

eLearning module

# Proof of Union Status System for Economic operators

Course takeaways

Welcome to the eLearning course “**Proof of Union Status System**”.

Thanks to this eLearning course, you will become familiar with the Proof of Union Status (PoUS) system, learn how it works and understand when and how to use it.

This eLearning course is addressed to **economic operators** across the EU.

**This is a quick and handy summary of the most relevant module information:**

## 1 Did you know?

Since 2016, the **Union Customs Code (UCC)** defines the EU's legislation regarding customs offices and the movement of goods into, out of, and within its territory.

This eLearning course, as part of the UCC eLearning Programme, helps customs professionals from both public and private organisations to understand the implications of the legislation and act in compliance with it.

In this course, you will learn about the **PoUS system**, the **IT system for managing, storing, and consulting** proofs of the customs status of Union goods.

## 2 Proof of Union status

### 2.1 Key concepts

The **UCC legal package** defines the legal framework for customs rules and procedures in the EU customs territory.

According to the UCC, goods transiting within the customs territory of the EU are assigned a **customs status**. They can be Union or non-Union goods.

**Union goods** are either wholly obtained in the customs territory of the Union, or are imported and released for free circulation, or are wholly obtained or produced using the first two kinds of goods. All goods that do not meet these requirements or have lost their Union Status are to be considered **non-Union goods**.

According to the UCC, all goods that circulate in the customs territory, except special cases, are **presumed** to have **Union Status**. In fact, all goods produced on the Union territory inherently have this status, and those that are imported from outside countries acquire it after undergoing the special procedure called "Release for free circulation".

However, there are cases where the Union Status of Goods that are within the customs territory is **not presumed**. In addition, Union goods may **lose** their status when they are temporarily taken out of the customs territory of the Union, except for specific cases.

### 2.2 The importance of the proof of Union status

**Q:** *Is there a way for the goods that I trade, which are manufactured within the customs territory of the Union, to **retain** their customs status of Union goods even if they abandon the customs territory for a limited time?*

**A:** *Sure there is. There are certain situations where those goods can temporarily move out of the customs territory of the Union without altering their customs status, provided that their customs status of Union goods is **proven**.*

**Q:** *What do I need in order to prove the customs status of Union goods?*

*A: It is necessary to request an **endorsement for a proof of Union status** from the **Competent Customs Office (CCO)** at departure. Then, the proof of Union status has to be **presented** to the **Presentation Customs Office (PCO)** at arrival. The proof attests to the **unaltered status** of Union goods that are located within the customs territory of the Union after being brought out of and back into it.*

## 2.3 The documents that prove the Union status of goods

Depending on how goods are transported, there are several means by which their customs status can be proven. We will focus on the **T2L and T2LF data**. These means of proving the customs status of Union goods, together with the **Customs Goods Manifest (CGM)**, are **covered by the PoUS system**.

The **T2L and T2LF data** are means to prove the Union Status for **goods in free circulation** which have been brought from one point to another within the customs territory of the Union and temporarily leave that territory.

The proof of the customs status of Union goods in the form of a T2L or T2LF is valid for **90 days** from the date of registration.

When a proof is requested by a person concerned, it needs to be **endorsed**. This means that it can be either approved or rejected by the customs authorities. In the case of an **Authorised Issuer**, however, issuing the proof of Union status **does not require endorsement** by the customs authorities.

## 2.4 The need for a unified Proof of Union Status system

The UCC mandates the creation of an **IT system** for issuing, managing and presenting the T2L or T2LF data used to prove the customs status of Union goods, thus replacing paper-based documents by electronic forms.

This will surely **streamline the customs operations** for economic operators. The **PoUS system** will allow economic operators to interact in the same way with the customs authorities of any Member State. Likewise, it will increase the efficiency of **supervision** including the **traceability** on the part of customs officers.

The PoUS system will ultimately **harmonise** and **simplify** the processes related to proofs of the customs status of Union goods.

