



Single Window Legal Framework for Cross-border Trade: 10 Case Studies

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Single Window Legal Framework on Cross-border Trade

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Abstract

Many countries have established a National Single Window (NSW) for trade to facilitate cross-border trade and develop their economies. A Single Window (SW) is a unified and integrated facility that streamlines and simplifies the exchange of trade-related information between government authorities and the trading community.

This paper conducts a thorough analysis of SW implementation across ten diverse countries - Cambodia, Cameroon, Georgia, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Mexico, Pakistan, Peru, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and Uzbekistan. Despite differing economic profiles and trade dynamics, a shared understanding resonates with the foundational importance of a robust legal framework for the success of SW initiatives.

The study delves into the evolution of national legislation, government directives, royal decrees, and any other regulatory changes in each country, unravelling the trajectory of legal frameworks crucial to the development and operation of SW. The analysis encompasses a comprehensive study of each country's SW implementation evolution, including significant acts, international agreements, standards, political commitments, and institutional arrangements. Recognizing the critical role of the legal landscape, the analysis emphasizes its impact on the operational effectiveness of SW. The legal foundation ensures compliance with international standards and establishes rules for data sharing, security, and functionality, forming the bedrock of successful SW operation.

By uncovering these common threads, the study provides readers with a deeper understanding of the legislative dynamics underpinning successful trade facilitation initiatives. It serves as a valuable resource, offering not only a comparative perspective on legal intricacies but also actionable insights for enhancing and harmonizing SW globally.

Keywords: National Single Window, Trade Facilitation, Legal Framework, Cross-Border Trade

JEL Codes: F13, K33

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1. Introduction

Countries worldwide have embraced the concept of a Single Window (SW) for trade to expedite cross-border transactions and foster economic development. A National SW serves as a facility that simplifies the exchange of trade-related information between government entities and the trading community. This paper presents a comprehensive analysis of SW implementation across ten diverse countries: Cambodia, Cameroon, Georgia, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Mexico, Pakistan, Peru, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and Uzbekistan.

Despite varying economic landscapes, these countries share a common understanding of the fundamental importance of a robust legal framework for the success of SW initiatives. The study meticulously explores the evolution of national legislation, government directives, royal decrees, and regulatory changes in each country, shedding light on the legal frameworks pivotal to the development and operation of SW. Emphasizing the critical role of the legal landscape, the analysis underscores its impact on the operational effectiveness of SW systems, ensuring compliance with international standards, data security, and functionality.

Each country's journey is dissected, providing insights into legislative milestones, international collaborations, and political commitments that propelled their SW initiatives. The conclusion for each country encapsulates key findings, emphasizing the pivotal role of legal frameworks in shaping SW efficacy. This analysis contributes to the broader discourse on the legal intricacies of SW, offering valuable insights for policymakers, practitioners, researchers, and stakeholders. The comparative analysis reveals crucial commonalities in legislative frameworks that ensure successful SW implementation across different countries.

2. Case Studies

2.1 Cambodia

2.1.1 Introduction

The Cambodian National Single Window (CNSW) project aims to streamline and centralize import, export, and transit-related requirements. The evolution of the project's legal framework traces back to regional agreements, influenced by the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement the ASEAN community's push for integration, and national laws focused on trade facilitation.

2.1.2 Analysis

The legal foundation for the CNSW has evolved in a phased manner, synchronized with regional ASEAN agreements and national legislative acts. Officially initiated in 2015 under the auspices of the Ministry of Economy and Finance and the General Department of Customs and Excise, the CNSW project is aimed at centralizing and streamlining import, export, and transit-related requirements.

2.1.3 Evolution

Initially, Cambodia's focus was on compliance with regional ASEAN SW initiatives. The laws and decrees started to become more specific over time, with the establishment of overseeing committees and implementation teams in 2015. Key acts like Sub-decree 25 and Prakas No. 959 laid the groundwork for the CNSW's structural and operational frameworks.

However, Sub-decree 17 ANKr.BK dated February 20, 2020, became a pivotal legislative act. While it added specificity to the types of goods covered under the CNSW, it also limited the scope primarily to prohibited and restricted goods. This move has been limiting the scope of the CNSW for Phases 1 and 2.

Despite achieving operational status and aligning with some international standards, the CNSW's legislative base still has room for growth, especially when it comes to broadening its scope beyond prohibited and restricted goods and fully integrating all other types of LPCOs for a more comprehensive trade facilitation system.

2.1.4 Significant Acts Influenced/Introduced

The implementation of the CNSW has led to legislative changes at both the ministerial and agency levels, signalling concerted efforts to improve and streamline trade facilitation.

Starting with the Ministerial Decree 575 MEF.PRK and Prakas No. 959 both dated 2015 and 2019 respectively, focus was given on the initial live implementation and the establishment of the implementation team.

The instructions and notifications dated from June 2019 to May 2021 indicate the effort to operationalize various functionalities within the CNSW. For instance, Letter No.

1880 AKR and Instruction No. 1882 both dated 27 June 2019, focus on implementing electronic customs permits and certificates of origin. Supplementary Instruction No. 1723 dated 14 July 2020 provides additional guidelines on this matter.

Notifications like 2428 Ponnach and 2709 MIH introduce the electronic application process for export-import licenses and certificates in specific industries like diamonds and chemicals. However, Notification No. 356 SOSCHON dated 17 May 2021, indicates a cessation in accepting applications for certificates in the chemical industry by direct application, perhaps indicating a move towards mandatory electronic applications.

Most recently, Notification No. 1523 dated May 25, 2021, represents an expansion into sectors like agriculture, forestry, and fishing, suggesting a gradual broadening of the CNSW's scope.

The piecemeal nature of these agency-level legislative changes indicates a degree of flexibility but also may signify challenges in creating a cohesive and unified system. While these instructions and notifications make steps toward the implementation and expansion of CNSW's functionalities, they also reflect the decentralized approach, which might pose challenges for integration and overall effectiveness.

2.1.5 International Agreements and Standards

As an ASEAN member, Cambodia has demonstrated a commitment to enhancing trade facilitation, aligning its initiatives with ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) Blueprints, including the current one for 2025. The integration into the ASEAN SW (ASW), where Cambodia became the 7th member state to participate in July 2019, signifies a pivotal step in leveraging technology to improve customs processes and business efficiency.

However, despite this progressive stance, there is a noticeable gap in the adoption of emerging technologies within the CNSW. Currently, there are no specific legislative acts that facilitate or govern the application of advanced technologies such as Artificial Intelligence, Machine Learning, the Internet of Things, or Blockchain in the operations of the SW.

2.1.6 Political Commitments & Institutional Arrangements

Cambodia has shown signs of strong political will in initiating and managing the CNSW project taking into account the level of adoption of the main legal acts.

The CNSW Steering Committee has demonstrated effectiveness in certain aspects. However, shortcomings such as its lack of connection to the National Committee on Trade Facilitation (NCTF) suggest that coordination across different branches of government is lacking.

In addition, the current legal framework primarily consists of laws and decrees initiated and adopted by individual government ministries, with no legislative acts having received approval from the Parliament of Cambodia. This raises questions about the breadth and depth of political commitment to the project.

The scope of the SW extends to government authorities and agencies (involved in the issuance of LCPO), as well as the non-governmental sector, such as certification bodies and test laboratories, Chamber of Commerce, National Bank of Cambodia, Ports Administrations, Phnom Penh Airport Administration, Business associations.

The NSW Project Steering Committee is led by the Ministry of Economy and Finance and Operation is led by the General Department of Customs and Excise is the primary force driving the CNSW.

2.1.7 Conclusion

The CNSW has seen a phased development aligned with both international guidelines and ASEAN initiatives. Extensive foundational studies, including analytical contributions from the World Bank and USAID, have helped identify legal and technical roadblocks, resulting in a legal framework for Phases I and II of CNSW's implementation. However, there are gaps in legislation that need to be addressed. While key acts regulating the initial functioning of CNSW have been enacted, there is a lack of legal instruments to guide Phase 2 and subsequent phases. There is no legal mandate compelling other relevant authorities to use the SW in their interactions with traders. Additionally, there is a noticeable absence of legislative provisions for the incorporation of emerging technologies like AI, ML, and IoT. In summary, while the CNSW has made commendable strides, in achieving operational and maintenance phases, the legislative framework still falls short in several key areas, indicating that there is considerable work to be done for a fully compliant and technologically advanced SW.

2.2 Cameroon

2.2.1 Introduction

The SW for Foreign Trade (GUCE) is a public-private structure created following the 1997 port reform in 1999 and operational since 2000. It simplifies import and export procedures and reduces costs and lead times by bringing together, physically and/or virtually, all the stakeholders involved. GUCE started in the form of a physical group of actors within the same place and then operationalized its electronic form in 2007. It is engaged with the support of the government in a vast program of modernization of foreign trade procedures by ensuring their simplification, harmonization, and dematerialization. The e-Guce platform is now operational and supports more than fifty online formalities in the context of import and export operations. These dematerialized procedures are processed 100% electronically through the platform.

2.2.2 Analysis and Evolution

The GUCE's statutes and 2002 memorandum laid the foundation for electronic procedures in 2007, emphasizing the importance of consultation frameworks. The 2010 laws, including the Electronic Communication Law, had a significant impact by legitimizing electronic transactions. The 2012 decisions, particularly the Steering

Committee, shifted the approach from Bottom-Up to Top-Down, enhancing institutional anchoring. The payment protocol in the same year operationalized the GUCE electronic payment platform further instilling confidence. The 2013 decree and ministerial instruction strengthened institutional anchoring and allowed unique manifest submission. The 2013 GUCE/ANTIC MoU established GUCE as a security best practices reference. The 2014 decree setting the conditions for the use of the e-Guce platform further solidified institutional anchoring. The 2016 Foreign Trade Law and its decrees reinforced GUCE's institutional standing and reduced initiatives challenging its prerogatives. The Acts in 2017 enabled single payments for various actors and formalities.

