

# TRADE OBSERVER

*The official CustomsBridge monthly update*

**02**

Circumvent walls

## **AN AMBITIOUS YEAR**

**CREATING A RESEARCH GROUP**

**THE TEAM IS GROWING**

Photo from Andre A. Xavier, Unsplash



# AN AMBITIOUS YEAR

**2020 promises to be an ambitious year both for CustomsBridge and for all those involved in the Customs business. From Brexit to the trade wars, this year will undoubtedly be intense!**

A flying start, that's how we could describe our first month of 2020. It soon became clear to us that in front of the mountain of work that awaited us to release a prototype around June, we would need reinforcements. That's why we welcomed Nathan to the team. We did not immediately think we needed such a profile, however, good profiles deserve deviations and it makes sense to have someone whose goal is to take care of our data.

Let's talk about our data. We've finally been able to put in place analytical tools to understand the data we've collected so far. Because even when you have your nose in the data day after day, at some point it becomes necessary to step up, take a break and really ask yourself what you have, and whether it's enough.

The answer has been somewhat scathing. Despite some 230,000 classification decisions covering 15,800 classifications, we could hope to have good coverage of the nomenclature. On average that makes 15 product descriptions for each customs code.

As reality is rarely the result of an average, we were able to discover the heterogeneity of the EBTI database. Indeed, starting from the assumption that a minimum of 10 product descriptions is necessary to consider that a customs code is covered by our artificial intelligence, **we could only cover 1,600 classifications** with the data we have today. **That is barely 10%.**

Let's not lie to ourselves, this is a problem. It's a problem to produce the solution as imagined.

To solve this problem, several paths are open to us:

- Reduce the precision of the tool, and offer not a 10-digit ranking, but an 8, 6-digit ranking.
- Continue to collect ranking data. Problem, it is rare to find such qualitative data as EBTI in free access. This is why we are looking for **partnerships with companies that could share their data with us**, and for which we could **respond with a score out of 10** that would allow us to **estimate** (in our opinion) **the correctness of the classification choice**. This would be a win-win solution.
- Think of the tool differently. Rather than proposing an automatic classification tool, propose a new generation tool for searching in an "augmented" nomenclature.

Various solutions that we are all exploring in order to remain true to our mission: **"Classifying products for a smooth border crossing"**.

We would like to close this issue by wishing you a happy and successful year 2020.

## CREATING A RESEARCH GROUP

Gathering universities around our project, explaining the impact it can have, the technical challenge it represents, is not easy.

However, we believe that research is essential to us and we are moving slowly in our contacts with universities to set up a qualified working group for the European research programme Horizon 2020.

## THE TEAM IS GROWING



**Nathan Forestier**

Back-end dev and data expert  
Arrived half January 2020

We are very pleased to welcome Nathan who will be collecting data, structuring, cleansing and making it available through a back-end.

This is a great responsibility as data is critical to our project.