

ENSURING THE ECONOMIC SECURITY OF UKRAINE AS A COMPONENT OF THE CUSTOMS COMPETENCES OF A CUSTOMS AUTHORITY OFFICIAL

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Abstract. The article addresses the issue of whether ensuring the economic security of Ukraine should be considered the responsibility of a customs authority official. The *purpose of this study* is to analyse the current state of the competences of a customs authority official. To this end, the following three steps are proposed: a) the praxeological dimension is to be identified; b) the subject-content dimension is to be distinguished and analysed; c) the ensuring of the economic security of Ukraine is to be substantiated as one of the key competences of a customs authority official. The *methodology of the study* incorporates a variety of approaches, including general and special methods of scientific cognition, the method of systems analysis, the dialectical method, formallogical methods, and the structural-functional method, in addition to a range of empirical methods. The *results* obtained from this study support the advancement of the thesis that the concept of "customs competences", in contrast to the concept of 'competence of customs authorities' (which has legal significance), is an applied concept and represents a set of specific characteristics (knowledge, skills, abilities, motives, and values). The exhaustive list of these characteristics is provided by customs legislation. It is clear that defining the notion of "customs competences" in terms of 'professional competence' is a breach of legal drafting techniques, given that the latter is substantially broader and more comprehensive in terms of content and essence. The State Customs Service of Ukraine is proposing the adoption of the following: a) training programmes for customs authority officials with a focus on ensuring economic security; and b) advanced training programmes aimed at updating knowledge related to ensuring economic security.

Keywords: competences of a customs authority official, customs authority, special requirements, customs authority officials, economic security of Ukraine, national security, economic interests.

JEL Classification: H83, F13, K23, H56, F52

1. Introduction

The economic security of the state is defined as the condition of safeguarding the economy and creating favourable conditions for the operations of economic entities and public institutions. This approach ensures the satisfaction of national economic interests and the mitigation of threats (Senchahova, 2021). Ensuring economic security is one of the tasks of public executive authorities. In the current era of globalisation and changing foreign economic conditions, ensuring the economic security of the state is of paramount importance, as development depends not only on stable financial flows, but also on the state's ability to withstand systemic internal and external threats. For Ukraine in particular, which has been operating

under significant economic and security pressure in recent years, this issue poses a major challenge to state customs policy and the activities of customs authorities. At the same time, there has been no standardisation of requirements or establishment of specialised knowledge as a mandatory component of the competencies of a customs authority official.

At the same time, the concept of "customs competences", as defined in Article 570 of the Customs Code of Ukraine (hereafter "the CC of Ukraine") (Customs Code of Ukraine, 2012), is a novel legal concept within both customs legislation and the current legislation of Ukraine. It is evident that establishing the essence and substantive content of this concept, in addition to conducting a comparative analysis

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with related concepts such as "customs competence", "professional competence" and "competence of customs authorities", is imperative. This is particularly crucial for identifying the specific features of its normative and legal regulation. This, in turn, underscores the necessity for the enhancement of customs legislation and the development of the theory of public service law and service legislation. Customs competencies are defined as "...the professional requirements for officials of the customs authority holding civil service positions in categories B and C, comprising a set of characteristics (knowledge, skills, abilities, motivations and values) that ensure the performance of official duties at a high level for the purpose of implementing the tasks entrusted to the customs authority" (The Law of Ukraine "On Amendments to the Customs Code of Ukraine Concerning the Establishment of Specific Provisions Governing Service in the Customs Authorities and the Assessment of Customs Officials"). Consequently, the aggregate of knowledge, skills, abilities, motivations, and values of a customs official related to ensuring the economic security of the state constitutes an integral element of the legal status of a customs authority official.