2.2.3 Significant Acts Influenced/Introduced

Following are the Laws, regulations, and agreements among agencies done to implement and support GUCE:

- 1997
 - National port reform
- 1999
 - The statutes of the GUCE
- 2002
 - *PAD (Douala Port Authority)/Customs/GUCE memorandum of understanding of May 28, 2002, for the establishment of a community information system; This memorandum was revised in 2008 to include the Cameroon National Shippers' Council (CNCC)*
- 2010
 - Electronic Commerce Law and implementing decrees
 - decree of June 15, 2011, establishing the terms of application of the law governing electronic commerce in Cameroon
 - Cybercrime and Cybersecurity Law
 - Electronic Communication Law
- 2012
 - Decisions establishing the Steering Committee for the Project to implement the dematerialization of Foreign Trade procedures
 - Protocol MINFI(Ministry in charge of finances)/Bank's Association Memorandum of Understanding for payments of Customs duties and taxes
- 2013
 - decree of February 22, 2013, establishing the operating conditions of the electronic platform "Single Window for Foreign Trade Operations"
 - Decree No. 2017/6525/0261/PM of June 7, 2017, modifying and supplementing certain provisions of Decree No. 2013/0261/PM of February 22, 2013, establishing the operating conditions of the electronic platform "Single Window for Foreign Trade Operations";

- Ministerial Instruction relating to the management of manifests
- GUCE/ANTIC memorandum of understanding of December 4, 2013, for bilateral collaboration in the operation of the national public key infrastructure
- 2014
 - Decree setting the conditions of use of the e-Guce platform for Foreign Trade operations
- 2016
 - Foreign Trade Law and its implementing decrees
 - *Decree No. 2017/6523/PM of June 7, 2017, establishing the terms of application of Law No. 2016/004 of April 18, 2016, governing foreign trade in Cameroon;*
- 2017
 - Decree establishing the terms of liquidation, recovery, and repayment of agricultural levies and the export duty on cocoa and coffee.
 - Finance law for the 2018 financial year
- 2020
 - Memorandum of understanding with the cocoa and coffee sector
- 2021
 - Memorandum of understanding with SGS
 - Memorandum of understanding with COC-TCHAD (Tchad Shipper's Council) to secure BESC's Tchad and popularize the use of the GUCE Transit platform
- 2022
 - Memorandum of understanding with the ministry responsible for the environment

2.2.4 International Agreements and Standards

GUCE aligns with international agreements and standards, notably the WTO's Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA), aiming to reduce trade barriers and enhance cross-border efficiency. Beyond TFA, GUCE focuses on adhering to international standards for Electronic Data Interchange (EDI), ensuring seamless alignment with global practices. GUCE adopts UN/CEFACT standards for data interchange, aligns with the UNCITRAL Model Law on Electronic Commerce, and adheres to WCO's Harmonized System, promoting uniformity in product classification for accurate customs declarations. Information Security and Quality management is underscored through alignment with ISO 27001 and ISO 9001, ensuring international quality benchmarks for continual improvement and customer satisfaction and security of all transactions.

GUCE is a founding member of AAEC (African Alliance for e-Commerce) and contributed to the redaction of the "Guide to the Implementation of Single Windows in Africa".

GUCE also integrate the Hub of the IPPC ePhyto Solution (world platform for the exchange of electronic phytosanitary certificate).

Cameroon is a party to the following trade facilitation agreements, such as Facilitation Committee of IMO, the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement, the Revised Kyoto Convention, the International Convention on the Harmonization of Frontier Controls, the Convention on the Contract for the International Carriage of Goods by Road, Customs Convention on the International Trade In Endangered Species (CITES), OMI convention.

2.2.5 Political Commitment & Institutional Agreements

GUCE has been significantly supported by the government, reflecting a commitment to enhancing efficiency and reducing complexities in foreign trade procedures. The government's involvement has extended across various dimensions, contributing to the evolution and success of GUCE. One crucial aspect of government support has been the establishment and modification of legal frameworks and regulations. Acts such as the Electronic Commerce Law, the Cybercrime and Cybersecurity Law, and the Electronic Communication Law were enacted to legitimize and support electronic transactions particularly the ones conducted through GUCE. These legal foundations have played a pivotal role in providing a secure and recognized environment for electronic trade operations.

Moreover, the government actively engaged in collaborative efforts through Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs). For instance, the 2002 MoU involving PAD (Douala Port Authority), Customs, and GUCE laid the foundation for a community information system, facilitating data exchanges and the introduction of electronic procedures. These collaborative frameworks have been essential in fostering a cohesive approach among key stakeholders in the trade ecosystem.

The creation of the Steering Committee in 2012, led by the Prime Ministry, marked a significant milestone. This inter-ministerial instrument provided strong institutional support, guiding GUCE's transition to a Top-Down model and enhancing its overall effectiveness in dematerializing foreign trade procedures. Financial collaborations underscore the government's commitment to GUCE's financial infrastructure. The Protocol MINFI/Bank's Association MoU for payments of Customs duties and taxes, for instance, operationalized the GUCE electronic payment platform. This collaboration reflects the government's dedication to ensuring the financial sustainability and reliability of GUCE.

Decrees and ministerial instructions issued by the government have played a critical role in defining and modifying the operating conditions of the electronic platform "Single Window for Foreign Trade Operations." These regulatory instruments have strengthened the institutional anchoring of GUCE and facilitated streamlined procedures for users.

Security has also been a focus, exemplified by MoUs such as the one between GUCE and ANTIC in 2013. This collaboration not only enhanced the security of GUCE but also positioned it as a "registration authority" and integrated electronic certificates,

showcasing Cameroon's commitment to global best practices in trade facilitation and security.

The enactment of the Foreign Trade Law in 2016, along with its implementing decrees, demonstrated the government's commitment to formalizing foreign trade in Cameroon and ensuring the sustainability of GUCE.

2.2.6 Conclusion

In conclusion, GUCE's evolution from a physical to an electronic platform has been supported by a comprehensive legal and institutional framework. The government's commitment, demonstrated through legislative acts, collaborative efforts, and financial support, has played a pivotal role in GUCE's success. GUCE's alignment with international standards positions it as a key player in the global trade landscape, enhancing efficiency, transparency, and reliability in foreign trade operations in Cameroon.

2.3 Georgia

2.3.1 Introduction

Georgia has established the National Single Window (NSW), which serves as the single entry point for customs-related procedures, handling all aspects of receipt, processing, and, where applicable, issuance of regulatory documents. The execution of customs formalities, including but not limited to declarations, certifications, licenses, permits, invoices, and contracts, is facilitated through the utilization of the internally developed "ASYCUDA" and "TAIS" tax administration information systems. To ensure the efficient creation and continual enhancement of the SW system, several legislative acts have been passed.

2.3.2 Analysis

The country's customs procedures are regulated by the Tax Code, the new Customs Code, and Ministerial Order No. 257. This order approves instructions on the movement and registration of goods in the Customs territory. The Customs Code and Ministerial Order No. 257 have been effective since August and September 2019, respectively. Other customs-related laws, such as the new Law on Border Measures Related to Intellectual Property Rights, which became effective in February 2018, supplement these legal instruments.

The latest Customs Code has been designed to advance the upgrade of customs infrastructure, streamline procedures, and digitize customs services. It has been developed by the commitments made by Georgia under the Georgia-European Union Association Agreement and draws from the provisions of the Union Customs Code. This new code represents a significant step forward in the modernization of customs practices and will contribute to the development of a more efficient and effective customs system in Georgia. By enhancing transparency, reducing administrative burdens, and improving the predictability of customs procedures, the new code will

facilitate trade, foster economic growth, and support Georgia's integration into the global economy.

2.3.3 Evolution

The NSW system was established in Georgia through Government Decree №1018 on September 6, 2014. It is a national-level platform that facilitates the issuance of licenses, permits, and certificates. The Georgia Revenue is responsible for maintaining the system, with six ministries participating. These include the Ministry of Internal Affairs, Ministry of Defence, Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Labour, Health and Social Affairs, Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth, and the Ministry of Environment Protection and Agriculture.

The Decree imposes obligations on governmental agencies to ensure the proper functioning of the SW. The agencies must issue documents through this system whenever requests are submitted through it. In parallel, paper-based communication is also accepted. The rights and obligations of the participants are not yet defined, and general liability principles are found in the applicable law (such as the civil or criminal codes).

In addition to exchanging data through the NSW system within different ministries, international exchanges may be done. The exchanges are regulated by bilateral or multilateral agreements, such as those Georgia has signed with Azerbaijan, Armenia, Ukraine, Kazakhstan, and Turkey. Information is exchanged through a VPN or any other secure means of encrypted data exchange with public and private keys.

The SW brings together various electronic services such as e-customs, e-licenses, e-permits, and e-certification. It is linked to numerous governmental agencies and financial institutions, providing access to roughly 300 different services. This includes data on businesses, border crossings, exchange rates, traffic monitoring cameras, land registration, and public registry data. Moreover, the NSW can interface with other diverse systems and can be integrated into other systems through APIs.

2.3.4 Significant Acts Influenced/Introduced

- Law of Georgia on Commodity Exchange and Trade Exchange (№2153-IIS, 23/06/1999) defines trade-related legal relations of commodity exchange (and its branches) and trade exchange and provides their legal guarantees.
- The Law of Georgia on Licenses and Permits (№1775, 24/06/2005) regulates spheres of licenses and permits and determines the comprehensive list of licenses and permits, including types of import and export products. Also defines rules on the issuance of licenses and permits, making changes, and revoking them.
- Decree №420 of the Government of Georgia (31/12/2010) regulates criteria for determining countries of origin, forms of certificates of origin, and ways to fill and issue them.