# 3 The PoUS system

## 3.1 The PoUS system: release timeline

In Phase 1, the PoUS system covers **T2L and T2LF data** as means of proof. The system covering T2L and T2LF is operational starting from the **first quarter of 2024**.

In Phase 2, the PoUS system covers the **CGM** as means of proof as well. The system covering CGM is operational starting from the **third quarter of 2025**.

## 3.2 Main features of the PoUS system

The PoUS system is the IT solution for the **re-engineering of the customs processes** related to proofs of Union status. Its goal is to enhance the efficiency, effectiveness and uniform application of these processes.

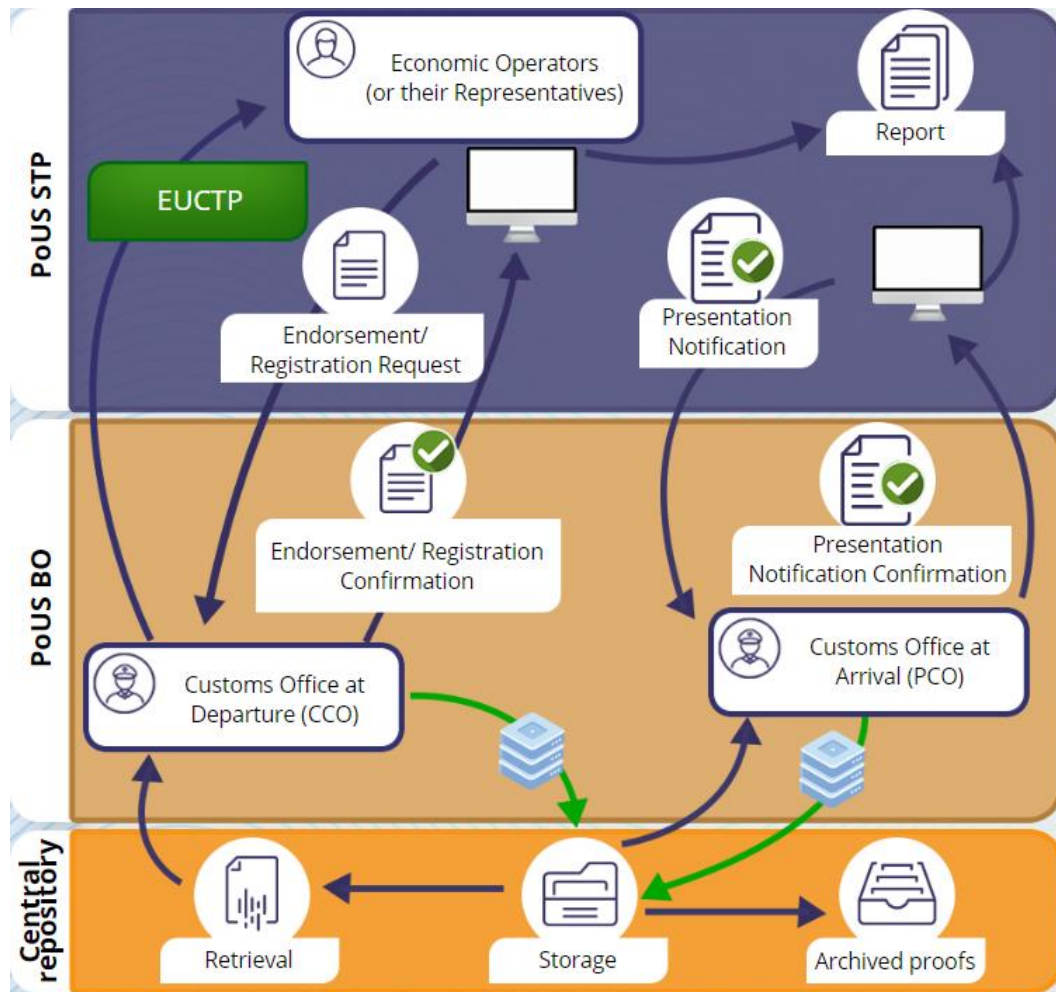
- It allows customs authorities to **store and exchange** proof of Union Status document data across all Member States; and
- It allows economic operators to **interact** with the customs authorities of any Member State **in a consistent way** when it comes to proofs of Union Status of Goods.