Given the absence of dedicated academic publications addressing this problem, the issue of defining the essence of the concept of "customs competences" and attributing knowledge of economic security to them acquires particular significance. The theoretical foundation of this study is based on scholarly conclusions concerning: a) the determination of the substantive meaning of the concept of "competence" in its legal sense as a set of formally established rights and obligations, that is, the powers of a public authority or an official (Averianov, 2001: 196); the right to exercise functions and powers in accordance with one's legal status (Selivanov, 2016: 433); a formally defined scope of powers of an authority vested with public power for the performance of its functions (Petryshyn, 2017: 240). This aspect has been examined, in particular, by D. Prymachenko (2011: 126), who analyses the concept and legal nature of competence and characterised the structure of the competence of customs authorities; A. Nazarko (2024), who conducted a comprehensive analysis of the concept and specific features of the competences of customs authorities of Ukraine in the context of current innovations in the customs sphere; and O. Ilchenko (2024), who characterised certain conceptual and categorical elements of the system of theoretical and legal regulation of anti-corruption relations in the customs sphere as an important component of strengthening customs security; b) studies on the essence of the economic security of Ukraine as a state of the national economy and public institutions that ensures guaranteed protection of national interests, socially oriented development of the

state as a whole, and sufficient economic potential under conditions of dangerous internal or external processes (Kozachenko, Liashenko, 2013: 77); the application of methods for assessing customs security (Holynskiy, Vikhot, 2021); and the determination of the role of customs authorities, their place and competence within the system of ensuring economic security (Rohatynska, 2018). In consideration of the aforementioned, the present article undertakes a doctrinal analysis of the following aspects: firstly, the applied (practice-oriented) significance of customs competences in view of the novelty of their normative consolidation; secondly, the subject-substantive characteristics of customs competences; and thirdly, the delineation of ensuring the economic security of the state as one of the competences of a customs authority official.

2. Customs Competences: the Praxeological Aspect

It is important to note that the applied nature of the concept of "customs competences" is evident in paragraph 4 of Article 570, clause 4 of the 2012 Customs Code of Ukraine, which states that this concept is defined exclusively for the purposes of Chapter XX, "Customs Authorities". Consequently, this definition is not applicable to other regulatory legal acts or chapters of the Customs Code of Ukraine. Thus, the concept of customs competences has a limited scope of application, as evidenced by the fact that, while it is formally applicable to Chapter XX of the Customs Code of Ukraine, it is only used in practice in Articles 570 ("Specific Features of Recruitment to Customs Authorities"), 570-3 ("Specific Features of Service in Customs Authorities") and 585 ("Remuneration of Officials and Employees of Customs Authorities"). At the same time, it should be emphasised that the concept of customs competencies is directly related to both recruitment to the customs authorities and the performance of public service by officials of the customs authorities, both of which will be discussed further below.

Analysing the concept of customs competencies enables us to identify a number of key characteristics that define their nature and distinguishing features, setting them apart from other related concepts. Customs competences constitute: a) requirements for the professional competence of customs authority officials [paragraph 5, part 4, Article 570 of the Customs Code of Ukraine] (2012); and b) special requirements for persons applying for civil service positions of categories B and C in customs authorities [paragraph 3, part 4, Article 570 of the Customs Code of Ukraine] (2012). In this context, several important aspects should be highlighted.

The legislator uses two concepts simultaneously: "competence" (customs competence) and "competency"

(professional competency). This necessitates clarifying their substantive meaning and conducting a comparative analysis of them. Here, the applied dimension of the concept of customs competence is employed, encompassing knowledge, skills, abilities, motives and values. By contrast, "competency" refers to an individual's ability to apply these characteristics, i.e., to demonstrate competence in practical activities in order to achieve specific performance outcomes. Based on the above, it should be noted that the Customs Code of Ukraine establishes only the requirement to possess the relevant characteristics, namely knowledge, skills, abilities, motives and values, and does not impose a requirement regarding the individual's ability to apply them in practice to achieve specific results.