- Law of Georgia on Control of Export and Import Products of Armament, Military Equipment, and Dual-Use Items (№1683-ІІ, 29/11/2013) determines rules and grounds for conducting control on exporting and importing products of armament, equipment for military purposes, raw materials, materials, equipment, technologies, scientific-technical information, and their production.
- Decree of the Government of Georgia on the issuance of licenses, permits, and certificates to be submitted on a one-stop basis during customs formalities (№1018, 09/06/2014), which made the SW operational.
- Law of Georgia on Electronic Document and Electronic Trusted Services (№639-ІІІ, 21/04/2017), which defines the legal basis for the use of electronic documents, electronic signatures, and electronic trust services. According to the Law, electronic signatures have the same legal effect as handwritten signatures. This law stipulates that the law of Georgia of 14 March 2008 on Electronic Signature and Electronic Documents shall be repealed.
- The Law of Georgia On border measures related to intellectual property rights (№ 1723-ІІ, 13/12/2017) establishes rules for special border measures regarding goods produced by violating intellectual property rights, including copyright, patents, trademarks, and more. It applies during the movement of such goods within Georgia's customs territory, covering activities like import, storage, and export. The legal framework aligns with the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) from the World Trade Organization.
- Decree of the Government of Georgia Regarding the establishment of the National Committee for the Promotion of International Trade and the approval of the regulations (№217, 01/05/2019), which included the main provisions for the creation and regulation of the functioning of the Committee.

2.3.5 International Agreements and Standards

The Association Agreement between Georgia and the European Union entered into force in 2016. It states that the Parties shall maintain a dialogue on regulatory issues raised by electronic commerce and address the following issues: recognition of certificates of electronic signatures issued to the public and the facilitation of cross-border certification services; liability of intermediary service providers concerning the transmission or the storage of information; treatment of unsolicited electronic commercial communications; protection of consumers in the ambit of electronic commerce; any other issue relevant for the development of electronic commerce.

Georgia is a member State of the Organization for Democracy and Economic Development – GUAM, established jointly by Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine. Cooperation in the area of economy and trade and the establishment of a free trade area among the GUAM member States are priorities of the organization

(<https://guamorganization.org/en/guam-sectoral-cooperation-development-strategy/>).

The specific rules for electronic trade for GUAM have not yet been developed.

Georgia is a party to the following trade facilitation agreements, such as the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement, Revised Kyoto Convention, International Convention on the Harmonization of Frontier Controls, Convention on the Contract for the International Carriage of Goods by Road, Customs Convention on the International Transport of Goods under Cover of TIR Carnets and Convention on the International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES).

2.3.6 Political Commitments & Institutional Arrangements

Georgia is dedicated to implementing paperless trade systems, such as the SW, with a strong commitment. The National Committee on International Trade Facilitation, established in 2019, oversees all trade facilitation aspects under the World Trade Organization Trade Facilitation Agreement. This committee comprises government bodies, private sector representative associations, and other organizations involved in trade-related procedures. The representation of the committee is expected to include more stakeholders and various organizations that have expressed interest in participating. The Ministry of Finance chairs the Committee on International Trade Facilitation, and the co-chair is elected by the committee members. The secretariat functions are managed by the Georgia Revenue Service.

The paperless trade system is well-supported by the legal framework in some aspects, but there are still some challenges that need to be addressed. Generally, the legal framework in Georgia is favourable towards electronic transactions, despite the lack of a specific law regulating this topic. Other laws and secondary legislation, such as the Civil Code of Georgia, allow parties to determine the form of transaction. Additionally, the Order of the Minister of Finance permits communication and declarations between the Revenue Service and taxpayers to be done electronically through the official website. Georgian legislation is based on the legal framework of the European Union, and it is aligned with Regulation № 910/2014 of the European Parliament and the Council of 23 July 2014, which deals with electronic identification and trust services.

2.3.7 Conclusion

Georgia Revenue Service has several access points from where traders can submit required documents. The taxpayer's portal (www.rs.ge) is a SW access point for legal entities where all tax and customs-related electronic services are accessible. Moreover, since 1998, Customs has been operating an automated system of customs data. In 2015, the system was upgraded and currently is operating with the most recent version of ASYCUDA World's E-Customs system. The E-Customs system enables the paperless processing of most customs operations. The infrastructure is integrated with the information systems of other state authorities providing inputs to (or consuming data from) customs operations, such as permits, licenses, and certificates.

Implementing the "Single Window" system in Georgia signifies a transformative step towards streamlining and modernizing administrative processes, particularly in trade, transportation, and related services. This initiative necessitated a comprehensive review of the legislative framework, leading to the introduction, revision, and adaptation of numerous legislative acts to ensure full compliance with the principles and objectives of the system. The aforementioned steps, combined with the ratification of several international agreements, underscore the country's commitment to creating a more transparent, efficient, and digital environment.

However, challenges such as disparities in the readiness of various departments and insufficient preparedness of the business community pose obstacles to the seamless implementation of the SW.

2.4 Kenya

2.4.1 Introduction

The Kenya TradeNet System is an online platform that serves as a single entry point for parties involved in international trade and transport logistics to lodge documents electronically, for processing, and approvals, and to make payments electronically for fees and levies due to the government, on goods imported or exported into and from the country.

The System was rolled out in October 2013 and over time, it has brought about greater harmonization and better sharing of relevant information across stakeholders and systems used for cargo clearance documentation resulting in improved efficiency, transparency, effectiveness, compliance, enhanced revenue collection, and reduction in cargo clearance time and cost of doing business for both the government and the business community.

The Kenya TradeNet system is one of Kenya's Vision 2030 Flagship Projects under the Economic Pillar, which seeks to help the country achieve a sustainable economic growth of 10% per annum. A SW system is recognized by the United Nations (UN CEFAC recommendation 33) and the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreements as one of the Key concepts in trade facilitation.

2.4.2 Analysis

Kenya is an important hub for the East African Community (EAC) serving landlocked EAC Partner States such as Uganda, Rwanda, Democratic Republic of the Congo and Burundi. The Government of Kenya has therefore been at the forefront of streamlining international trade procedures and initiated the NSW in 2007.

The Kenya Trade Network Agency (KenTrade) is a State Corporation under The National Treasury established under the Kenya Electronic Single Window Act 2022. KenTrade's primary objective is implement and operationalise the Kenya Electronic Single Window system and Trade Facilitation. This is geared towards reducing delays and minimizing costs associated with the clearance of goods at Kenyan borders.

Importantly, it aims to maintain necessary controls and ensure the collection of duties and taxes applicable to imported or exported goods. KenTrade has been at the forefront of the implementation of trade facilitation initiatives in Kenya. The successful implementation and launch of the SW System (Kenya TradeNet) in 2013 has enabled the industry players in both public and private sectors to trade efficiently and effectively thus saving costs to benefit our economy. The system is module-based and brings together over 42 stakeholders with over 19,000 registered users which includes more than 37 permits/licenses/certificates government issuing agencies known as Partner Government Agencies (PGAs) whose cargo clearance documentation has been automated through System integrations or interfaces with Kenya TradeNet System. To accommodate growth and to ensure that stakeholders continue to receive efficient services, KenTrade upgraded the Kenya TradeNet system in 2019.

2.4.3 Evolution

The Legal framework governing Kenya's NSW has evolved strategically, incorporating key legislative acts to enhance trade facilitation. The analysis reveals the following critical components:

- Legal Notice No. 6 of 2011 - Lead Agency Mandate: The designation of the Kenya Trade Network Agency as the primary authority showcases a pivotal moment in the NSW's legal foundation. This legal notice ensures a concentrated and well-coordinated approach to trade facilitation, highlighting the commitment to streamline and oversee the implementation of the NSW.
- National Electronic Single Window System Act of 2022 (No. 25 of 2022): Enacted on July 11, 2022, this act serves as the cornerstone for the creation and operation of the NSW, emphasizing the government's commitment to streamline trade processes. The act establishes the Kenya Trade Network Agency, designates it as the lead agency, and outlines its leadership roles, providing a robust structure for effective administration. Clear provisions for electronic transactions and related matters contribute to the overall efficiency and transparency of NSW.
- Regulations 2023 (Draft, Awaiting Parliament Approval): Drafted following the signing of the 2022 ACT, these regulations play a pivotal role in defining the NSW's functions, capabilities, and overall operational framework. The regulations outline procedures for user registration, notification, rejection, suspension, reinstatement, and deregistration within the NSW system, ensuring a systematic approach to user management. Key areas such as trade facilitation mechanisms, integration with other systems, maintenance requirements, and support from county governments are detailed, offering comprehensive guidance.

2.4.4 Significant Acts Influencing/Introduced

- Legal Notice No. 6 of 2011: Established the Kenya Trade Network Agency as the primary authority overseeing the NSW.

- National Electronic Single Window System Act of 2022 (No. 25 of 2022): Laid the foundation for the creation and operation of the NSW, defining its structure and administration.
- Regulations 2023 (Draft): Outlined the NSW's functions, capabilities, and operational requirements.

2.4.5 Political Commitments & Institutional Arrangement

Kenya has exhibited a noteworthy political commitment and implemented essential institutional structures to bolster the success of TradeNet, its NSW initiative.

The establishment of the KenTrade stands out as a strategic manoeuvre by the government to facilitate cross-border trade. Functioning as a pivotal entity, KenTrade takes on the crucial role of coordinating and overseeing the efficient operation of the SW. The government's political commitments serve to further fortify the institutional backing for TradeNet. This commitment is exemplified by the allocation of direct government funding specifically designated for the operations of the TradeNet System. The provision of financial support underscores the government's commitment to sustaining and enhancing the system's functionality.

Beyond financial support, the government has actively issued directives endorsing and supporting the implementation and operation of the TradeNet system. These directives highlight the proactive role of the government in steering the success of Kenya's TradeNet, showcasing a comprehensive approach to ensuring the system's effectiveness and longevity.

2.4.6 Conclusion

In conclusion, Kenya's NSW legal framework has undergone strategic evolution, culminating in key legislative acts that underscore the country's commitment to efficient and transparent trade processes. The establishment of the Kenya Trade Network Agency as the lead authority, supported by Legal Notice No. 6 of 2011, marks a pivotal step in ensuring a well-coordinated approach to trade facilitation.

