



**World Customs Organization
Organisation mondiale des douanes**

LEGAL & PROCUREMENT SERVICE

HEAD OF LEGAL & PROCUREMENT

1. INTRODUCTION

The World Customs Organization (WCO) is an independent intergovernmental body, established in 1952 as the Customs Co-operation Council (CCC), whose mission is to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of Customs services across the globe. The WCO represents 187 Customs administrations that collectively process approximately 98% of world trade. As the global centre of Customs expertise, the WCO is the only international organization with competence in Customs matters.

As a forum for dialogue and exchange of experiences between national Customs delegates, the WCO offers its Members a wide range of conventions and other international instruments, as well as technical assistance and training services provided either directly by the Secretariat, or with its participation. The Secretariat also actively supports its Members in their endeavours to modernize and build capacity within their national Customs administrations, as well as fostering international cooperation among them.

2. SHORT DESCRIPTION OF THE VACANT POSITION

The Head of Legal & Procurement reports to the Chief of Staff and manages a small and close-knit team of four staff providing legal & procurement services for the WCO.

In July 2025, as part of a wider organizational modernization programme, the responsibilities of the Service were expanded to incorporate not only all legal but also all procurement-related tasks and responsibilities.

This position would suit an individual motivated by the opportunity to lead a team, manage a broad portfolio of responsibilities and work closely with other Services and senior decision-makers, ensuring the provision of a high quality legal and procurement service.

3. MAIN ACCOUNTABILITIES

Under the supervision of the Chief of Staff, the position holder will focus on the following key activities:

Leadership:

1. As an integral member of the management team reporting to the Chief of Staff, contribute to ensuring effective delivery in line with the WCO Strategic Plan.
2. Manage staff within the Service in accordance with the WCO's values, Staff Manuals and Policies, including management of leave and attendance, recruitment, onboarding, offboarding and associated knowledge transfer, as well as staff welfare, liaising with the Human Resources (HR) Service and other relevant services, as required.
3. Assign tasks to staff within the Service, ensuring alignment with individual skills and capacities, balancing workloads to the extent possible, and setting deadlines and expectations.
4. Provide guidance and direction to staff within the Service, ensuring ongoing two-way feedback, setting objectives and development plans, conducting performance evaluations, and identifying opportunities for development.
5. Ensure effective communication and knowledge-sharing within the Service, and in coordination with the other Heads of Service in the WCO.

Technical responsibilities:

6. Process requests relating to the establishment, application, interpretation and/or revision of all legal texts relating to the Organization (Convention establishing a Customs Co-operation Council; Staff Manuals; Financial Rules; Policies; Guidelines; Procedures; etc.) as well as treaties and conventions to which the Organization is a party or depositary.
7. Oversee the preparation and negotiation of all types of contracts with the Organization's employees as well as all agreements signed by the Organization with Members, other international organizations, and any other public and private/commercial entities.
8. Oversee handling of all disputes relating to staff members, any disciplinary or administrative procedure, any application before the Organization's internal dispute settlement bodies and the Administrative Tribunal of the International Labour Organization (ILOAT) and, where appropriate, ensure cooperation with any external legal advisor consulted in this context.
9. Oversee procurement activities across the Organization, ensuring full compliance with WCO's Financial Rules, procurement policies and rules as well as internationally recognized best practices; develop and implement procurement strategies; monitor risk and supplier performance; support contract oversight; build staff capacity; and provide strategic guidance on the effective, ethical, and sustainable acquisition of goods and services; participate in the Advisory Committee on Contracts (ACC).
10. Oversee the handling of the Organization's general legal affairs, including the management of legal questions, research, and the preparation of legal opinions and

notes on issues relevant to its mandate and operations, encompassing, where applicable, the application of the laws of the host country (Belgium) or other national laws, and covering, inter alia, the privileges and immunities of the Organization and its staff, Public International Law, International Civil Service Law, the Law of International Organizations, Intellectual Property Law, Commercial and Contract Law, Liability Law, and Data Protection and Privacy Law.

11. Manage contractual and extra-contractual litigation, judicial proceedings, arbitration, and amicable settlement procedures in accordance with Decision 331 of the Council and liaise with external counsel as necessary.
12. Act independently, neutrally, and impartially as the WCO's Data Protection Officer (DPO), appointed by the Secretary General and reporting directly to him/her, to monitor the application of the WCO's Personal Data Protection Policy and to advise individuals and the Organization on their respective rights and obligations, either upon request or on his/her own initiative;
13. Act as Information Protection Compliance Officer (IPCO) to establish and ensure the WCO's compliance with information protection policies and rules, including the classification, labelling, retention, and secure disposal of information/data; monitor risks, promote best practices, advise staff on the secure handling of sensitive and confidential information, raise awareness and deliver training, and report on compliance to management; and
14. Act as presenter and rapporteur on all legal topics for Finance Committee, Audit Committee and Council, or any other internal meeting or committee, as the need arises.