Such a regulatory approach appears acceptable when applied to candidates for civil service positions within customs authorities, since it is impossible to assess their level of competency due to the absence of relevant experience. However, it is important to emphasise that the use of the concept of "customs competences" is methodologically incorrect with regard to customs authority officials, particularly when assessing their level of "customs competences". In this case, the issue is not about customs competence, but rather customs competency. What is actually being assessed is the ability of customs authority officials to apply their competence in practical activities, i.e., their level of competency. In this regard, attention should be drawn to the fact that the Law of Ukraine "On Civil Service" (2015) employs the concept of professional competency in relation to: a) a person applying for a civil service position (paragraph 1, Article 20); and b) civil servants in the context of the obligation to enhance their level of professional competency (Article 48).

Thus, the Law of Ukraine "On Civil Service" establishes the requirement that a candidate possess such a qualitative characteristic as professional competency, which is impossible without the presence of the corresponding quantitative characteristic, namely competence. This demonstrates that the concept of competency is related to the concept of competence as a whole, i.e., competence is an element of competency. It is also necessary to compare the concepts of customs competence and professional competency within customs legislation. It should be noted that the legislator defines the concept of customs competences through the concept of professional competency: "customs competences are requirements for professional competency..." In doing so, a component (competence) is defined through the whole (competency), constituting a violation of the principles of legal drafting.

Another violation of legal drafting technique lies in the fact that, by defining customs competences

through professional competency, the legislator neither provides a definition of professional competency within the Customs Code nor refers to paragraph 5, part 1, Article 2 of the Law of Ukraine "On Civil Service" (2015), where such a definition is established for the civil service sphere. This provision defines professional competency as "the ability of an individual, within the scope of the powers assigned to a position, to apply specialised knowledge, skills, and abilities, and to demonstrate appropriate moral and business qualities for the proper performance of assigned tasks and duties, as well as for learning, professional, and personal development". In summary, the utilisation of the concept of customs competences as delineated in the Customs Code of Ukraine, as well as the legislative definition of this concept, are both subjects of considerable debate and require appropriate amendments to Article 570 of the Customs Code of Ukraine.

It is evident that the Customs Code of Ukraine and the Law of Ukraine "On Civil Service" lack definitions for the aforementioned concepts, thus necessitating further elaboration. In particular, it should be noted that: a) knowledge refers to the body of theoretical information related to a particular field; a set of data and concepts in a specific area acquired through education, research, and other forms of learning; b) skills (abilities) denote the capacity to consciously and successfully perform activities in the field of customs affairs and to solve tasks based on acquired knowledge and experience; c) practical skills are abilities developed through experience and practice that enable an individual to perform certain actions and tasks automatically, without excessive effort, using existing knowledge to achieve a specific goal; d) abilities are individual psychological characteristics of a person that constitute a prerequisite for successful performance in the field of customs affairs and ensure the rapid acquisition of knowledge, skills, and practical abilities; e) motives are driving forces that prompt actions, behaviour, or activity, creating a need for something and determining the direction and stability of a person's actions; f) values are what an individual considers particularly important, meaningful, and worthwhile, shaping behaviour, decision-making, and motivation. As demonstrated above, the majority of these concepts are mutually conditioned, interconnected, and interdependent.

The content of customs competences consists of a set of specific characteristics, the exhaustive list of which is defined in Article 570 of the Customs Code of Ukraine (2012). This set of characteristics is designed to guarantee that customs authority officials carry out their duties to the highest standard in order to fulfil the tasks assigned to customs authorities. The pivotal element in this provision is the adjective "high level", which permits both a broad interpretation due to its absence of definition and the possibility of

subjectivity in determining the level of performance of official duties.

