

Import Control System 2 (ICS2) – Release 2: New rules for inbound air shipments to the EU went live on 1 March 2023

The European Union launched the second phase of its Import Control System 2 (ICS2), the new advance cargo information and risk management platform, to protect against security and safety threats from goods entering the EU.

From 1 March 2023, all air carriers, freight forwarders, express couriers, and postal operators involved in the transportation of goods by air to or through the EU¹ must provide a complete set of Entry Summary Declaration data on the goods, prior to their arrival at the EU external border. They must do this through the ICS2 system, which is gradually replacing the EU's existing Import Control System (ICS) between 2021 and 2024. Air carriers currently filing advance cargo information into the Import Control System (ICS) will fully phase out from that system as soon as they start filing this data into ICS2.

The second phase of ICS2 introduced new data requirements and processes to be complied with, prior to transporting the goods from a third country and before their arrival at the European Union's external border. Failure by affected economic operators to obtain the necessary data from their clients and to provide it to ICS2 will lead to actions by customs authorities to enforce compliance prior to and on arrival at the external border. Please consult our [website](#) for additional information on these important changes.

In case economic operators are not ready to comply, they need to make a request to start filing into ICS2 at a later date during the time-limited deployment window. They should do this through the Member State where the EORI² number of the economic operator which will be used for the advance cargo information filing is registered. The deployment window, if granted, allows the economic operators to become operationally ready for ICS2 Release 2 after 1 March 2023. However, to ensure a smooth transition from Release 1 to Release 2, and to facilitate trade operations, the deployment window for each business model and the order in which different types of economic operators connect to ICS2 Release 2 will be aligned across all Member States, as defined in the relevant [transition strategy](#). Member States can grant the deployment window up until 2 October 2023.

If economic operators are not ready by the set deadline, and do not provide the data required under the ICS2 system, consignments and freight will be stopped at the EU borders and the goods in question will not be cleared by the customs authorities.

For more information

More information about ICS2 and Release 2 is available on the European Commission's webpage [here](#).

¹ All EU Member States, as well as Norway, Switzerland, and Northern Ireland

² Economic Operators Registration and Identification

ICS2 in detail

The ICS2 programme has been prepared in close collaboration between the European Commission, Member States' customs authorities, and business. It enhances customs supervision of goods prior to their transport in a third country and arrival at EU external borders. It provides improved data quality, improved customs risk management and a better risk-based approach to customs risk mitigation measures and external border controls. This enables EU customs to identify threats earlier and to intervene at the most appropriate point in the supply chain. The ICS2 programme and the new tools also help to better target a wide range of unsafe goods found in small e-commerce parcels.

In Release 1, ICS2 focused on postal and express consignments coming to or through the EU by air. In this release, a subset of the Entry Summary Declaration (so called pre-loading advance cargo information - also known as "PLACI") must be provided before the goods are loaded onto the aircraft bound for the EU, to enable customs to detect immediate threats to aviation security.

With ICS2 Release 2, from 1 March 2023, air cargo general consignments are also subject to the PLACI filing and to the complete set of data of the Entry Summary Declaration (ENS) prior to their arrival. The filing can be provided in one single complete ENS filing, if all the necessary data is available to the party that files and assumes the responsibility for bringing the goods into the European customs territory. Alternatively, it can be done with multiple filings, where more than one partial ENS filings are submitted by different actors in the supply chain. In case of multiple filings, each filer is responsible for ensuring that their own filings are submitted in a timely, accurate and complete way. However, it is the responsibility of the air carriers to work closely with their contracting parties, and the responsibility of the latter parties to work with their clients in the supply chain, in order to ensure that all ICS2 ENS filing requirements are met. You can check the relevant pre-arrival data filing requirements in this [factsheet](#). Before economic operators start filing ENS in ICS2 Release 2, they must verify that their system is compatible with the ICS2 business processes and filing requirements. They need to do this through the mandatory self-conformance testing procedure. A detailed [factsheet](#) is available to explain these requirements.

One further release of ICS2 will complete this important reform: Release 3 will include maritime, rail and road modes of transport from 1 March 2024.