INTRODUCTION TO THE REGISTERED EXPORTER SYSTEM (REX)

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GENERALISED SYSTEM OF PREFERENCES
The Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) is a generalised and non-reciprocal preference scheme beneficial to developing countries (also known as preference receiving countries or beneficiary countries) extended by developed countries (also known as preference giving countries or donor countries). It involves reduced MFN (most favour nations) Tariffs or duty-free entry of eligible products exported by beneficiary countries to the markets of donor countries.

The main objectives of granting trade preferences to developing countries are to:
- Enhance their export earnings;
- Promote industrialization, and
- Encourage the diversification of their economies.

Switzerland
The Swiss Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) was first introduced on 1 March 1972 and was extended for an unlimited period in 2007. It covers all industrial goods and many agricultural products and provides preferential treatment in the form of reduction of or exemption from duty.

The Swiss GSP rules of origin are similar to the EU and Norway. Origin status is granted to products wholly obtained in the beneficiary country and to products manufactured from imported materials that are sufficiently worked or processed according to a specific list for each product.

Norway

The countries eligible to benefit from the Norwegian GSP are developing countries and are divided in three lists: a list of “least developed GSP-countries (LDCs)”, a list for “low income countries” and another list representing the “ordinary GSP-countries”.

The Norwegian GSP-scheme provides exporters from developing countries duty relief when exporting goods to Norway.

Proof of origin
• To obtain GSP preferential treatment for a product on importation to Norway or Switzerland, the originating status must be proved by satisfactory proof of origin

• Certificate Form A which must be certified by the Trade Division
As from 01 January 2019 and by 30 June 2020, the Certificate of Origin Form A and Declaration of Origin will gradually be phased out to be replaced by the REX Declaration of Origin.

The Registered Exporter System (REX) is a new system of certification of origin of goods that has been introduced by the European Union for the purpose of preferential trade arrangements.

At the first instance it is being applied to Generalised System of Preference (GSP) whereby Norway and Switzerland have been roped in the single system devised by the European Union.

The REX system simplifies export formalities by allowing the registered exporter to certify the preferential origin himself by including a specific declaration (statement of origin) on the invoice or another commercial document identifying the exported products.

Thus, the registered exporter does not need to apply upon each export for issue of a certificate of origin.

The application to become registered exporter is a one-off formality, where the exporter provides the necessary information for being registered. Once the REX number is assigned to him, the registered exporter may use it for all his exports under the preferential arrangements where the system of certification of origin is applied is the REX system.

The REX system takes the form of a web application accessed with a username and password through the internet and has been developed by the European Commission so that beneficiary countries do not have to develop their own repository of registered exporters.

Registered Exporter

Exporters from Mauritius who export goods under the GSP scheme to Norway and Switzerland with a value higher than €6,000.

For consignment of originating goods having a value below €6,000, the statement of origin can be made out by any exporter with no obligation to be registered.

It is a new self-certification system by exporters that will gradually replace the system of certification of origin issued by the Trade Division as from 01 January 2019 until 31 December 2019, with a possibility of a 6 month extension being granted.

Exporters have to be registered in the so-called registered exporter system: the REX system

• Registration is free of charge
• It is a one-time operation
• The exporter will be assigned a REX number and from then onwards be recognised as being a “registered exporter”.
• From 2019 onwards registered exporters will directly provide the traders with their statements of origin.
• The application of the REX system brings no change on rules for determining the origin.
• The same registration number will be valid for exporting with GSP tariff preference under the GSP scheme of Norway and Switzerland.
Procedures to become a registered exporter

- Either paper based application form
  Exporters must complete and submit the signed application form to the Trade Division if a paper based application form.

- Or pre-application based
  Exporters may use the pre-application mechanism which has been implemented to be able to prefill their registration application. The exporter will have to fill in the pre-application form via Internet (available on Europa web site) with a valid TIN number after which the exporter validates the information and saves the pre-application form. The exporter will need to print the pre-application, signs it and sends it to the Trade Division.

Exporters always need to send a paper copy of the application with hand-written signature.