It appears that in this context a combination of the following indicators should be taken into account: a) timeliness (the performance of official duties is directly linked to compliance with established deadlines; it is insufficient merely to perform duties, as they must be performed within the prescribed time limits); b) intensity (determined by the completeness of official duties, that is, the totality of all possible and permissible forms of relevant behaviour, actions, and decisions); c) diligence (manifested primarily in the achieved results of a particular activity; it is insufficient merely to engage in activity, as it is necessary to achieve tangible positive outcomes); d) creativity (it is insufficient to perform official duties, assignments, or instructions of a superior at any cost; rather, it is necessary to demonstrate innovativeness in selecting the solution that is most effective, appropriate, and optimal in a given situation); e) initiative (expressed through proactive behaviour in proposing new solutions to issues within the scope of one's powers; a customs authority official should not merely await instructions or orders from a superior but should independently initiate the resolution of relevant issues) (Bila-Tiunova, 2020: 129).

In this context, it is imperative to draw attention to certain inaccuracies pertaining to the list of characteristics that an individual applying for a civil service position in a customs authority is required to possess. Specifically, the Customs Code of Ukraine does not define the concept of professional competency (through which the concept of customs competences is formulated), while the Law of Ukraine "On Civil Service", which does provide a definition of professional competency, includes the following characteristics within its content: a) special knowledge, understood as the body of theoretical information related to the field of customs affairs, acquired through education, research, and other learning processes; b) skills; c) practical skills; d) moral qualities, that is, internal traits, beliefs, and principles that determine an individual's understanding of good and evil, justice, honour, and responsibility, as well as regulate behaviour and interaction with others. These include gratitude, honesty, compassion, empathy, co-operation, respect, equality, fairness, courage, approval, sincerity, responsibility, perseverance, self-control, and similar qualities; e) business qualities, meaning personal traits and characteristics that determine an individual's effectiveness and success in professional activity, such as independence, responsibility, communicative ability, goal orientation, stress resistance, integrity, decision-making ability, work capacity, flexibility, and others.

As demonstrated above, the lists of characteristics that constitute customs competences and professional competency largely do not coincide (with the exception

of skills and practical skills). This provides a foundation for asserting the existence of gaps and inaccuracies in the legal regulation of the concept of customs competences. It is therefore necessary to eliminate legal inconsistencies and refine existing regulatory gaps.

3. The Subject and Substantive Features of Customs Competences

Customs competencies are also characterised by a specific group of people to whom they apply. Before analysing this group, it should be noted that customs competencies extend to either customs authority officials or persons applying for civil service positions within customs authorities. They do not apply to employees of customs authorities whose activities are governed by labour legislation. Three groups of persons to whom customs competences apply may be distinguished, depending on the classification criterion, in particular:

1) By the status of persons, namely: a) persons applying for civil service positions within customs authorities – at the stage of recruitment to customs authorities (Article 570(4) of the Customs Code of Ukraine); b) persons who are customs authority officials – during the annual assessment of the level of their customs competences (Article 570-3 of the Customs Code of Ukraine) (2012).

2) By categories of civil service positions [as defined by the Law of Ukraine "On Civil Service" (2015)] occupied by customs authority officials, namely: a) category A positions: as noted above, the concept of customs competences is used only in Articles 570, 570-3 and 585 of the Customs Code of Ukraine, and only Article 570 provides that customs competences as a special requirement apply to persons applying for civil service positions of categories B and C within customs authorities. At the same time, Articles 570-1 and 570-2, which regulate the requirements for candidates for the position of the Head of the State Customs Service (a civil service position of category A) and the procedure for appointment and dismissal, do not contain any reference to customs competences. Thus, at the legislative level, the application of customs competencies to individuals applying for category A civil service positions (i.e., the Head of the State Customs Service, the First Deputy Head, and the Deputy Heads) remains unregulated. However, this issue is regulated at the level of a subordinate normative legal act – the Catalogue of Typical Positions of Customs Authority Officials (2015). In particular, paragraph 9 of the Catalogue states that category A civil service positions include the first and second levels of standard customs roles. These roles involve leading a customs authority, exercising the powers of the head of the civil service within the customs authority, and defining priority objectives, development strategies,

and work plans. They also involve ensuring internal and external communication. Accordingly, with regard to the subordinate legislation, the competences of the customs authorities extend to category A civil service positions within the customs authorities themselves. This approach appears to be inconsistent and requires reconsideration, as well as proper legislative regulation, in particular through amendments to Article 570-1 of the Customs Code of Ukraine; b) Category B positions: these are managerial-level civil service positions, including heads of independent structural units of the State Customs Service (such as departments and divisions), deputy heads of such units, first deputy heads, and deputy heads of customs offices and customs posts, as well as heads and deputy heads of structural units within customs posts. Category C positions: these are professional-level positions, including chief state inspector, senior state inspector, and state inspector.