The system is **hybrid** from the point of view of its implementation. This means that the Member States are free to choose whether to rely on the **central system** developed by DG TAXUD or develop the system at a national level. Some Member States may choose to develop their own **national PoUS system**.

At any rate, the structure of the PoUS system remains the same. The system includes the following components:

- A **trader component**;
- A **customs officer component**; and
- A **central repository**.

### 3.3 The role of stakeholders and system components



- The **PoUS Specific Trader Portal (PoUS STP)** allows the **electronic communication between economic operators and customs authorities**. Economic operators shall receive notifications of operations to perform via **EUCTP**.

Through the trader interface, the user, whether they are a person concerned or an authorised issuer, can **carry out all operations** related to proofs of Union status. They can, for example, submit an endorsement or registration request for a proof of Union status, or present the proof at arrival.

In addition, the economic operator will have full and permanent access to documentation previously exchanged through the PoUS STP and to **reports** of the completed activities.

- The **PoUS Back Office (PoUS BO)** covers the **proof management** at the customs offices involved.

Through the client interface, the customs officers can **manage customs processes** related to the request and the presentation of proofs of Union status, communicating with economic operators while concurrently sharing data with the central repository.

This allows the customs offices all around the customs territory of the EU to **have access to the same data** and retrieve proofs from the system quickly, so that the information is always up to date.

- The **central repository stores the proof particulars** and all their related information (MRN, usage information, etc.) and **makes this data available to all Member States**. It also stores and provides users with all necessary data for monitoring and reporting, by archiving the used proofs.

### 3.4 Overview of the electronic process

**Q:** So, what's new for economic operators? Considering the procedure for requesting a proof of Union status in the form of T2L or T2LF, how will things change?

**A:** The process is still the same as we have seen before. In this case, however, the proof endorsement or registration request is to be submitted by filling out a **dedicated electronic form**, after accessing the **PoUS Specific Trader Portal** from the EUCTP.

Then, the **PoUS system handles the request**, checking its consistency with the data stored in the systems connected to it (CRS, TARIC, etc.). In this way, any inconveniences related to compiling errors are promptly addressed.

At this point, the customs officer accesses the PoUS BO to reject or validate the request and sets a validity period. The economic operator **receives the confirmation** of the proof endorsement or registration, together with the MRN and all complementary data, directly on the STP, and they can **consult and keep track of the status of the proofs**.

## 4 The business process from the economic operator's point of view

### 4.1 The EUCTP PoUS STP

The EUCTP serves as a **common entry point to each business-specific customs domain**, each of which is integrated in a standard interface for the economic operator.

From the EUCTP dashboard, you have **direct access to the PoUS STP**, similarly to the other services offered by EUCTP.

