

## World Customs Organization (WCO)

### Key features

**Type of organisation:** Inter-governmental organisation

**Charter/Constitution:** Convention establishing a Customs Co-operation Council, [www.wcoomd.org/en/about-us/legal-instruments/~media/7E31EB9C9DC24D7984C217508F05D9E8.ashx](http://www.wcoomd.org/en/about-us/legal-instruments/~media/7E31EB9C9DC24D7984C217508F05D9E8.ashx)

**Membership:**

- Nature: Representatives from customs administration (usually from specific national agencies or the ministries of finance)
- Number: 182 members

**Year of establishment:** 1952

**Headquarters:** Brussels, Belgium

**Secretariat staff:** 194(2017)

**Total budget:** EUR 15.9 million<sup>1</sup> (members' contributions for 2017/2018) plus EUR 20.9 million (voluntary contributions from donors as available for projects in April 2017)

**Type of activity:** Policy dialogue, data collection and analysis, information exchange, development of legal instruments and standards

**Sectors of activity:** All customs matters, including customs procedures aimed at facilitating and securing trade, capacity building

**Webpage:** [www.wcoomd.org](http://www.wcoomd.org)

### Members

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bahamas, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bermuda, Bhutan, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Curaçao, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, European Union, Fiji, Finland, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, France, Gabon, Gambia, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Hong Kong (China), Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Korea, Kosovo, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libya, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Macau (China), Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Moldova, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Palestine, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Romania, Russia, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Samoa, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Somalia, South Africa, South Sudan, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Tanzania, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Uganda, Ukraine, United Kingdom, United Arab Emirates, United States, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

### Observers

Seventy eight IGOs and international customs/trade related associations have Observer status at WCO.

#### Mandate

The WCO's mission is to improve the effectiveness and the efficiency of its members across the globe. While three-quarters of its members are developing countries, the WCO's combined membership is collectively responsible for managing and processing more than 98% of world trade. The responsibilities linked to the international movement of goods, people and means of transport have expanded and will continue to do so, ranging from traditional Customs activities such as the collection of revenue to activities as diverse as environmental protection, combating drug trafficking and money laundering, and ensuring supply chain and revenue security.

<sup>1</sup> Seven WCO Members were inactive as from 1 July 2017

## IRC processes taking place within the World Customs Organization



## Categories of legal and policy instruments

	Is it taking place within the IO?	Approximate number
Treaties for ratification by States (excluding the funding one)	√	5 currently active
Legally binding decisions	√	
Recommendations	√	80
Political declarations	√	30
Model treaties or law	√	
Production of technical standards	√	9
Non-binding guidance/best practices document	√	

## Interactions with other international organisations active in the field

Mechanisms of interaction	Approximate number of IOs involved	Examples
Develop joint instruments		
MoU or other agreements	√ 90	World Bank, ICC (International Criminal Court), Interpol, AU (African Union), ISO,
Participate in co-ordinating institution	√	IATA, BIC (Bureau International des Containers et du Transport Intermodal),
Joint meetings that provide forum for co-ordination	√	ICAO (International Civil Aviation Organization), WHO, FAO, etc.
Observe relevant actions of other bodies	√	
Exchange information	√	

### WCO history

Born after the Second World War out of a desire by countries to re-launch world trade, and to provide a platform for the discussion of Customs issues, the WCO was officially established in 1952 as the Customs Co-operation Council. It held its first meeting on 26 January 1953. Since then the Organization has grown from its original 17 founding members to encompass a truly global membership now numbering 182.

Source: Updated from OECD (2016), *International Regulatory Co-operation: The Role of International Organisations in Fostering Better Rules of Globalisation*, OECD Publishing, Paris. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264244047-en>