3) By the level of the civil service position within customs authorities, which reflects qualitative differences in the complexity and responsibility of official duties. According to the Catalogue (2015), eight levels of positions are established based on their primary functional responsibilities, grouped into three levels: strategic level (Levels I and II); managerial level (Levels III, IV and V); professional level (Levels VI, VII and VIII).

For the first time, the list of customs competences has been normatively defined and classified into nine groups depending on: a) the list of typical positions of customs authority officials (eight levels); b) the primary functional responsibilities of positions at the relevant level (for example, leadership of a customs authority, exercising civil service management powers, defining strategic objectives and development strategies – for Levels I and II); c) the role and place of a position within the organizational structure of a customs authority and its primary purpose, such as ensuring the implementation of state customs policy, including customs control, customs clearance, protection of intellectual property rights, and provision of administrative services.

4. Ensuring the Economic Security of the State as a Customs Competence

In the Ukrainian legal system, economic security is defined as an integral component of national security. According to the Decision of the National Security and Defence Council of Ukraine "On the Economic Security Strategy of Ukraine", "sustainable and competitive economic development, the economy's capacity for self-reproduction, and its resilience to internal and external threats constitute key goals and priorities of state policy" (2021). In the context of customs activities, the regulatory and legal framework for ensuring the economic security of the state is set

out in the Customs Code of Ukraine. This legislation identifies the key tasks of the customs service as "ensuring the economic security of the state by implementing state customs policy, exercising customs control, preventing violations of customs legislation and combatting smuggling" (2012).

The role of customs authorities is pivotal in the system of ensuring and implementing the economic security of the state. It is precisely through their activities that the protection of Ukraine's financial and economic interests is carried out, control over the movement of goods, currency values, and capital across the customs border is exercised, and offences that undermine the economic sovereignty of the state are prevented. The key functions of customs authorities include: monitoring compliance with customs legislation; managing customs risk; collecting customs duties and other mandatory payments; preventing the illegal movement of goods, currency and strategic resources; and ensuring an appropriate level of customs and economic security in foreign economic activities.

Customs authorities are part of the system of executive authorities that implement state customs policy and direct their activities, *inter alia*, toward ensuring the economic security of the state [Article 544 of the Customs Code of Ukraine] (2012). As part of the ongoing development of these provisions, the new version of the Code introduced Article 570-3, which requires the annual assessment of the professional competence of customs authority officials. This assessment evaluates analytical abilities, decision-making skills, knowledge of risk-oriented control methods, capacity for strategic thinking and integrity in the performance of official duties. This provision reflects a modern European approach to developing the competency-based potential of the civil service, with the aim of increasing the effectiveness of customs administration.

Additionally, the Government Resolution "On Approval of the Regulation on Advanced Training of Civil Servants" (2017) defines competence as an integral characteristic of an individual that encompasses professional knowledge, practical skills, personal qualities, and value orientations. This regulatory act emphasises the need for civil servants to undergo continuous professional development, to adopt modern educational technologies, to develop digital and communication skills, and to raise anti-corruption awareness. These requirements are particularly significant for the customs service, as customs officials are directly exposed to the risk of abuse, pressure from business entities and bribery attempts.