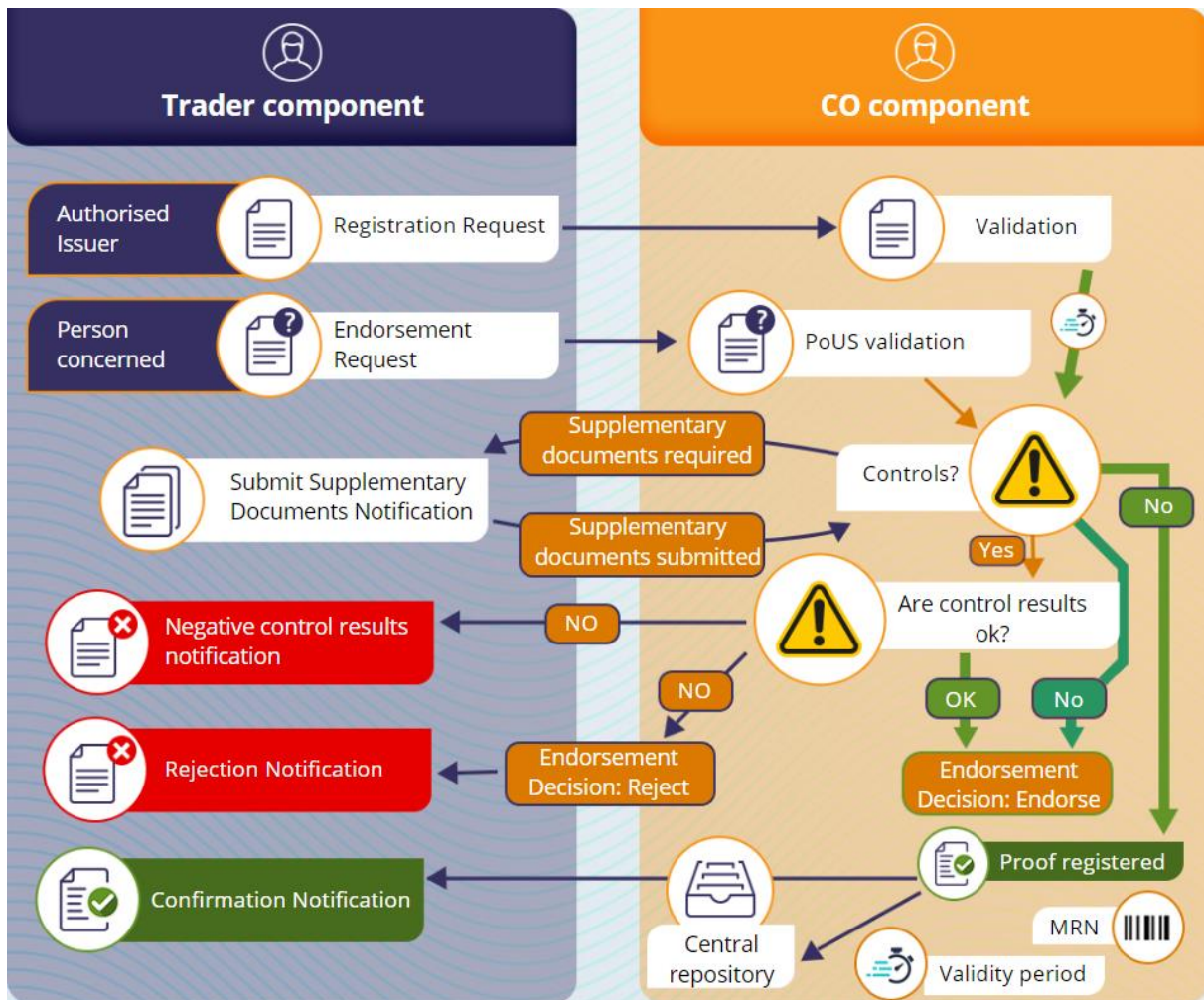
You can **manage all activities related to proofs of Union status from here**, whether you wish to submit requests or documents to the relevant customs offices, control the status of your proofs, or retrieve data and reports on operations which you have completed previously.

The EUCTP dashboard displays a **single list of notifications** for all the different business-specific customs domains, so that you can **keep track of all events** related to your ongoing business processes. You can then select the PoUS STP notifications and proceed to the assigned tasks, if any, from there.

### 4.2 The business process from the trader's point of view

Let's see what the **business processes are for requesting and presenting the proof of Union status** in the form of T2L or T2LF data using the PoUS system.

First, let's examine **the endorsement or registration request business process**.



1. The economic operator accesses the EUCTP PoUS Specific Trader Portal and selects the option "**Create T2L(F) Proof Request**".
  - If the economic operator is a **person concerned**, their submission will be an **endorsement request**.
  - If the economic operator is an **Authorised Issuer**, they are asked to enter their **Authorisation Number** as well.

When the economic operator has filled in all the data, they **submit the request**. The PoUS system **validates** the request by checking its compliance with the information stored in the interconnected databases.