The person appointed will also be required to perform such other duties as may be assigned and may be subject to reassignment within the WCO Secretariat.

4. EDUCATION & QUALIFICATIONS

- Advanced university degree in law (Master or equivalent) and a track record demonstrating continuous professional development.
- Qualifications related to data protection, procurement, the law of international organizations or international civil service law would be advantageous.

5. ESSENTIAL EXPERIENCE, SKILLS & COMPETENCIES

- At least 7 years of progressively responsible experience in one or more fields of law relevant to the position.
- Leadership potential and the ability to develop high-performing teams and use resources effectively to accomplish organizational objectives.
- Motivated by the opportunity to contribute to the modernization of legal and procurement services.
- Strong research, analytical and problem-solving skills.
- Excellent written and oral communication and negotiation skills and the ability to communicate complex legal concepts clearly to different audiences.

- Excellent inter-personal skills, intercultural awareness and the ability to work effectively with in a cross-cultural, multi-stakeholder context.

6. DESIRABLE EXPERIENCE, SKILLS & COMPETENCIES

The following would be advantageous, but are not essential:

- Professional experience in a similar position in an international or an intergovernmental organization.
- Prior experience in managing a legal team.
- Practical experience in an international, multicultural, and multilingual environment.
- Experience of international dispute resolution.
- Knowledge/experience of emerging technologies and associated legal considerations.
- Knowledge/experience of Belgian legislation.

7. LANGUAGES

- Fluency in both English and French (both spoken and written), the official languages of the WCO, is required. This is in order to handle all legal and procurement matters and represent the Service internally and externally in both languages, as required.

8. CONTRACT AND CONDITIONS

- Staff member under WCO contract of five (5) years, with the possibility of renewal up to a maximum total duration of appointment at A-Grade of 10 years;
- Probationary period: six (6) months;
- Full-time employment (thirty-seven (37) hours and forty (40) minutes weekly) at WCO Headquarters in Brussels, Belgium;
- Thirty (30) days of annual paid leave;
- Salary based on the Co-ordinated Organisations' salary scale, grade A3, step 1; amount of 8,091.28 EUR/month (remuneration exempted from income tax in Belgium);
- The basic salary can be augmented by allowances based on the staff member's eligibility, and it is subject to the mandatory withholding of terminal allowance (for retirement planning) and medical and life & disability insurance contributions.

This position is subject to the WCO Staff Manual (for permanent staff). If a candidate is related to current WCO staff members (spouse, father, mother, son, daughter, brother or sister), they are required to specifically indicate this in the application.

9. APPLICATION AND RECRUITMENT PROCESS

Interested candidates should submit their application for review no later than **3 May at 23:59 Central European Time**, including a CV and motivation letter in English or French. This application should be sent by email to: HoLegal.vacancy@wcoomd.org .

The subject line of the email sent by each candidate should clearly indicate the job vacancy for which they are applying.

The onus is on the applicant to demonstrate how they meet each of the essential qualifications and requirements. Applicants are encouraged to describe tangible achievements in their CV and motivation letter, as well as to include contact details for referees.

Only short-listed candidates will be contacted for an assessment, which may include a written test and/or an interview. All short-listed candidates may be requested to provide copies of their original diploma, certificates and proof of relevant experience. Pre-selected candidates may also be subject to reference checks to confirm the information provided in their application.

Interested candidates may submit a request for additional information via email, providing their full name and contact details.

The evaluation of applicants will be conducted on the basis of the information submitted in the application, according to the criteria for the position and the applicable WCO rules.

10. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The WCO is committed to the principles of integrity, transparency and accountability, as well as to promoting diversity among its staff members. Accordingly, applications from qualified candidates, irrespective of gender, will receive equal treatment and due regard will be paid to the importance of recruiting nationals from WCO Members on as wide a geographical basis as possible. The age limit for employment at the WCO is 65. Please note that the WCO Headquarters building is a non-smoking environment.

Any personal data collected and processed as part of the recruitment procedure will be in accordance with the WCO's Personal Data Protection Policy (available on the WCO website: <https://www.wcoomd.org/en/about-us/legal-instruments/policies.aspx>). Any questions or complaints in this regard may be addressed to the WCO's Data Protection Officer (dpo@wcoomd.org).