

DaziT and Passar: digital customs

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The transformation of the customs administration was driven above all by a digital programme called DaziT, a name formed from the Romansh word for customs, *dazi*, and the letter T for transformation. The Federal Parliament approved the programme and an overall credit of about CHF 393 million in 2017, with implementation planned over roughly a decade. Its aim is to digitalise all customs and border procedures, to allow companies and travellers to complete their formalities online and to free officials from routine work so that they can concentrate on risk-based controls. For a border region with heavy traffic, the promise is shorter waiting times for lorries and a more intelligent selection of the consignments that are actually stopped.¹

The core of DaziT is a new goods traffic system called Passar, which replaces the older electronic declaration platforms e-dec and NCTS that Swiss exporters and forwarders had used since the 2000s. Passar is being introduced in stages. According to the FOCBS, companies had to migrate their export declarations to Passar by the end of 2025, after which the export module of e-dec was switched off at the beginning of 2026. The import side followed on a separate timetable. For the trading and logistics firms of the Rhine ports, the migration required new interfaces, new data structures and in many cases new contracts with software providers. Experience from the first years suggests that teething problems were considerable, as is usual for large public information technology projects.²

For private travellers, DaziT produced the application QuickZoll, which allows goods above the duty-free allowances to be declared and the duties to be paid on a smartphone before crossing the border. The application has particular relevance in Basel, where thousands of residents shop daily in Weil am Rhein, Lörrach or Saint-Louis. A traveller who brings back meat above the permitted quantity, or goods whose total value exceeds the value added tax allowance, can settle the charges digitally and use the green lane.

The underlying principle is that the declaration is moved forward in time and away from the physical border, so that officials at the crossing need only verify a fraction of the declarations already submitted.³

The digital transformation has legal consequences that are easy to underestimate. When declarations are made electronically and assessed automatically, questions of attribution, liability for errors and the evidential value of system data become central. The forwarder who submits a declaration on behalf of an importer, the software provider whose interface transmits it and the official who releases the goods without inspection all play roles that the old paper-based law did not fully anticipate. The new customs legislation, discussed in the next section, was designed to answer these questions. Until its ordinances have been tested in practice, a degree of legal uncertainty will remain.⁴

1 Notes

1. Federal Decree on the overall credit for the DaziT programme, adopted by Parliament in 2017; on the amount of approximately CHF 393 million and the planned duration, see the Federal Council's dispatch on DaziT of 15 February 2017 and the reports of the Swiss Federal Audit Office. Figures and status to be verified. ↩
2. On Passar and the replacement of e-dec, see the FOCBS information "Passar – what companies need to know" and the minutes of the DaziT business support group (Begleitgruppe Wirtschaft) of 2024 and 2025; on the shutdown of e-dec Export on 1 January 2026, see *economiesuisse*, "Jahrelange Debatte zum Zollgesetz findet erfolgreichen Abschluss", 2025. Status to be verified. ↩
3. On the QuickZoll application, introduced in stages from 2019, see the FOCBS website. To be verified. ↩
4. On the legal questions raised by fully digital customs procedures, see the Federal Council's dispatch on the total revision of the Customs Act of 24 August 2022 and the literature on Swiss customs law. Status to be verified. ↩

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