



REPUBLIC OF NORTH MACEDONIA
MINISTRY OF FINANCE
CUSTOMS ADMINISTRATION

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**STRATEGY
ON ENHANCEMENT OF THE AUTHORISED ECONOMIC OPERATOR
STATUS
2021-2023**

July 2021



Contents

1.	INTRODUCTION.....	4
2.	STRATEGIC PRIORITIES.....	7
3.	ACTIVITIES	7
4.	FINAL PROVISIONS.....	9



Document History				
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Reference documents	
Reference	Document Title
International Agreements	Central European Free Trade Agreement - CEFTA Additional Protocol 5
Laws	Law on the Customs Administration „Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia“ no 46/04, 81/05, 107/07, 103/08, 64/09, 105/09, 48/10, 158/10, 53/11, 113/12, 43/14, 167/14, 33/15, 61/15, 129/15, 23/16 and 120/18
	Customs Law „ Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia“ no.39/25; 4/08; 48/10; 158/10; 44/11; 53/11, 11/12, 171/12, 187/13, 15/15, 129/15, 154/15, 192/15, 23/16 and 144/18
Strategic plan	Strategic plan of the Customs Administration of the Republic of North Macedonia 2021-2023
Decision	Decision of the CEFTA Agreement Joint Committee no. 1/2019 on establishing a procedure for validation of the AEO program of the CEFTA parties in relation to the AEOS
Report	Report on mutual recognition of the Authorized Economic Operator Program by CEFTA validation team

Acronyms	Meaning
CEFTA	Central European Free Trade Agreement
AP5	Additional Protocol 5
AEO	Authorized Economic Operator
AEOS	Authorized Economic Operator Safety and Security
AEOC	Authorized Economic Operator – Customs Simplifications



Pursuant to Article 7 paragraph 4 of the Law on Customs Administration ("Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia" No. 46/04, 81/05, 107/07, 103/08, 64/09, 105/09, 48/10, 158 / 10, 53/11, 113/12, 43/14, 167/14, 33/15, 61/15, 129/15, 23/16, 120/18, 248/18 and 122/21) the Director General of the Customs Administration of the Republic of North Macedonia adopted

STRATEGY ON THE ENHANCEMENT OF THE AUTHORISED ECONOMIC OPERATOR STATUS 2021-2023

1. INTRODUCTION

The Law Ratifying the Additional Protocol 5 to the Agreement on the Amendment of and the Accession to the Central European Free Trade Agreement was adopted and published in the Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia No. 12 of 18 January 2018.

Annex 3 of the Additional Protocol 5 refers to Authorized Economic Operator (AEO), the criteria and conditions for issuing an authorisation, the types of authorisations, the benefits provided to holders, the conditions for revocation, annulment and amendment of authorisation, supervision and the possibility of mutual recognition of the granted authorisation in the CEFTA parties.

Annex 3 of the Additional Protocol 5 is fully in line with the relevant provisions of the Customs Code of the European Union (Union Customs Code UCC) as well as the relevant provisions of the Delegated Regulation and the Implementing Regulation.

The decision of the CEFTA Agreement Joint Committee no. 1/2019 was adopted on 18th December 2019. This Decision establishes the procedure for mutual recognition of AEO programs in the CEFTA parties that refer to AEOS.¹

¹ Published on the CEFTA Secretariat on the following link <https://cefta.int/legal-documents/#1463498231136-8f9d234f-15f9>



According to Decision no. 1/2019 the Customs Administration submitted a request to start the procedure for validation of the AEO program to the CEFTA Secretariat in 2020, on grounds of which, on 18-21.01.2021 a validation mission was conducted by a team selected by the CEFTA Secretariat and respectively a Report was submitted to the Customs Administration, giving a positive assessment of the established AEO program in the Republic of North Macedonia.

The further affirmation and promotion of the concept itself is part of the Strategic Plan of the Customs Administration of the Republic of North Macedonia 2021-2023 no. 01-015113/21-0001 dated 17.03.2021, item 5.1.3 - Providing simple and predictable procedures and formalities.

By enhancing the status of AEO, conditions are created for the realization of the strategic priorities of this Strategy, in order to raise the level and significance of the status for the holders of authorisations, customs officers and future holders of authorisations.