2. The request is lodged via the PoUS BO at the **Competent Customs Office (CCO)**. The customs authority assesses whether **relevant controls at CCO** are necessary and whether, if so, supplementary documents are required from the economic operator. In that case, a notification is sent to the EUCTP dashboard, explaining which documents are needed and why. The economic operator can manage the submission of supplementary documents from there. If supplementary documents are provided to the customs outside of the system (for example, via mail or brought in personally), the customs officer can register those documents in the system himself. **Simplified requirements apply for the Authorised Issuers**, but their goods may still have to undergo controls.

In both cases, the economic operator will receive a message when the documents are correctly registered at CCO.

3. Controls are then carried out by the customs officer.

In case the controls give unsatisfactory results, the request is rejected: a **negative controls results notification** is sent to the economic operator together with an explanation of why the controls gave negative results.

The request is therefore **rejected**.

4. However, if the controls are satisfactory, if the endorsement request is valid and if the goods declared are indeed Union goods, then the proof endorsement is confirmed, and **the proof is registered**.

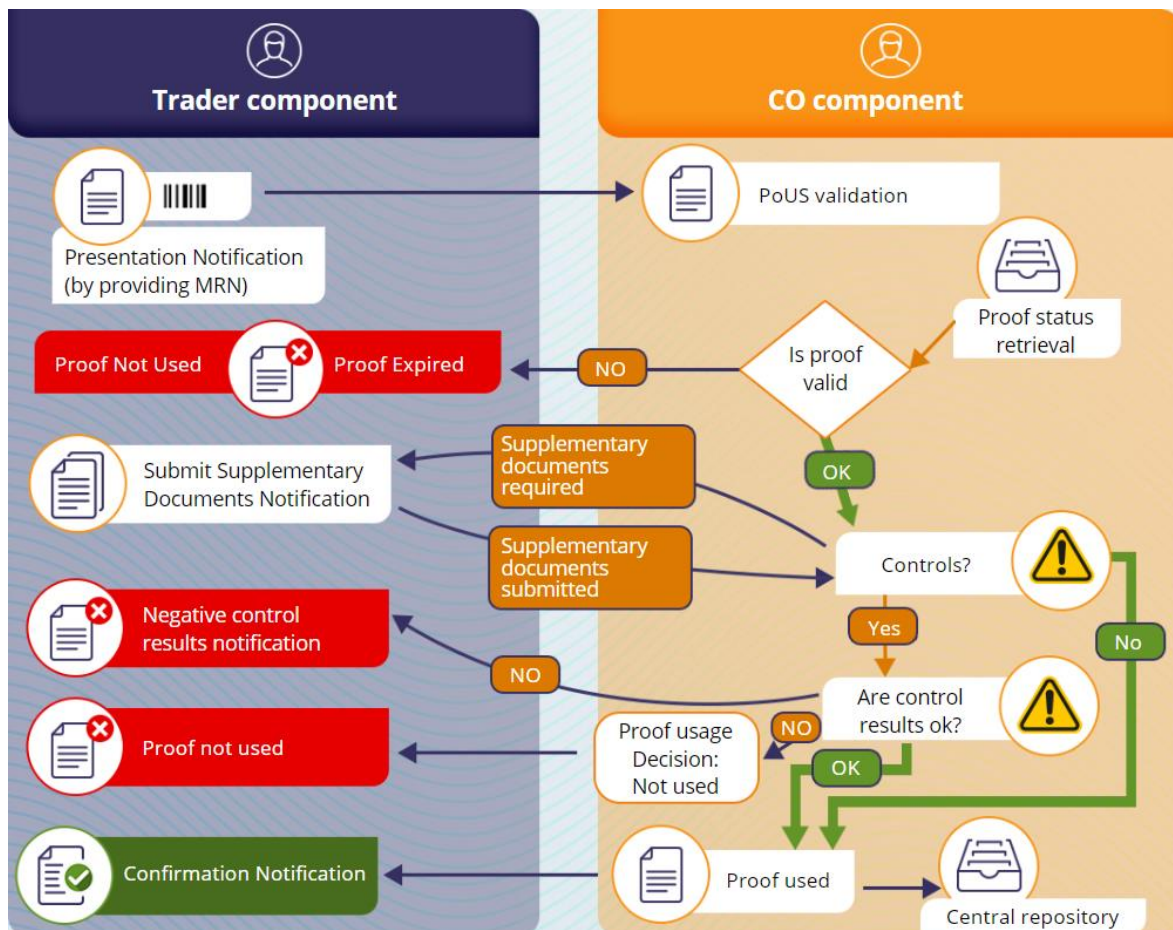
The business process for registration requests follows a slightly different path to that for endorsement requests: in case of a **registration request** from an Authorised Issuer, controls are simplified and, if the customs officer doesn't make decisions on performing controls, the proof is **automatically endorsed**.

