

# Customs 2013: action programme for customs in the Community

2006/0075(COD) - 23/05/2007 - Final act

**PURPOSE:** the establishment of: “**Customs 2013**”.

**LEGISLATIVE ACT:** Decision No 624/2007/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing an action programme for customs in the Community (Customs 2013).

**BACKGROUND:** customs administration plays a vital role in protecting the Community’s financial interests. It provides an equivalent level of protection to both EU economic operators as well as EU citizens. The main objective of the EU’s custom’s policy is to ensure that national customs administrations operate as one single administration in order to ensure optimal efficiency. In 2003, the Community approved a customs action programme referred to as “Customs 2007” the purpose of which was to help finance these objectives. Customs 2007 expired on 31 December 2006.

**CONTENT:** the purpose of this Decision is the establishment of “Customs 2013” aligned along similar lines to that of its predecessor and to coincide with the 2007-2013 Financial Perspectives with a total multi-annual budget amounting to EUR 323 800 000. The new programme will last for a period of six years commencing on 1 January 2007 and expiring on 31 December 2013. Its objective will be to support and complement action undertaken by the Member States in order to guarantee the effective functioning of the internal market in the customs field. In pursuing the more general, overall objectives, of strengthening security and safety and supporting the internal market, the programme will be able to support more specific objectives namely and amongst others, a reduction in the administrative burden and costs of the Member States; applying best working practices; ensuring uniform and unambiguous tariff classifications; and supporting the creation of a pan-European electronic customs environment.

The programme has been divided into a number of activities. In brief that are:

**Communication and information exchange systems:** The Decision specifies what electronic systems will apply for the implementation of Customs 2013. For example, the common communications network and interface will be CCN/CSI and the computerised transit system will apply the CTS system. Under this framework, the Commission will be responsible for concluding contracts to ensure the operational nature of Community components – i.e. the hardware, software and network connections that are common to all participating countries.

The Member States, on the other hand will be responsible for all non-Community components of the ICT exchange – i.e. national databases forming part of these systems. National administrations must ensure that the non-Community components are kept operational and must ensure the interoperability of these components with Community components.

**Benchmarking:** Benchmarking activities such as working methods, procedures or processing that involve agreed indicators to identify best practices, may be organised between two or more participating countries.

**Seminars and workshops:** To be organised regularly by both the Commission and the Member States in order to keep those involved abreast of latest developments.

**Project groups and steering groups:** Project groups may be established charged with carrying out specific tasks within a specified time-scale. Steering groups will perform co-ordinating activities.

**Working visits:** Working visits, to be organised by the participating states, may be organised that last no longer than one month.

**Training activities:** The Commission and national administrations will co-operate in the development of training standards, training programmes, access to training courses and the provisions of training infrastructure. Customs officials will receive initial and continuing training that may be needed to acquire common professional skills and knowledge.

**Monitoring actions:** Monitoring will be carried out by joint teams made up of customs officials from the Member States and Commission officials. They will visit different points in the Community's customs territory where customs administrations carry out their duties.

**Participating in Customs 2013 and Information sharing:** Representatives of international organisations, third countries and economic operators may take part in the programme. The Commission, together with the participating countries, will develop the sharing of information resulting from the Programme's activities.

As far as expenditure is concerned the Community will bear the following costs: the acquisitions, development, installation and maintenance of the Community components of the ICT system; the travel and living expenses of officials incurred for benchmarking activities and the cost of organising seminars and workshops. The participating countries, on the other hand, will bear the cost of the non-Community components of the ICT exchange system and the initial and continuing training of their officials – particularly their linguistic training.

In its final provisions, the Decision specifies that the programme will be subject to continuous monitoring as well as mid-term and final evaluations.

**ENTRY INTO FORCE:** 4 July 2007.

**APPLICATION:** from 1 January 2008.

**REPEALED:** Decision No 253/2003/EC as from 1 January 2008.