Simple and easy to fill in by exporters

- TIN number (box 1): Trader Identification Number (an.17 starting with 2 letters country code)

Conditions for becoming registered exporter

- An application form should be completed and applied to the Trade Division

- Any exporter, manufacturer or trader of originating goods, established in Mauritius, is entitled to apply to the Trade Division to become a registered exporter, provided that he holds, at any time, appropriate evidence of origin of the products he intends to export, for the purpose of checks to be carried out by the customs authorities.

- The exporter should be an established and functional manufacturer or trader.

- The registered exporter should be able to submit at any time, at the request of the Trade Division, all appropriate document proving the originating status of the product concerned.

- The registered exporter should accept verification, by the Trade Division, of his accounting and the manufacturing process of the products.

The registered exporter should keep for at least three years copies of the statements on origin and supporting documents related to the statement of origin he has made out whereby the period starts from the end of the calendar year in which the statements of origin were made out.

The registered exporter should assume the entire responsibility of the use of his registration number.

The registered exporter should agree to inform the Trade Division about any alteration affecting his registered data.

The registered exporter can only have 1 active REX number at a time

If his REX status has been revoked and he applies again, he must have remedied to the situation which has led to this revocation.

Registration of the Exporter by the Trade Division

The exporter shall only be registered as soon as possible if the application form submitted by the exporter requesting his registration is complete and if all the information provided there in is correct.
**Application form**
The data requested from the exporter in the application form are
- exporter's name
- address
- identification number
- contact details-whether the exporter is a trader or a producer or both
- an indicative list of goods that the exporter intends to export under the preferential trade agreements

**Validity of Registration**
• The REX registration is valid from the date the complete application form is received and is not limited in time.
• The REX registration has no expiry date but can be revoked on an individual basis or at country level.
• If a registration is revoked, then a date from which the revocation will take effect will be provided by the Trade Division upon revocation.

**Modification of the Registration of an Exporter**
- A registered exporter has the obligation to communicate all changes on his registered data to the Trade Division.
- In order to request modification of his registration, the registered exporter should apply same in writing.
- The exporter would be informed in writing about the successful or unsuccessful modification of the registration.

The following data may be modified:
- Exporter's information: Name, Address, Email Address, Fax and Phone number
- Exporter's Contact Person Details
- Exporter's Activities
- Description of Goods
- Consent for publication

**Removal from the Registration of an Exporter**
A registered exporter shall ask in person to be removed from the REX system in the following cases:
- he does not meet the conditions required by the REX system
- he does not intend to use his registration number anymore
- the company ceases its operations

**Revocation of the Registration of an Exporter**
A registered exporter shall be revoked:
- If it is discovered that the registered exporter intentionally or negligently drew, or caused to be drawn up, a statement on origin which contains incorrect information.
- If the registered exporter does not exist anymore
- If the registered exporter no longer meets the conditions required by the REX system (failure to keep data up to date or serious shortcoming)
- If the registered exporter no longer meets the conditions for exporting goods under the GSP Scheme
- At the request of the exporter if he informs that he will not export goods under the GSP scheme
The registration number of an exporter which has been revoked must not be used for new registration of exporters. If an exporter who had been revoked applies again to be registered, a new registration number would be assigned, except in case of annulment of the revocation. Registration of a revoked registered exporter shall be done if the latter certifies that the situation that led to the revocation has been remedied and if he has provided correct data. When a revocation is annulled (because the exporter won an appeal against the revocation or because the revocation was done by mistake), the same (revoked) registration number may be reassigned to the exporter.

### Verifying the validity of registered exporters
The data of the REX system are published on the public website of DG TAXUD for consultation by economic operators:


- If the registered exporter has given his consent in his application form for publication of his data, then all data will be published on the public website of DG TAXUD:
  - Trader identification number (TIN)
  - Name of registered exporter
  - Address of the place where the registered exporter is established
  - Contact details of the registered exporter
  - Indicative description of the goods which qualify for preferential treatment

- If the registered exporter has not given this consent, then only anonymous subset of data will be published on the public website of DG TAXUD. The subset data comprised of:
  - the number of registered exporter and their registration number
  - the date from which the registration is valid
  - the date of revocation where applicable
  - information whether the registration applies to exports to Norway or Switzerland
  - the date of the last synchronisation between the REX system and the public website. The subset of data is sufficient to verify the validity of the registration number.