The enactment of the National Electronic Single Window System Act of 2022 (No. 25 of 2022) serves as a cornerstone, providing a robust structure for the creation and operation of the NSW. This legislation, with its emphasis on electronic transactions and clarity in administration, enhances the transparency and effectiveness of trade processes.

Looking forward, the draft regulations for 2023, once approved by Parliament, could further refine the NSW's operational guidelines. These regulations address crucial aspects such as user management, trade facilitation mechanisms and integration with other systems, reinforcing Kenya's dedication to creating a streamlined and efficient trade ecosystem.

In summary, Kenya's SW legal framework, marked by significant acts and impending regulations, positions the country at the forefront of modernizing trade processes. The

cohesive legal structure ensures effective oversight and sets the stage for a seamless, transparent, and digitally enabled trade environment in Kenya.

2.5 Kyrgyzstan

2.5.1 Introduction

Kyrgyzstan introduced the Single Window (SW) system for foreign trade in 2007, which has since progressed and adapted through legal acts. Kyrgyzstan embarked on a journey to implement a SW system to enhance foreign trade, streamline administrative procedures, and integrate modern technology. This analysis explores the evolution of the SW system in Kyrgyzstan, the legislative acts influencing it, and the political and institutional commitments shaping its implementation.

2.5.2 Analysis

The journey towards the SW system began with Presidential Decree No. 464 on October 23, 2007, emphasizing the development of the state policy in foreign trade and initiatives to bolster export-import procedures. The following year, the government outlined its vision for the SW system with Resolution No. 315, which further clarified the participating entities, objectives, and implementation timelines. This initiative aligns with the broader strategy for streamlining transport and trade procedures.

2.5.3 Evolution

Multiple legal acts have governed the establishment and progression of the SW system:

- Decree No. 464 (October 23, 2007): This decree established the state policy to refine foreign trade, particularly focusing on modernizing administrative procedures, implementing the SW system, integrating modern technology, and setting up regional transit systems in line with global standards.
- Resolution No. 315 (June 19, 2008): This conceptualized the implementation of the SW, emphasizing a unified platform for facilitating interactions related to foreign trade.
- Resolution No. 76 (February 4, 2009): Detailed the project's structure, financial requirements, and overarching goals.
- Resolution No. 539 (August 27, 2009): This led to the creation of the "Single Window Center", highlighting its structure, objectives, and functions.
- Resolution No. 708 (December 26, 2019): Explained the procedures for electronic permit issuance for specific goods, referencing several regional laws and regulations.
- Resolution No. 157 (April 20, 2021): Outlined procedures for permit issuance, assigning the Ministry of Economy and Commerce as the central body for managing the foreign trade information system.

2.5.4 Significant Acts Influenced/Introduced

- Laws on Plant Quarantine (No. 02, January 12, 2015), Technical Regulation (No. 67, May 22, 2004), Foreign Trade Activities (No. 41, July 2, 1997), Veterinary Medicine (No. 175, December 30, 2014), and Road Transport (No. 154, July 19, 2013): All underwent revisions due to the SW system.
- Temporary Regulation on Ethyl Alcohol (No. 327, May 27, 2015) & Law on Licensing and Permit System (No. 195, October 19, 2013): Both shaped by the SW system.
- New Acts: Include Quarantine Phytosanitary Rules (No. 376, June 18, 2015), Rules of origin (No. 49, July 13, 2018), Declaration of conformity (No. 20, January 28, 2019), and the Protocol on electronic permissions for trade (No. 708, December 26, 2019).
- Law on Electronic Signature (No. 128, July 19, 2017): Validated the use of electronic signatures.
- Provisions on Licensing in Road and Water Transport (No. 430, September 17, 2018) & List of Expert Organizations (No. 156, April 20, 2021): Direct outcomes of the SW system.
- Decree on Issuing Permits and Documents (No. 157, April 20, 2021): A primary catalyst for SW System 2.0.

Although Kyrgyzstan has made significant advancements in digitalizing international trade processes, there's an absence of emerging technologies within the SW system. However, existing systems, like "Tulpar", benefit a wide range of stakeholders, especially small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

2.5.5 International Agreements and Standards

12 August 2015 Kyrgyzstan became a full member of the Customs Union of the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU). The entry into the EAEU for Kyrgyzstan opens new perspectives; removes barriers in the free movement of goods, services, capital, and workforce; and opens new investment opportunities and prospects of implementation of large infrastructure projects, primarily in the areas of energy, transport, and agriculture. Integration in the EAEU accelerates standardization and harmonization of information and leads to the development of synchronization between SW mechanisms among the members of the Eurasian Economic Union.

Kyrgyzstan also accepts the application of UN/CEFACT recommendations for the development of the SW and undertakes the harmonization, simplification, and standardization of all data used for exchange in the SW mechanism. UN/CEFACT recommendations, specifically Nos. 1 and 18, as well as data libraries and data reference models, have been utilized. Additionally, Kyrgyzstan applies WCO standards and recommendations, including the Data Model, and adopts international standards in the design and implementation of information systems and technologies for the development of the SW mechanism (ISO, GS1, etc.).

2.5.6 Political Commitments & Institutional Arrangements

Kyrgyzstan has demonstrated significant political commitment by endorsing strategic documents for the SW project. Key features of the project, such as the principle of single submission of documents and interagency cooperation, have been realized. This commitment is evident at both the presidential and governmental levels.

The SW system encompasses both governmental and non-governmental entities, like certification bodies and the Chamber of Commerce. The State Enterprise “Single Window Center in the Field of Foreign Trade” plays a pivotal role in this initiative. Additionally, multiple government bodies, such as the Ministries of Economy, Justice, Agriculture, and Transport, along with agencies like the State Customs Committee, National Bank, and Border Service, are stakeholders in this project. The implementation of the SW system in Kyrgyzstan has been a major driver for legislative changes, prompting the adoption of new legal acts and revision of existing ones.

2.5.7 Conclusion

The implementation of the SW system in Kyrgyzstan signifies a transformative step towards streamlining and modernizing administrative processes, especially in areas of trade, transport, and related services.

This initiative has necessitated an extensive overhaul of the legislative framework, leading to the introduction, revision, and adaptation of numerous legal acts to ensure seamless alignment with the system’s principles and objectives. The aforementioned legislative changes, ranging from protocols to technical regulations, underline Kyrgyzstan’s commitment to fostering a more transparent, efficient, and digitally forward environment.

However, challenges such as varied automation levels, readiness disparity in different departments, and insufficient readiness from the business community pose hurdles to seamless implementation.

2.6 Mexico

2.6.1 Introduction

The Ventanilla Única de Comercio Exterior (VUCEM) stands as a cornerstone in Mexico’s quest for modernizing and streamlining its foreign trade processes. Enacted through the “Decreto por el que se establece la Ventanilla Digital Mexicana de Comercio Exterior” on January 14, 2011, VUCEM translates to the Mexican Digital Foreign Trade Window. This innovative platform embodies the government’s commitment to leveraging technology to enhance efficiency, transparency, and coordination in international trade operations.

VUCEM serves as a Single Window (SW) designed to facilitate and expedite the submission and processing of trade-related documentation. With a focus on reducing bureaucratic hurdles and paperwork, VUCEM plays a pivotal role in fostering a

business-friendly environment for importers, exporters, and other stakeholders engaged in cross-border trade activities. Its establishment aligns with global best practices in trade facilitation, contributing significantly to Mexico's competitiveness in the ever-evolving landscape of international commerce.

This introduction sets the stage for a detailed exploration of VUCEM, outlining its objectives, operational framework, and transformative impact since its 2011 inception during President Felipe Calderón's tenure, the "DECRETO establishing the Mexican Digital Window for Foreign Trade" in the Official Gazette of the Federation. This decree, comprising 12 articles, laid the groundwork for one of Mexico's paramount tools in the realm of foreign trade - the "Single Window for Foreign Trade," more commonly referred to as "VUCEM". This decree explicitly stated that VUCEM would focus on receiving and addressing procedures and services across federal agencies.

VUCEM emerged to streamline administrative processes, serving as a unified portal for federal agencies involved in foreign trade. Beyond efficiency gains, VUCEM reduces administrative expenses, processing times, and direct interactions, curbing corruption opportunities.

2.6.2 Analysis

The applicable regulatory framework for the Mexican SW for Foreign Trade includes various legal documents and decrees, such as the Mexican Constitution (February 5, 1917, and September 15, 2017), the Organic Law of the Federal Public Administration (December 29, 1976, and June 15, 2018), the Law on Acquisitions, Leasing, and Services of the Public Sector (January 4, 2000, and November 10, 2014), the Law on the Tax Administration Service (December 15, 1995, and December 17, 2015), the Foreign Trade Law (July 27, 1993, and December 21, 2006), the Customs Law (December 15, 1995, and June 25, 2018), and various regulations and decrees related to these laws.

Additionally, there are regulations such as the Regulation of the Law on Acquisitions, Leasing, and Services of the Public Sector (July 28, 2010), the Regulation of the Customs Law (April 20, 2015), and the Internal Regulation of the Tax Administration Service (August 24, 2015). There are also decrees like the one establishing the Mexican Digital Foreign Trade Window (January 14, 2011) and the one granting administrative facilities in General Rules of Foreign Trade (March 21, 2008, and November 1, 2012).

Furthermore, there are guidelines for governing the project management cycle of the Tax Administration Service, its monitoring, evaluation, and supervision (September 20, 2011), as well as general guidelines for regulating the processes of handover, receipt, and accountability in the Federal Public Administration (July 24, 2017). Other documents include the Customs Strategic Plan 2013-2020, the General Administrative Manual for Acquisitions, Leasing, and Services of the Public Sector (August 9, 2010), and the Customs Operations Manual, Fourteenth Amendment (July 21, 2011).

