS	○	○	○	○	○
More user-friendly interface	○	○	○	○	○
Other, please specify	○	○	○	○	○

4.4 As you have other suggestions for improvement, please specify

500 character(s) maximum

5 Alternatives to ECICS

Imagine the public version ECICS was unavailable.

5.1 Which of the following alternative methods and sources would you use to find the information you normally look for in ECICS?

Please pick up to five methods/sources you would consider and rank them: '1st' for the most important, followed by a '2nd' and '3rd' and so on as appropriate.

	1st choice	2nd choice	3rd choice	4th choice	5th choice
I would use the **secure version of ECICS** (which I can access through the Common Communication Network - CCN)	○	○	○	○	○
I would consult **other available databases / chemicals catalogues / publications**	○	○	○	○	○
I would **contact a customs authority** (central administration or local customs office)	○	○	○	○	○
I would **contact the TAXUD DDS** (Data Dissemination System) **mailbox** for help	○	○	○	○	○
I would **contact another expert** (e.g. private customs advisor or scientific consultant)	○	○	○	○	○
I would **try to classify the product myself**	○	○	○	○	○
Other - please specify	○	○	○	○	○

5.2 If other, please specify

500 character(s) maximum

5.3 Using the method / source you identified above as most important: how much time (on average) would it take you to identify / classify a chemical?

- ○ **Up to 5 minutes**
- ○ More than 5 minutes but **no more than 1 hour**
- ○ More than 1 hour but **no more than 1 working day**
- ○ **More than 1 working day**
- ○ No opinion / don't know
- ○ Other, please specify

5.4 Please specify

500 character(s) maximum

5.5 Do you/ does your organisation currently pay a **subscription fee for access to any databases that encode chemical substances**?

- ○ Yes
- ○ No
- ○ No opinion/ I don't know

5.6 Assume users were charged to access ECICS.
   Would you/your organisation still use ECICS if you had to pay to access it?

- ○ Yes
- ○ Yes, but only if it were improved
- ○ No
- ○ No opinion/ I don't know

6

Document upload and final comments

6.1 Should you wish to provide additional information (e.g. a position paper, report) or raise specific points not covered by the questionnaire, you can upload your document here.

Please note that the uploaded document will be published alongside your response to the questionnaire which is the essential input to this open public consultation. The document is an optional complement and serves as additional background reading to better understand your position.

6.2 If you wish to add further information - within the scope of this questionnaire - please feel free to do so here.

2000 character(s) maximum