Academic literature emphasises that a lack of clarity over the qualifications required of customs officials, coupled with the absence of a unified system for assessing competence, leads to a heterogeneous workforce and a decrease in the effectiveness of

customs control. In particular, V. Levytskyi (2023) emphasises the necessity of establishing clear criteria for the competence of customs authority officials in the context of reforming the customs service of Ukraine. These criteria should encompass not only formal knowledge but also the ability to engage in analytical thinking and strategic risk management. In a similar vein, T. Hryhorenko (2022) posits that the human resources potential of customs authorities should be formed on the principles of professionalism, integrity, adaptability to changes in the international environment, and possession of crisis management skills.

The contemporary model of a customs official is characterised by a competency-based approach, which integrates a range of professional, legal, analytical and digital skills. This integrative system is designed to ensure the effective performance of official duties within the context of globalised economic processes. The conceptual foundation of this approach entails the integration of expertise in customs, financial, administrative, and information law with the application of practical skills in risk management, threat forecasting, and the assurance of adequate economic security at the national level. This model conceptualises a customs official not merely as an executor of technical customs clearance procedures, but as an analytical specialist capable of assessing the impact of foreign economic processes on the state of economic security and making well-reasoned decisions within the scope of their competences.

According to the Concept for Reforming the System of Professional Training of Civil Servants and Local Government Officials (2021), one of the key directions for improving human resource capacity is the implementation of a competency-based approach, which envisages continuous updating of knowledge in the fields of financial monitoring, anti-corruption activities, and the digitalisation of public administration processes. For the customs service, this signifies a transition from conventional procedural compliance to analytical risk assessment, the prevention of violations, and the facilitation of secure international trade.

As emphasized by L. M. Dorofieieva (2020), the competency-based approach to training customs officials should rely on three interrelated components: regulatory-legal, professional-practical, and analytical-evaluative. It is precisely the latter that ensures the linkage between professional knowledge and the objectives of economic security. A customs official must possess not only a comprehensive understanding of the relevant legislative framework but also the economic logic underpinning offences related to customs duty evasion, including both formal schemes and informal transit mechanisms for strategic resources.

The gradual development of the competency-based model is also driven by Ukraine's international

obligations to the World Customs Organization (WCO). Within the framework of the implementation of the SAFE Framework of Standards to Secure and Facilitate Global Trade (2021), customs administrations of participating countries undertake to integrate trade security standards into their internal procedures. For Ukraine, this means aligning national customs control methods with international supply chain security standards. This requires customs officials to have advanced data processing technology and electronic declaration skills, as well as knowledge of international mechanisms for verifying the origin of goods.

The assurance of economic security is not merely an ancillary component of professional competence; rather, it is an integral element that constitutes the very foundation of the system. A customs authority official with a security-oriented focus must possess the capacity to identify potentially high-risk operations, analyse data from automated risk management systems, and detect suspicious trade flows that may indicate tax evasion or the financing of illegal activities. It is evident from the extant literature that contemporary customs expertise is assuming the characteristics of an analytical instrument of public administration, with the objective of maintaining macroeconomic stability (Kozachenko, Pohorielov, 2019).

O. Kim (2022) aptly observes that "customs expertise is essential for counteracting illicit trade, which undermines budget revenues and poses indirect risks to the national economy." This assertion reflects the strategic role of the customs authority official as an agent of economic security. In their daily professional activities, they perform fiscal, analytical, preventive and control functions. Ultimately, the competency-based approach to training customs officials, which has been institutionalised within the educational programmes of the National University "Odesa Law Academy", the National University of the State Fiscal Service of Ukraine and the National Academy of Internal Affairs, is aimed at developing a new type of professional who is technologically proficient and oriented towards safeguarding national economic interests.

The transition from a competency-based model to the practical implementation of its components within the customs sector is a logical step in the development of the state's economic security system. The competence of a customs authority official cannot be limited to theoretical knowledge or educational standards alone. Its realisation is evident in practical customs control procedures, the application of modern technologies and analytical methods, and adherence to international trade security standards. Therefore, the relationship between professional competence and the technological level of customs processes is of strategic importance to the effectiveness of public administration in foreign economic activities.