2.6.3 Significant Acts Influenced/Introduced

The regulatory framework supported for the execution of the Mexican Foreign Trade SW is the following:

- Political Constitution of the United Mexican States (February 5, 1917, and September 15, 2017).
- Organic Law of the Federal Public Administration (December 29, 1976, and June 15, 2018).
- Law on Acquisitions, Leasing, and Public Sector Services (January 4, 2000, and November 10, 2014).
- Tax Administration Service Law (December 15, 1995, and December 17, 2015).
- Foreign Trade Law (July 27, 1993, and December 21, 2006).
- Customs Law (December 15, 1995, and June 25, 2018).
- Regulations of the Law on Acquisitions, Leasing and Public Sector Services (July 28, 2010).
- Regulations of the Customs Law (April 20, 2015).
- Internal Regulations of the Tax Administration Service (August 24, 2015).
- Decree establishing the Mexican Digital Window for Foreign Trade (January 14, 2011).
- Decree granting administrative facilities in Customs and Foreign Trade Matters (March 21, 2008, and November 1, 2012).
- Guidelines to Regulate the SAT Project Management Cycle, its Monitoring, Evaluation, and Supervision V. (September 20, 2011).
- Agreement establishing the General Guidelines for the regulation of the delivery-reception and accountability processes of the Federal Public Administration (July 24, 2017).
- Customs Strategic Plan 2013-2020.
- Administrative Manual of General Application on Public Sector Acquisitions, Leasing and Services (August 9, 2010).
- Customs Operation Manual, Fourteenth Modification (July 21, 2011).

2.6.4 International Agreements and Standards

Mexico's VUCEM adheres to global standards endorsed by the World Trade Organization and the World Customs Organization. These standards, supported by international entities and frameworks such as the United Nations Organization (UN/CEFACT), the SAFE Regulatory Framework, the revised Kyoto Convention, the World Bank, the World Economic Forum, and the Inter-American Development Bank, actively contribute to and affirm the importance of VUCEM. This endorsement

underscores the crucial role of data standardization and technology in facilitating seamless information exchange and promoting Coordinated Border Management.

Operating within the RedVUCE framework, VUCEM actively engages in information exchange with member countries of the Pacific Alliance, focusing on Phytosanitary, Zoosanitary, and Origin Certificates.

Internationally recognized, VUCEM serves as a benchmark, consistently evolving its processes and enhancing interactions with foreign trade users.

2.6.5 Political Commitment & Institutional Arrangement

Government commitment to the success of VUCEM (is multi-faceted and evident in various government-led initiatives. Firstly, the legal foundation is established through the "Decreto por el que se establece la Ventanilla Digital Mexicana de Comercio Exterior". Government directives actively guide VUCEM's implementation and operation, fostering alignment with national trade goals. Coordination with key agencies, including the Ministry of Finance and Public Credit, the Tax Administration Service, and the Ministry of Economy, ensures an integrated approach.

Political commitment is evident through public endorsements and active participation in VUCEM's updates. The government engages in the platform's renewal through the General Customs Administration (AGA), emphasizing transparency, efficiency, innovation, simplicity, and consistency.

Internationally, VUCEM integrates with the Inter-American Network of SWs for Foreign Trade (RedVUCE), facilitating information exchange with Pacific Alliance member countries.

In summary, the Mexican government's support for VUCEM spans legal, financial, strategic, and collaborative dimensions, reflecting a commitment to its success in streamlining foreign trade processes.

2.6.6 Conclusion

The evolution and success of VUCEM can be attributed to a robust legal framework and strategic regulatory changes. Since its establishment in 2011, VUCEM has played a pivotal role in the overhaul of Mexico's foreign trade procedures, aligning itself with global benchmarks. The regulatory framework supporting VUCEM encompasses a myriad of legal documents, decrees, and regulations, including but not limited to the Mexican Constitution, the Organic Law of the Federal Public Administration, the Law on Acquisitions, Leasing, and Services of the Public Sector, the Tax Administration Service Law, the Foreign Trade Law, and the Customs Law. These regulatory instruments create a solid foundation, ensuring adherence to best practices and standards in foreign trade operations.

In conclusion, the symbiotic relationship between a robust legal framework, strategic regulatory changes, and active government support has propelled VUCEM to be a leading force in modernizing and facilitating Mexico's foreign trade. The platform's evolution reflects a commitment to excellence, adherence to international standards,

and a proactive approach to embracing advancements in technology and global trade practices.

2.7 Pakistan

2.7.1 Introduction

The Pakistan Single Window (PSW) initiative, driven by the aim to enhance business efficiency, reduce costs, and streamline cross-border trade, was initiated by Pakistan Customs. The PSW Company (PSWC), established as a wholly owned Government public sector entity under Section 42 of the Companies Act, 2017, serves as the designated 'operating entity' for the PSW system, as mandated by the PSW Act, 2021.

The PSW system, an electronic platform, consolidates import, export, and transit-related regulatory requirements by enabling standardized information and document submission through a single entry point. Envisioned as a facilitator for integrated customs and regulatory clearance processes, the PSW adopts a harmonized approach to cargo reporting, management, and clearance. World Bank estimates predict direct savings of US\$430 million in the national economy upon full PSW implementation, attributed to reduced costs for documentary and border compliance.

The PSW's leadership, overseen by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) appointed by the Federal Government, operates under the governance of the Board of Directors. This board comprises representatives from public sectors such as Pakistan Customs, the Ministry of Commerce, and the Board of Investment, along with private sector representatives from the Pakistan Business Council and the Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FPCCI). The current chairman of the PSW Board of Directors is the Member Customs (Operations) of the Federal Board of Revenue.

Supervised by a Governing Council established under the PSW Act, 2021, chaired by the Federal Minister for Finance and Revenues, the PSW is subject to performance benchmarks outlined in an MOU between the PSW Company and the Governing Council.

2.7.2 Analysis

The enactment of the PSW Act was a pivotal milestone, highlighting the indispensable role of a robust legal framework in successfully implementing a NSW in Pakistan. Preceded by comprehensive foundational studies, the PSW initiative revealed no inherent legal impediments but emphasized the need for a specific legal instrument to establish the NSW. The resulting PSW Act addresses this gap comprehensively, accommodating transformative changes such as re-engineered processes and the adoption of e-signatures and e-documents and importantly negating the need to make changes in all impacted Government Agency legislation.

Strategically designed, the PSW Act focuses on key considerations to fortify its foundation and enhance effectiveness. Firstly, it leverages insights from foundational studies, laying the groundwork for a robust legal framework. This foundation encompasses critical elements such as document reduction, integrated risk

management, and the seamless transition to electronic documentation, setting the stage for a transformative shift in trade processes.

Secondly, the Act prioritises interagency coordination to mitigate challenges witnessed by other Single Window systems worldwide. By mandating the involvement of Customs and Other Government Agencies (OGAs), it aims to preempt coordination issues and cultivate broad support for seamless operations.

Thirdly, the legal framework establishes a flexible governance mechanism, striking a balance between autonomy and accountability. This approach provides stability and safeguards against abrupt changes, fostering a reliable and adaptable system.

Lastly, the PSW Act positions itself as a national initiative led by Customs, with the overarching goal of serving all OGAs. This unique status grants independence to the PSW, empowering it to guide OGAs and promote recommendations for cross-border trade, thus contributing to a more inclusive and collaborative trade environment.

2.7.3 Significant Acts Influenced/Introduced

- Pakistan Single Window Act 2021

The Act makes it mandatory for all trade regulators to be part of the PSW system. It also requires Customs and other government agencies to align (standardize) their processes, procedures, information, and documentary requirements with the PSW system. The PSW Act has overriding powers and provides legal cover for modern concepts such as digital signatures, paperless processing, electronic risk management, etc. where individual laws do not have those provisions. The law also provides the governing and operating framework.

- Various government notifications having the force of law regulating SW mandate, governing, and operating model, service fee charges, inclusion of government agencies, implementation dates, integrated risk management system, and the Trade Information Portal, etc.
(<https://tipp.gov.pk/index.php?r=site/displaythemostrecentxx&category=Legal%20Document>).
- MoU with the PSW Governing Council including a set of performance benchmarks that PSW is committed to achieving.
- MoU with the lead agency (Customs) and other governing departments integrated with the SW system.

2.7.4 Political Commitment & Institutional Arrangements

The PSW's leadership structure, including the Governing Council, Board of Directors, and CEO appointment procedure, reflects a commitment to public-private collaboration. The PSW Act provides a legal foundation for its role and independence,

ensuring accountability and alignment with government regulations whilst offering a basis for a facilitated approach to trade.

2.7.5 Conclusion

The PSW initiative, fortified by the legal framework of the PSW Act, stands as a pivotal force in Pakistan's journey towards a modern, efficient, and digitized trade environment. The commitment to avoiding pitfalls witnessed by other SW systems, ensuring governance flexibility, and fostering a national initiative with legal backing positions the PSW as a cornerstone for advancing the nation's trade facilitation agenda. As the PSW continues to evolve, its impact on reducing bureaucracy, enhancing transparency, and realizing substantial economic savings is materializing and is poised to be profound.

2.8 Peru

2.8.1 Introduction

The Single Window (SW), commonly referred to as VUCE, has been operational since 2010 and falls under the management of the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Tourism (Mincetur). Comprising three main components—controls on restricted goods, certificates of origin, and port-related controls (e-maritime)—the SW is designed for seamless interoperability with the Customs system. It stands out for its inclusion of not only around 15 border-controlling bodies but also non-cross-border related procedures. An ongoing overhaul since 2017, known as the New SW (VUCE2.0), introduces new components such as E-Pymex/Marketplace, Free Zones Systems, and Transparency Portals. The anticipated inclusion of a Port Community System (PCS) is expected to be part of the NSW by 2024. Notably, despite these advancements, there has been no major process reengineering, maintaining a pragmatic approach.