By July 2021, the Customs Administration has granted a total of 18 AEO authorisations, of which:

- 13 authorisations for customs simplifications/safety and security – AEOC/AEOS;
- 2 authorisations for customs simplifications – AEOC;
- 3 authorisations for safety and security – AEOS.



According to the roles in the international supply chain that the AEO holders have, they can be classified in the following categories:

- Customs agent and customs warehouse holder - 7 holders;
- Manufacturer and exporter - 4 holders;
- Customs agent - 3 holders;
- Carrier - 3 holders;
- Importer - 1 holder.



2. STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

The enhancement of the concept of authorized economic operator and the full implementation of the benefits in the customs area and in the CEFTA region, which it offers to the holders of approvals, enables the realization of the strategic priorities of this Strategy, as follows:

- Concluding agreements for mutual recognition of the AEO program;
- Trade facilitation for holders of AEO authorisations;
- More efficient implementation of customs procedures by the employees of the Customs Administration;
- Establishing a partnership with the holders of AEO authorisations;
- Increasing the number of authorization holders that perform different roles in the international supply chain.

3. ACTIVITIES

Achieving the strategic goals depends on taking action in multiple segments.

3.1 Harmonization of the national legislation with the amendments in the EU AEO related legislation

- Preparation of a draft amendment to the Customs Law Implementing Regulation in accordance with the amendments to the European Union Implementing regulation of Article 24 no. 2020/1717

3.2 Update of the internal acts

- Harmonization of the AEO Guide in accordance with the adopted amendments to the Customs Law Implementing Regulation and harmonization with version 7 of the EU AEO Guide and establishment of an AEO compact model for risk analysis (DG TAXUD / 1452/13 of 13.06.2006);
- Update the Procedure for issuing AEO authorisations with segments related to conducting controls upon submitted request and monitoring of authorisations based on risk analysis;



- Ensure reduced physical controls and reduced document controls in relation to other economic operators;
- Analysis of the possibility for structural and continuous exchange of information between the organizational units of the Customs Administration and risk information with other state agencies;
- Ensure priority in performing the controls of the authorized economic operators, by defining a procedure in the internal instructions for customs clearance of goods.

3.3 Interinstitutional cooperation

- Preparation of Memoranda of Understanding / cooperation with other state agencies that will aim to include benefits for AEO holders and exchange of information.

3.4 IT system

- Improving the functionality of the system for economic operators and management of AEO authorisations and exchange of a common data set related to mutual recognition of AEO between CEFTA member states, in accordance with Annex 1, Annex 3 of AP5.

3.5 Transparency

- Reorganization of the website of the Customs Administration by placing the logo "authorized economic operator" published with the AEO Guide on the home page, in order to increase the accessibility of the AEO-related information for the interested entities;
- Publication of all activities related to the enhancement of AEO status.

3.6 Organization

- Preparation of a draft amendments to the Rulebook on organization and work in the Customs Administration and the Rulebook on job post systematization in the Customs Administration with the work obligation and competence of the participants in the process of control, granting, monitoring and re-evaluation of AEO authorisation;
- Increasing the number of employees involved in the process of implementation of control, granting, monitoring and re-evaluation of issued AEO authorisation.

3.7 Training

- Organizing and conducting training events for all customs officers on the AEO status with emphasis on the necessary criteria to be met for acquiring the status and benefits for the AEO status holder;
- Organizing training events for the participants in the process of granting safety and security authorisations, financial solvency and IT security.

3.8 Workshops

- Organizing workshops for possible holders of the status of AEO, chambers of commerce and state agencies at central and regional level.

4. FINAL PROVISIONS

The measurability of the realization of this Strategy and the implementation of the foreseen activities shall be done through 01.10.00.ST.045.01-OB.01.01 Action Plan which is an integral part of this Strategy.

The action plan contains the identified activities, responsible persons/entities for their realization, performance indicators and the necessary deadlines for implementation.

The responsible persons/entities for the activity inform the Director General of the Customs Administration on a quarterly basis, by the 5th working day in the new quarter, about the realized activities in the previous quarter.



With the signing of this Strategy, the Strategy for development of the concept authorized economic operator no. 01-067927 / 18-0001 of 09.08.2018 ceases to be valid.

This Strategy shall enter into force on the day of its signing.

Acting Director General
Goran Sugareski, MSc

No. 01-067927/18-0002
Skopje, 01.07.2021



The Strategy was prepared by:	Sector for Customs System, Department for Customs and Tax Procedures
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