In practical terms, the competence of a customs authority official is implemented through mastery of modern customs control instruments, including electronic declaration [Articles 257–259 of the Customs Code of Ukraine, 2012], automated risk management systems (Procedure for Risk Analysis and Assessment and the Development and Implementation of Risk Management Measures for Determining the Forms and Scope of Customs Control, 2015), cargo scanning, supply chain monitoring, customs value databases, and integration with the information platforms of the State Tax Service and the State Border Guard Service. These tools enable potential violations to be forecast, high-risk groups of goods and economic operators to be identified, the resources of customs authorities to be optimised, and effective interagency coordination to be ensured. An important area of practical activity involves cargo scanning and supply chain monitoring, which is being implemented within the framework of the Strategy for the Development of the Customs Service of Ukraine until 2030 (2023). The introduction of a "single window" system for international trade, electronic customs value databases, and integration with the State Tax Service and State Border Guard Service information platforms create the conditions necessary for establishing a unified security environment.

The concept of the "Intelligent Border" has been successfully implemented in the Member States of the European Union, integrating customs, border and tax systems into a single information and analytical space (European Commission, Smart Borders Package, 2022). This approach provides complete control over the movement of goods and vehicles, reduces customs clearance times and improves security at the EU's external borders. In the United States of America, the Customs–Trade Partnership Against Terrorism (2025) is being implemented with the aim of strengthening the security of logistics chains and reducing the risk of terrorist threats. These practices serve as benchmarks for Ukraine, which is seeking to align its customs procedures with international standards and incorporate the concept of a "smart border" into its national system.

At the same time, although Ukrainian practice is demonstrating gradual progress, it faces a number of objective and subjective challenges. These include inconsistencies between IT systems at different customs units, the uneven application of modern technologies at regional level, and a shortage of certified personnel with analytics and digital monitoring expertise. Corruption-related risks also undermine trust in the customs service. As T. Synytsia (2023) noted, the lack of a unified electronic platform to integrate customs, border and law enforcement databases greatly

restricts the potential for interagency co-operation and makes it more difficult to identify systemic threats.

Thus, ensuring the state's economic security through customs activity requires a comprehensive, multi-level approach combining the improvement of the regulatory framework (particularly the implementation of WCO and EU international standards in Ukrainian customs legislation), the development of a modern, competency-based model for customs officials, the application of highly effective digital customs control technologies and the expansion of interagency coordination. It is asserted that only such a systemic strategy has the potential to strengthen the state's economic resilience, increase public trust in customs authorities, and ensure Ukraine's genuine integration into the global security and trade environment. It is therefore recommended that the State Customs Service of Ukraine implement the following measures: firstly, the development and implementation of training programmes for customs authority officials, incorporating a dedicated component on ensuring economic security; and secondly, the establishment of advanced training programmes aimed at updating and deepening knowledge related to economic security.

5. Conclusions

The concept of "customs competences" can be defined by several key characteristics. Firstly, it is characterised by an applied, practice-oriented aspect. Secondly, it correlates with the concepts of "customs competence" and "professional competence" as a part-whole relationship. Thirdly, it is a special requirement that is inherent only to persons applying for civil service positions in customs authorities. In contrast, for customs authority officials, "customs competence" is an integral requirement.

The contemporary model of a customs authority official is characterised by an integrative system of professional, legal, analytical and digital competencies, which collectively ensure the effective performance of official duties within the context of globalised economic processes. The conceptual foundation of this approach entails the integration of expertise in customs, financial, administrative, and information law with the application of practical skills in risk management, threat forecasting, and the assurance of adequate economic security at the national level. The assurance of economic security is not merely an ancillary facet of competence; rather, it constitutes an integral system-forming component. A customs authority official with a security-oriented perspective is required to identify potentially risky operations, analyse data from automated risk management systems, and identify suspicious trade flows that may indicate tax evasion or the financing of illegal activities.

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