2.8.2 Analysis

The NSW necessitates regulatory adjustments for effective implementation, as outlined by key legislative measures:

- Law 30860, named the SW Optimizations Act, delineates NSW's new components, establishes rules for procedures (mandating SW usage), reinforces Mincetur's authority over the SW, and mandates SW agencies to use risk management criteria in proceedings evaluation.
- Supreme Decree 008-2020 Mincetur, Statute of Law 30860, is a significant milestone extending NSW rules to embrace Trade Facilitation Principles, standardizing procedures into five types and introducing advanced provisions, such as Advanced Rulings for non-customs agencies.
- Legislative Decree 1492, enacted during the COVID-19 crisis, aimed to secure the supply chain, expedite digitalization of foreign trade-related procedures, and

establish additional rules for transparency in logistics costs, enhancing services provided by the NSW.

- Supreme Decree 001-2021 Mincetur deliver operational regulations to implement the Foreign Trade Operators Data Exchange Module Legislative (MIIO) which enables the importer to endorse electronically the Bill of Lading.

2.8.3 Significant Acts Influenced/Introduced

- Law 30860, known as the SW Optimizations Act,
- Supreme Decree 008-2020 Mincetur, Statute of Law 30860
- Legislative Decree 1492.
- Supreme Decree 001-2021 Mincetur, Statute of Legislative Decree 1492

2.8.4 Political Commitment & Institutional Arrangement

The commitment of the government, notably through the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Tourism (Mincetur), has played a crucial role in ensuring the effective operation and continuous improvement of VUCE since its inception in 2010. The ongoing transition to VUCE 2.0 and the planned integration of a Port Community System (PCS) by 2024 underscore the unwavering commitment of the government. Legal backing, notably through Law 30860, solidifies the mandatory utilization of VUCE. Collaborative efforts with around 15 controlling bodies and the enactment of Legislative Decree 1492 amid the COVID-19 crisis exemplify the government's dedication to adapting and optimizing VUCE. These initiatives underscore the pivotal role of VUCE in the ongoing modernization of Peru's foreign trade landscape.

2.8.5 Conclusion

In summary, the legal framework instated by Law 30860 has laid the groundwork for an ambitious and comprehensive SW, arguably the most innovative in Latin America. The NSW, though still evolving with critical components pending, empowers Mincetur to align controlling agencies within its scope. The SW has become instrumental in incentivizing agencies to digitize their procedures, irrespective of SW inclusion. Notably, in line with Law 30860, a risk management service has been developed to streamline pre-market approvals controls, achieving goals like applying risk management criteria for evaluating permits and integrating emerging technologies like AI for efficient decision-making. This could lead to automatic approval or elimination of pre-market controls through interoperability and AI application to customs declaration data.

2.9 United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

2.9.1 Introduction

The United Kingdom has undertaken significant initiatives to modernize and streamline its border management processes through the implementation of Single Windows

(SW). Two notable endeavours are the National Maritime Single Window (NMSW) and the upcoming UK Single Trade Window, each designed to enhance efficiency, reduce redundancies, and facilitate digitalization in compliance with international standards.

The 2025 UK Border Strategy (dated December 2020) has pledged to initiate the development of a cutting-edge UK Single Trade Window. This will establish a unified access point to government services where all necessary information for importing and exporting can be submitted to border authorities and agencies. This transformation is expected to revolutionize the interactions between traders and industries with the government regarding border procedures. According to the strategic documents, it will offer a singular electronic interface that facilitates the efficient fulfilment of all regulatory obligations related to imports, exports, safety, security, and transit-related processes.

In addition, the Electronic Trade Documents Act 2023 (ETDA) (dated July 2023) plays a pivotal role in aligning legal frameworks with the digitalization and streamlining objectives of the NMSW and the Single Trade Window. It provides the necessary legal foundation for recognizing and processing electronic trade documents, contributing to the overall efficiency of maritime and trade-related processes in the UK.

2.9.2 Analysis

The UK government is undertaking substantial legislative changes to establish a Single Trade Window (STW). The current legislation, tailored for individual government department needs, necessitates amendments to enable a more user-centric and efficient border process. The ongoing STW program, set to be fully operational by 2027, aims to streamline trade processes by providing a unified platform for import, export, and transit requirements. This involves overcoming challenges posed by existing data sharing restrictions, requiring new legal powers for HMRC. The Electronic Trade Documents Bill reflects the government's commitment to aligning policies, standards, and legislation, allowing electronic acceptance of key trade documents, and further catalysing innovation in the UK's trade ecosystem.

2.9.3 Evolution

The UK's NMSW has been launched as a pilot since 2016. Now NMSW is available at - <https://www.nmsw.homeoffice.gov.uk/>. The NMSW implemented EU Directive 2010/65/EU (the Reporting Formalities Directive, or RFD). This Directive requires Member States to provide a national SW through which maritime reports can be made, including data covered by the International Maritime Organization's standard forms under the "IMO FAL Convention". The forms provide advance data regarding the ship, its voyage, stores, crew, passengers, dangerous cargo, security, and waste/health information. The NMSW aims to simplify and digitize the process of handling legally required pre-arrival/departure paperwork, where necessary so that data can be submitted quickly via one online portal, alongside existing portals, in an electronic format and meeting the Directive's requirements.

The information provided via the NMSW is accessible only by parties with a legislative requirement to receive that information. The Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006 (Duty to Share Information and Disclosure of Information for Security Purposes) Order 2008 specifies travel-related information the border agencies must share where it is likely to be of use for immigration, HM Revenue & Customs, or police purposes. The Order also specifies that the border agencies may disclose this information to the security and intelligence agencies if the information is likely to be used for particular security purposes. The Order is under sections 36 and 38 of the Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006. In this context, the border agencies are the responsibility of the Secretary of State (the Home Secretary), to the extent that the Home Secretary has functioned under the immigration acts, HM Revenue & Customs, and a chief officer of police. This order underpins the required data sharing by the agencies under Border Systems and other joint working arrangements that pursue their shared aim of securing the border.

The Immigration, Asylum, and Nationality Act 2006 (Data Sharing Code of Practice) Order 2008 was enacted on 1 March 2008, the Code of Practice on managing information shared by Border Force, His Majesty's Revenue and Customs, and the Police. This Code of Practice imposes certain obligations on the border agencies when handling and sharing data under section 38 of the Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006. It sets out what data may be shared, how and purposes for which it may be shared, and the safeguards that must be applied. In particular, it highlights that the data must be handled and transmitted in compliance with the European Convention on Human Rights and the Data Protection Act 1998. It also sets out the sanctions that may be imposed on staff for data misuse. The Code of Practice is subject to regular review by the border agencies in conjunction with the Information Commissioner's Office.

The 2025 Border Strategy sets out our vision for the UK border to be the most effective globally. A Single Trade Window is a crucial commitment within the Strategy. "The Government has committed £180 million to build a UK Single Trade Window which will reduce trade costs by streamlining trade interactions with border agencies"². Currently, multiple government systems are involved in moving goods across the UK border. Traders and intermediaries submit data to each system as required, with some of this data being duplicative. This creates additional complexity and cost for border users. A UK Single Trade Window will provide a single data portal into which traders and intermediaries can submit data to the government. The delivery of the UK Single Trade Window will also take account of areas of devolved competence. Through centralizing data entry into one point, traders and intermediaries will no longer have to duplicate the entry of data and will see reduced administrative burdens. This will also allow for better data sharing amongst government agencies. It is expected that the UK Single Trade Window will lead to reduced costs of importing and exporting goods for businesses. In addition, the UK Government is also interested in exploring other

² <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/2025-uk-border-strategy>

opportunities to develop a UK Single Trade Window. As part of bringing together services and processes within a UK Single Trade Window, it also reviews the guidance available for border users to ensure that it is easily accessible and more tailored to the needs of users.

There are four key areas the Government is looking to explore and understand stakeholder views: one which relates to the core model of a single data entry point, and three which relate to broader opportunities and considerations. In terms of the core model of the UK Single Trade Window, the Government is seeking views on:

- Approaches to data collection and usage through the UK Single Trade Window. It is expected after the STW launch, border data will be improved, and border data will be submitted to the government through new data collection options in the Single Trade Window in the short term.
- In terms of the additional and longer-term opportunities, there are three key areas the UK Government is seeking views on:
- The potential scope for self-declaration of border data directly into the UK Single Trade Window.
- How the UK Single Trade Window should work with existing port and commercial systems, including Community System Providers (CSPs).
- Further opportunities and considerations for data in the longer term include supply chain data and interoperability.

The ecosystem of trust across the UK border seeks to integrate the use of technology to promote efficient and secure border systems, encouraging the adoption of collaboration between public and private sectors, between states, and between different types of new technology (e.g., the Internet of Things, Artificial Intelligence, Robotic Process Automation, Distributed Ledger Technology, and Smart Contracts).

On 20 July 2023, the Electronic Trade Documents Act 2023 (ETDA) received Royal Assent and became law in the UK. From 20 September 2023, the ETDA allows for the legal recognition of trade documents such as bills of lading and bills of exchange in electronic form.

The ETDA aims to help rectify deficiencies in treating electronic trade documents under English law. This will allow businesses to take advantage of reduced costs and accelerated transaction timelines, increasing trade and access to trade finance. Before the ETDA, electronic documents did not have the same legal recognition as their paper counterparts under English law. The ETDA will give electronic equivalents of paper trade documents the “same legal treatment, effects and functionality” as their paper equivalents.

Key features of the ETDA:

- Defining a “paper trade document”. The ETDA provides a flexible definition of paper trade documents requiring them to be in paper form and of a type

commonly used in trade or trade finance in at least one part of the United Kingdom.