The PoUS BO issues an **MRN** and the customs officer confirms (or not) the **requested validity period** for the proof.

**The proof is stored** in the Central Repository to be available for retrieval.

A **confirmation notification** containing the relevant data for the registered proof is then sent to the EUCTP dashboard, where the economic operator can consult and download the **Status Registration Document (SRD)**.

Let's now examine **the proof usage business process**.





1. The economic operator accesses the EUCTP PoUS Specific Trader Portal and selects the option “**Create T2L(F) PN**”. They enter the **MRN** of the proof to be presented. The PoUS STP interacts with the PoUS BO to **retrieve the relevant data** for the proof.  
When the economic operator has filled in all the data, they **submit the proof presentation notification**.  
Meanwhile, the PoUS system **validates** the proof presentation notification by checking its compliance with the information stored in the interconnected databases.
2. The request is lodged via the PoUS BO at the **Presentation Customs Office (PCO)**.  
The PoUS BO queries the central repository to retrieve the status of the proof corresponding to the presented MRN. The **following outcomes** are possible:
  - a. Presented proof is registered and valid to be used;
  - b. Presented proof validity date has expired;
  - c. Presented proof was already used;In all cases except the first, the proof is invalid, and its use cannot be recorded. The economic operator is informed about the **invalid outcome** of the operation **via a notification** on the EUCTP dashboard and the business process ends.
3. However, if the proof is valid, the customs officer assesses whether **relevant controls at PCO** are necessary and if so, whether **supplementary documents** are required from the economic operator.  
In that case, a notification is sent to the EUCTP dashboard, explaining which documents are needed and why. The economic operator can manage the submission of supplementary documents from there. If supplementary documents are provided to the customs outside of the system (for example, via mail or brought in personally), the customs officer can register those documents in the system himself.  
In both cases, the economic operator will receive a message when the documents are correctly registered at PCO.
4. Controls are then carried out by the customs officer.  
In case the controls give unsatisfactory results (e.g. if the goods presented to the Presentation Customs Office do not match those for which the proof was endorsed), the proof cannot be used: a **negative controls results notification** is sent to the economic operator together with an explanation of why the controls gave negative results, and the business process ends.
5. If the controls do not detect any mismatch, **the proof use is registered**.  
The **proof usage registration is stored** in the Central Repository to be available for retrieval. A **confirmation notification** containing the summary of the proof usage is then sent to the EUCTP dashboard, where the economic operator can consult the **SRD** of the proof.

### 4.3 The trader component

Please keep in mind that, with the introduction of the PoUS system, **all activities related to proofs of customs status of Union goods in the form of T2L or T2LF that used to be paper-based are now entirely electronic**.

The **EUCTP PoUS STP** is therefore your **reference portal for the management of business processes related to the proofs of Union status**. All economic operators fill in the T2L or T2LF forms for proof of Union status here.

In case of confirmation or rejection of the proof registration or usage and in case of supplementary actions that need to be performed by the economic operator, the **national customs authorities notify the economic operator through their EUCTP dashboard**.

#### 4.4 The benefits of the PoUS system for traders

The **PoUS system greatly simplifies the management of proofs** of Union status for economic operators, because it **standardises the business process** and **ensures the consistency of the requirements** by national customs administrations.

*Remember, this is a quick and handy summary of the most relevant course information. Only the European Union legislation published in the Official Journal of the European Union is deemed authentic. The Commission accepts no responsibility or liability whatsoever with regard to the training.*

