

# **International Network of Customs Universities (INCUI) in Pacific Rim: Characteristics of Training and Prospects for Enhancing Network Cooperation**

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The world-wide globalization increasingly contributes to the expansion of such a strictly European phenomenon in education as Bologna declaration, in the geographically distant countries with cultures dissimilar to European ones. It is true for the Asia-Pacific region. There are many universities providing training in various areas of science, production, management and the like for decades in the Pacific Rim countries. Keeping alive their national and cultural traditions, they are fully adapted to adopt the principles of Bologna education system and quite successfully develop the network communication on its basis. Alongside this process, since recently another network of education centers, so called International Network of Customs Universities (INCUI), has been created and has been separately developing. The author analyzes and gives his own vision of the development prospects.

The significance of customs as a government institution inevitably contributed to the development of the national training and retraining systems. Some Customs administrations and academic institutions have recognized that there is a distinct set of knowledge, skills and behaviours that are needed to serve Customs unique role in a Government, regulating international trade to meet national objectives, which can only be delivered through a more professional approach to development and career management. In 2005, the WCO Program for Partnership in Customs Academic Research and Development (PICARD) was launched in order to build general principles for training, conduct researches and develop customs matters, create a platform to share experience in science and customs training. In parallel, 17 academic institutions of customs training with support of WCO PICARD created the International Network of Customs Universities (INCUI), which currently embraces about 100 academic institutions.

PICARD in partnership with INCU produced a set of common principles and practices that could serve as common professional standards for targeted at professionalization of Customs. These professional standards for customs training were adopted by WCO in July, 2009. Today the standards can and are being used by the academic world to develop educational programmes which provide professional qualifications for Customs staff to BA and MBA Level.

Thus, the network of customs academic institutions works and promotes both annual conferences within the framework of PICARD, and publications, and implementation of professional standards in education. It is the environment of collaboration between the national customs administrations and regional customs authorities in Pacific Rim countries that encourages further network activities.

INCU academic institutions all over the world are different and it is true for the Pacific Rim countries. But INCU institutions in Pacific Rim can be characterized as:

1. Higher educational institutions of vocational customs education established by customs authorities on purpose:

- Shanghai Customs Academy – General Administration of Customs of the People's Republic of China;
- Vladivostok Branch of the Russian Customs Academy – the Federal Customs Service of Russian Federation.

SCA provides both 3-year Master's and 4-year Bachelor's degree programs. Vladivostok Branch offers 5-year program for training specialists for customs management.

2. Higher special educational institutions of higher education administered by universities:

- Lyceum of the Philippines University provides Bachelor degree's program in customs;
- College of Business Education and Training (CBET) of Asian Institute of Maritime Studies (AIMS) provides Bachelor of Science in Customs Administration;

- Department of International Business in Seowon University, Cheongju-city, offers the course of Customs Law (3 credits) for undergraduates;

- Centre for Customs and Excise Studies (CCES), University of Canberra, provides both Master's degree programs and Bachelor's degree programs and also trains specialists;

- Institute of Customs, Taxation and Border Management of Pannasastra University of Cambodia (PUC) offers Executive Master of Business Administration-Customs and Executive Master of Business Administration-Taxation;

- Massey University, Center for Defence and Security Studies in New Zealand provides Master's / Bachelor's / PhD degree programs and also trains specialists.

3. Educational institutions with the experiential learning system on customs administration affiliated by research establishments:

- Korea Customs and Trade Development Institute – the Korean customs service, Republic of Korea.

4. Training centers with experiential learning system:

- Customs Training Institute of Japan;

- Customs Border Control Training Center in Cheonan-si, Republic of Korea;

- Centre for Customs and Excise Studies, Bangkok, Thailand.

5. Institutions for Science and Research:

- Korea Research Society for Customs/ KRSC, Seoul, Republic of Korea.

The classification given above represents only part of INCU members, not the full list of the relevant institutions, but still features both general approaches to and differences in the educational objectives. There is a certain part of educational institutions such as university and academy which provide 4-year training of specialists for customs service (see para. 1-2) and meet the requirements of Bachelor academic degree (BA) and yet they can also offer 3-year non-degree program. There are education establishments specializing in separate kinds of activity, for example, radiation control. Training centers (para.4) offer several programs, including initial training (about 4-6 weeks), advanced training (about

two and a half months) and special one (up to 6 months) and also implement the extra short-term courses (from several days up to a month) for training specialists in customs. There is a full time course, part-time course and intra-extramural form of study that are given by full-time or part-time teachers as well as by experts from customs agencies. Thus, in most countries educational institutions for customs provide different levels of customs training from the initial to higher one: personnel training advanced training, academic degree.

The educational institutions with WCO Regional Training status are of different types: Shanghai Customs Academy; Customs Institute of Japan; Customs Border Control Training Center in Cheonan-si, Republic of Korea.

INCU often includes several educational institutions for customs of the same state. Besides, there is an interaction between local research establishments for customs («internal» network, for example, EMA/Education and Methodics Association in Russia).

The creation of customs universities network is a great advance on the path to convergence of customs education and future integration. But this process seems to be a long-term prospect. Nowadays we can see only a few results of interaction: boosting customs training to other countries by the University of Canberra; arranging courses and developing special programs in the Pacific Rim countries by the Customs Training Institute of Japan, signing memorandums and meetings of Vladivostok Branch of the Russian Customs Academy and Federal Customs Service of Russia with Shanghai Customs Academy of the General Customs Administrations of People's Republic of China and Korea Research Society for Customs, Republic of Korea. The Bachelor's degree programs for customs training carried out by many universities in Pacific Rim as well as MBA's degree programs for training customs officials initiated by the University of Canberra on the base of the University of Cambodia are a key factor for cooperation.