- Defining an “electronic trade document”. For an electronic trade document to fall within the definition in the ETDA, it must first have the same function as a paper trade document. It must also be used under a “reliable system” to ensure (among other things) that it can be distinguished from any copies, cannot be altered without authorization, and cannot be used by more than one person at any time.
- Allowing possession and endorsement of an electronic trade document. ‘Possession’ of a trade document is an essential concept in international trade, as constructive possession of any goods is evidenced by holding the document of title. This means that ‘possession’ of the goods can be transferred while they are still in transit. Where a bill of lading has been moved to a new lawful holder, possession gives that holder the right to demand delivery of the goods. The previous restrictions under English Law required all trade documents to be ‘possessable’ in that they had to be in a physical, paper-based format. Without an express contractual agreement between the parties, English law did not recognize the use of electronic trade documents. The ETDA now permits a person to “possess, indorse and part with possession of an electronic trade document” as if it has the same effect as an equivalent paper trade document, thereby altering the long-standing approach to the previous requirement of ‘possession’.
- Allowing change of form. A paper trade document may also be converted into an electronic trade document and vice versa if:
 - a statement that the document has been converted is included in the paper in its new form, and
 - any contractual or other requirements relating to the conversion of the document are complied with.
 - This is significant in practice as it permits a holder to change the trade document medium to comply with jurisdictional requirements.
 - The Electronic Trade Documents Act 2023 (ETDA) supports both the National Maritime Single Window (NMSW) and the upcoming UK Single Trade Window by facilitating the legal recognition of trade documents in electronic form. Here's how:
 - Integration with NMSW
- The NMSW, as part of the UK's commitment to the Reporting Formalities Directive (RFD), requires the submission of maritime reports and data covered by international standards.

- The ETDA, by allowing legal recognition of trade documents in electronic form, aligns with the digitalization objectives of the NMSW. It provides a legal framework for the electronic submission of documents related to ships, voyages, cargo, crew, passengers, security, and waste/health information.
 - Simplification and Digitization
- The NMSW aims to simplify and digitize pre-arrival/departure paperwork. The ETDA contributes to this objective by providing legal recognition to electronic trade documents, eliminating the need for paper-based processes.
- Traders and intermediaries can use the ETDA to submit trade-related documents electronically, streamlining the process of handling legally required paperwork in alignment with the goals of the NMSW.
 - Single Trade Window Implementation:
- The UK's 2025 Border Strategy includes the commitment to establish a Single Trade Window. The ETDA supports this initiative by providing the legal basis for recognizing electronic trade documents within the Single Trade Window.
- Traders and intermediaries can take advantage of the ETDA to submit electronic trade documents through the Single Trade Window, reducing administrative burdens and simplifying data entry.
 - Enhanced Data Sharing:
- The ETDA enhances data-sharing capabilities by legally recognizing electronic documents. This aligns with the objective of the NMSW and the Single Trade Window to improve data sharing among government agencies.
- By promoting the use of electronic trade documents, the ETDA contributes to a more efficient and secure border system, fostering collaboration between public and private sectors.
 - Exploration of Additional Opportunities:
- The UK Government, as part of the Single Trade Window implementation, is exploring opportunities for self-declaration, collaboration with existing port systems, and considerations for long-term data opportunities. The legal recognition of electronic trade documents under the ETDA aligns with these explorations.
- In summary, the ETDA plays a pivotal role in aligning legal frameworks with the digitalization and streamlining objectives of the NMSW and the Single Trade Window. It provides the necessary legal foundation for recognizing and processing electronic trade documents, contributing to the overall efficiency of maritime and trade-related processes in the UK.

2.9.4 Significant Acts Influenced/Introduced

- Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006. This Act specifies information-sharing requirements among border agencies for immigration, HM Revenue & Customs, and police purposes.
- Immigration, Asylum, and Nationality Act 2006 (Data Sharing Code of Practice) Order 2008: Enacted on March 1, 2008, this order sets out obligations on border agencies when handling and sharing data, ensuring compliance with the European Convention on Human Rights and the Data Protection Act 1998.
- National Maritime Single Window (NMSW): Launched as a pilot in 2016, the NMSW implements EU Directive 2010/65/EU, requiring Member States to establish a national 'Single Window' for maritime reports.
- Electronic Trade Documents Act 2023 (ETDA) - this act, effective from September 20, 2023, allows for the legal recognition of trade documents in electronic form, aligning with the digitalization goals of the NMSW and the upcoming UK Single Trade Window.

2.9.5 International Agreements and Standards

The Digital Trade Principles (<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/g7-trade-ministers-digital-trade-principles>), endorsed by the G7 countries, including the UK, were released at the close of 2021. These principles emphasize the development of SWs based on common standards, with a primary objective of achieving international interoperability in alignment with the best practices recommended by the World Customs Organization (WCO). The potential advantages of this approach encompass enhanced collaboration between countries or regions that adhere to WCO's common customs standards and reduced administrative expenses for traders, as the same information wouldn't need to be submitted to multiple national authorities.

The importance for the UK STW to adopt common international standards such as the World Customs Organization (WCO) data model and those from the United Nations Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business (UN/CEFACT) was noted in Strategic documents. Other frameworks mentioned were from the WTO, the Digital Container Shipping Association (DCSA), the International Air Transport Association (IATA) ONE Record, and LWIN (the world's most extensive open-source database for wine and spirits).

2.9.6 Political Commitments & Institutional Arrangements

The United Kingdom demonstrates a high level of commitment to modernizing border processes through initiatives like the NMSW and the upcoming UK Single Trade Window. The 2025 UK Border Strategy pledges to create a unified access point for trade-related information. The Electronic Trade Documents Act 2023 (ETDA) aligns legal frameworks with digitalization goals. The NMSW, aligned with EU directives, simplifies pre-arrival paperwork. Defined institutional arrangements ensure data sharing compliance. The UK Single Trade Window aims to centralize data entry,

reduce duplication, and enhance data sharing, aligning with stakeholder views and exploring new technologies. Endorsement of Digital Trade Principles and recognition of international standards highlight the commitment to global best practices. The UK government's role in catalysing innovation through legislation, such as the Electronic Trade Documents Bill, underscores its forward-looking approach.

2.9.7 Conclusion

To establish a Single Trade Window (STW), the UK's government needs to change the legislation governing data collection, utilization, and sharing. Additionally, adjustments must be made to the legal framework supporting specific declaration types to ensure their compatibility with the SW.

This is necessary because the existing legislative structure for border requirements has been tailored to accommodate the current border process model, which is designed based on the individual needs of various government departments rather than taking a comprehensive approach that considers the user's perspective. Under the current setup, data must be submitted to multiple government departments via various portals through declarations and other border-related requirements like licenses and authorizations. This often results in redundant and time-consuming submission processes.

Currently, The UK Government has launched efforts to design and create a Single Trade Window. The program is in its design phase, and the goal is to provide certain functionalities to traders by the end of 2023. It is expected to become fully operational by 2027. Once fully functional, the UK Single Trade Window will serve as a bridge connecting businesses with UK border procedures and systems. This will enable users to fulfil all their mandatory import, export, and transit requirements by submitting information in one place, eliminating the need for multiple submissions.

Implementing the STW system requires new legal powers for HMRC (His Majesty's Revenue & Customs) to collect and share data, as current legislation restricts information sharing between departments. In addition, the restrictions set out in the Commissioners of Revenue and Customs Act (CRCA) 2005 (<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2005/11/contents>) and other laws require changes to allow HMRC to carry out these activities as part of the operation of the STW.

The UK's government has outlined its role in catalysing innovation by ensuring that policy, standard setting, and legislation are aligned, for example, via the forthcoming Electronic Trade Documents Bill. This bill will permit documents used in international trade, such as the bill of exchange, bill of lading, promissory notes, and marine insurance documents, to be accepted in electronic rather than physical format.

2.10 Uzbekistan

2.10.1 Introduction

From 2020, all border Customs checkpoints in Uzbekistan implemented a Single Window (SW) digital information system to streamline the registration process for cargo customs declarations, reducing the processing time from three days to just one. Importers are now mandated to provide advance information and verify the issuance of all relevant certificates through the SW system. Additionally, starting on October 1, 2021, Uzbekistan introduced customs posts for remote electronic declaration, enabling the remote clearance of electronically submitted cargo customs declarations.

2.10.2 Analysis

The implementation of the SW system in Uzbekistan represents a significant modernization effort in administrative processes, especially in trade and transportation services. This initiative involved a comprehensive review of the legislative framework, resulting in the introduction and adaptation of various legislative acts to align with the system's principles. The State Customs Committee overcame multiple challenges, including document proliferation and IT system diversity. Despite these achievements, issues persist, such as concerns about information security, disparities among departments, and limited awareness within the business community. Furthermore, the practical application of enacted legal norms lags, and bureaucratic obstacles are encountered in processing certain licenses and permits.

2.10.3 Evolution

The SW Customs information system (SWC) has been implemented in Uzbekistan since 2020. Through this system, it is possible to obtain the permits and certificates required for export-import operations. The introduction of the SWC is by the Presidential Decree of the Republic of Uzbekistan dated November 20, 2019, No. PP-4525 "On Measures to Further Improve the Business Environment and Enhance the Entrepreneurship Support System in the Country". According to this decree, starting from February 1, 2020, the issuance of permits and certificates required for export-import operations was to be carried out through the SWC. This system began operating on January 1, 2020, and can be accessed electronically at www.singlewindow.uz.

The SWC of Uzbekistan integrates automated information systems of authorized authorities, including the State Customs Committee (SCC), the "Uzstandart" Agency, the Ministry of Health, the State Committee for Veterinary and Livestock Development, the State Committee on Ecology and Environment Protection, the State Plant Quarantine Inspectorate under the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan, the OJSC "Uzeptertiza", as well as the Central Bank.

To enhance the speed and efficiency of the activities of phytosanitary, sanitary-epidemiological, veterinary, environmental control services, and certification bodies (in carrying out control functions related to goods and vehicles crossing the borders of the Republic of Uzbekistan, including through accelerated interdepartmental electronic

cooperation), the Presidential Decree of the Republic of Uzbekistan dated April 23, 2019, No. PP-4297 "On Measures to Further Improve Administrative Procedures for Foreign Economic Activities" was adopted.

Specifically, this decree mandated implementing the SWC that complies with all recommended criteria and guiding principles for creating the SW mechanism developed by the United Nations Center for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business. By the end of 2019, the system had been developed and launched in a test mode.