A statement on origin is valid if it is made out at a time when the registration of the registered exporter who made it out was valid. A statement on origin by a revoked registered exporter is admissible if it is made out before revocation.

### Statement on Origin

- The registered exporter making out a statement on origin should be able to declare and to prove the origin of the goods and to reply to request for verifications.
- If the registered exporter making out the statement on origin is not the producer (for instance, a trader), then he should have in his possession all necessary documents (supplier's declaration etc) allowing him to declare and to prove the origin of the goods, and to reply to request for verifications.
- No handwritten signature of the exporter is required on statements on origin.
- The statement on origin must clearly identify the name of the exporter.

A statement on origin and a replacement statement on origin are valid for 12 months from the date of completion, whereas a certificate of origin Form A, a replacement certificate of origin Form A, and an invoice declaration are valid for 10 months.

The statement on origin is made out by the registered exporter by typing, printing or stamping the text on the invoice or another commercial document identifying clearly the originating products and showing the name and full address of the exporter and consignee as well as a description of the products and the date of issue:

*The exporter ... of the products covered by this document declares that, except where otherwise clearly indicated, these products are ... of preferential origin (country of origin of products to be indicated) according to rules of origin of the Generalised System of Preferences of the Norway/Switzerland and that the origin criterion met is ...*
To summarise…

• The Registered Exporter system (the REX system) is the system of certification of origin of goods that is being applied in the Generalised System of Preference (GSP) of the Switzerland and Norway as from 1 January 2017 and would be effective in Mauritius as from 1 January 2019.
• It is based on a principle of self-certification by economic operators who will make out themselves so-called statements on origin.
• To be entitled to make out a statement on origin, an economic operator will have to be registered in a database by Trade Division. The economic operator will become a "registered exporter".

• The supporting IT system, which is called the REX system, made available by the European Commission, takes the form of an application accessed with a user and a password as a website through Internet.
• Exporters apply to become registered exporters by filling in an application form and by returning it to the Trade Division who will register exporters who submit complete and correct application forms.
• Once registered, a registered exporter has the obligation to communicate to the Trade Division authorities all changes on his registered data.

• In some cases, a registered exporter will be revoked from the REX system. This can happen for instance if the company ceases to exist or if the registered exporter commits fraud. Depending on the reason, the revocation will be done either on request of the registered exporter or on the initiative of the Trade Division

• To be entitled to make out a statement on origin, an economic operator needs to be registered in the REX system and to have a valid registration, i.e. a registration which is not revoked. It is however allowed that unregistered exporters make out statements on origin for consignments of originating goods having a value which is below EUR 6 000.

• A statement on origin is a declaration of origin added by the registered exporter on the invoice or any other commercial document. The text of the statement shall read as follows:
  • The exporter ... of the products covered by this document declares that, except where otherwise clearly indicated, these products are of ... (Country of origin) preferential origin according to rules of origin of the Generalised System of Preferences of the.... (Switzerland/Norway) and that the origin criterion met is .... *
  The fulfilled origin criterion must be indicated with
  • "P" or
  • "W" with a four-digit HS-number

**Publication of registered exporter's data**

• The data of the REX system will be published on the EU Commissions, Swiss Customs and Norwegian Customs websites.
• Economic operators using statements on origin will be able to verify the validity of the registrations of the registered exporters who submit those statements on origin.
• Through his registration data, a registered exporter may decide if he wants all his registration data to be published or not. If he doesn't consent for the publication of all his registered data, an anonymous subset of the registered data (the REX number of the registered exporter, the date from which the registration is valid and the date of revocation if applicable) will anyway be published to allow operators to verify the validity of those registrations as well.
Application of the REX system

- The REX system will be applied as from 01 January 2019
- When a beneficiary country starts the application of the REX system, the system of origin certification with certificates of origin Form A will continue to apply in parallel during 12 months. In case those 12 months are insufficient for the beneficiary country to abandon the system with certificates of origin Form A, an extension of 6 additional months is possible.