At present, entrepreneurs can submit applications online to the SWC using electronic digital signatures to obtain the permits and certificates required for export-import operations. The documents and certificates issued in response to the application are simultaneously sent to the entrepreneur and Customs authorities for processing. Additionally, entrepreneurs can verify the authenticity of documents and certificates and obtain information about document forms, customs tariffs, trade regimes, and export-import indicators through the portal.

The typical customs clearance procedure typically takes place within the jurisdiction where the Customs authority is situated. Nevertheless, if requested by the involved party, customs clearances can be carried out at alternative locations. The declaration of imported goods can be performed by either an individual or a legal entity responsible for the transportation or transfer of the goods or by a licensed customs broker. Regardless of whether the person or entity making the declaration is the importer or a customs broker, they must fulfil all legal obligations and assume total responsibility as stipulated by the legislation. In Uzbekistan, a customs broker is defined as a legal entity authorized to conduct customs clearance operations on behalf of the person or entity they represent. Additionally, it should be noted that the SW system has a strong political will for further implementation and development, including at the highest levels (e.g., the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan). Moreover, there has been increased collaboration among the agencies participating in the SW system recently.

2.10.4 Significant Acts Influenced/Introduced

- The Framework Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Uzbekistan and the Government of the Republic of Korea on Grant-in-Aid for 2013 dated 03.12.2013.
- Resolution of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan No. PP-2224 dated 08.18.2014 "On measures to ensure the effective use of the grant of the Government of the Republic of Korea for the implementation of the project "Customs Modernization by Introducing the "Single Window" Unified Customs Information System in the Republic of Uzbekistan
- The Action Plan to implement Resolutions of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan № PP-2224 dated 18.08.2014, № 02/1-3621 dated 20.08.2014, approved by the Prime Minister of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

Within the framework of these initiatives, the creation of a unified Customs information system called SW, its integration into the Unified Portal of Interactive Government Services, and the supply of necessary software, materials, and equipment for the successful implementation of the project are envisaged. The Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) acts as the executing agency on the Korean side, responsible for the project's implementation. The State Customs Committee of the Republic of Uzbekistan is the executing authority on the Uzbek side, responsible for the targeted use of the grant and the successful project implementation.

In summary, this resolution approves the main tasks and details of the project related to the modernization of the customs service and the implementation of the SW information system in the Republic of Uzbekistan. They also designate responsible parties from both sides for the successful execution of the project.

2.10.5 International Agreements and Standards

International cooperation plays a significant role in the activities of the Customs authorities of Uzbekistan. To implement international norms and standards into national legislation, Uzbekistan acceded to the Istanbul Convention on Temporary Admission in 2020 and the Kyoto Convention on the Simplification and Harmonization of Customs Procedures in 2021.

In 2022, the Central Customs Laboratory attained the status of a regional customs laboratory of the World Customs Organization. Additionally, the Customs Institute underwent accreditation to conform to the professional standards of the World Customs Organization's PICARD. The National Canine Center holds the status of a Regional Canine Center of the World Customs Organization.

Currently, active collaboration is ongoing with 35 foreign customs services based on 158 international agreements. Recommendations obtained from the customs services of countries where foreign experience was studied have been extensively used to develop new electronic programs. For instance: The experience of the UAE and Korea in developing information systems "E-Transit" and "Risk Assessment of Passengers," aimed at enhancing control over cargo vehicles and citizens at the border. The experience of countries such as Turkey, Georgia, and Azerbaijan in developing information systems "Cargo Operations" and "Customs Inspection," aimed at the conditional release of goods and controlling goods in warehouses. The experience of the UAE and Azerbaijan was used in developing information systems "Customs Officer" and "Management of Corruption Risks," aimed at combating corruption and improving employee efficiency.

Separately, it is worth noting the Memorandum of Mutual Understanding between the Ministry of Foreign Economic Relations, Investment and Trade of the Republic of Uzbekistan and the Ministry of Knowledge Economy of the Republic of Korea on Cooperation in the Development of the E-trade System of Uzbekistan dated May 27, 2009. This document concerns cooperation in the development of e-commerce and the use of the SW system in international trade between Uzbekistan and Korea. It

outlines the importance of electronic trade and the use of e-commerce in fostering global economic development, expressing the mutual interest of both countries in further cooperation in this area.

2.10.6 Political Commitments & Institutional Arrangements

Uzbekistan has exhibited noteworthy political commitment by endorsing strategic documents for the SW project. The tangible implementation of key project features underscores this commitment, which is apparent at both the presidential and governmental levels. This dedication reflects a strong resolve to streamline administrative processes and foster collaboration across various government agencies, highlighting Uzbekistan's proactive approach to the successful implementation of the SW system.

To facilitate and encourage entrepreneurial activities in Uzbekistan, several provisions related to this field have been critically reviewed, and bureaucratic obstacles hindering work have been removed. As a result of these measures, the business environment has improved, providing extensive opportunities for entrepreneurs and private investors.

2.10.7 Conclusion

Implementing the SW system in Uzbekistan signifies a transformative step towards streamlining and modernizing administrative processes, particularly in trade, transportation, and related services. This initiative necessitated a comprehensive review of the legislative framework, leading to the introduction, revision, and adaptation of numerous legislative acts to ensure full compliance with the principles and objectives of the system. The State Customs Committee of Uzbekistan had to overcome many impediments to implement the design of a SW in practice. Such barriers included: multiple documents, numerous various IT systems, barriers in interaction, inadequate technical infrastructure, etc.

However, the analysis has revealed some remaining issues with the SW System. These include problems related to information security, disparities in the readiness of various departments, and insufficient preparedness of the business community. Moreover, local implementers are not fully informed about the nature and significance of the reforms being carried out in the SW domain, and the incorporation of enacted legal norms into practice significantly lags. Additionally, when processing certain licenses and permits, bureaucratic obstacles are encountered.

3. Conclusion

The comparative analysis of Single Window (SW) systems in ten diverse countries reveals a dynamic landscape marked by evolving legal frameworks, institutional advancements, and technological innovation. Each country, from Cambodia to Uzbekistan, demonstrates unique approaches to trade facilitation through SW implementations. Common advantages include efficiency gains, enhanced transparency, and improved regulatory compliance. Robust legal frameworks, exemplified by acts like the Electronic Trade Documents Act in the UK, underscore the importance of legislative support in driving successful SW initiatives.

In their SW implementations, each country faces unique strategies and challenges, forming a rich tapestry. A common theme across successful cases involves, based on the appropriate legislative support, fostering interagency coordination, supported by a flexible governance mechanism and strong leadership in national initiatives.

Fostering Interagency Coordination: One recurring challenge identified in the studied countries is difficulties in inter-agency coordination. Successful SW implementations, such as those in Cambodia, Kenya, and Pakistan, emphasize the need for enhanced collaboration among government entities. The establishment of comprehensive legal frameworks and effective regulatory changes, as seen in Mexico, ensures a harmonized approach among controlling bodies.

Flexible Governance Mechanism: The need for a flexible governance mechanism emerges as a critical factor in successful SW systems. Countries like Georgia and Peru, with robust institutional arrangements, showcase the importance of adaptability in overcoming challenges. The ability to evolve legislative frameworks, as demonstrated by Kenya, ensures that the governance structure remains responsive to changing trade dynamics.

National Initiative Leadership: Leadership in national initiatives, driven by committed government bodies, plays a pivotal role in SW's success. Countries like Pakistan and the United Kingdom highlight the importance of a strong commitment to digitization and trade facilitation at the national level. The PSW initiative in Pakistan, fortified by the PSW Act, Mexico's VUCEM decree, and Kenya's NSW Act, exemplifies the impact of national leadership in driving efficient, digitized trade environments.

Despite progress, challenges persist, including data security concerns, technological disparities, and the need for continued capacity building. The analysis emphasizes the importance of fostering international collaboration, continuous investment in technology infrastructure, and dialogue for harmonizing standards to promote seamless cross-border trade. Key takeaways include the shared global commitment to enhancing trade facilitation through SW, the adaptability inherent in diverse approaches, and the significance of collaboration, innovation, and continuous updates.

In conclusion, countries with successful SW implementations share common best practices, including fostering interagency coordination, maintaining a flexible governance mechanism, and showcasing leadership in national initiatives. When appropriate legal frameworks support the SW implementation along with these elements, they collectively contribute to the dynamic evolution of SW systems, reinforcing the shared global commitment to enhancing trade facilitation. Moving forward, continuous collaboration and innovation will be instrumental in shaping the future of international trade processes.

ANNEXES

Annex 1. Comparative analysis of the Single Window (SW) systems

Country	Key Legislation	Evolution of Legal Framework	Regulatory Effectiveness
Cambodia	Sub-decree 25, Prakas No. 959	Evolved with ASEAN agreements, incorporating national decrees	Moderate; limited to specific goods
Cameroon	MoU with Douala Port Authority/Customs/GUCE, Electronic Commerce Law	Progressively modernized with laws, regulations, and inter-agency agreements	High; significant streamlining of foreign trade processes
Georgia	New Customs Code, Ministerial Order No. 257	Driven by EU commitments, modernizing customs practices	High; modernized customs practices
Kenya	Legal Notice No. 6 of 2011, National Electronic Single Window System Act	Strategic evolution from port-centric to national SW	High; streamlined trade processes
Kyrgyzstan	Presidential Decree No. 464, Resolution No. 315	Focus on modernizing administrative procedures, SW integration	Moderate; digitalization in progress
Mexico	Mexican Constitution, Customs Law, Foreign Trade Law	Extensive legal and regulatory framework	High; comprehensive foreign trade coverage
Pakistan	Pakistan Single Window Act 2021	Centered around the PSW Act 2021	High; mandatory trade regulator participation
Peru	Law 30860 (SW Optimizations Act), Supreme Decree 008-2020	Expansion of NSW with advanced provisions	Moderate to High; regulatory adjustments in progress
United Kingdom	Electronic Trade Documents Act 2023	Focus on modernizing trade and maritime processes	High; significant digitalization efforts
Uzbekistan	Presidential Decree dated November 20, 2019, No. PP-4525	Focus on operational aspects	Moderate; modernization efforts evident

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