United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) "Revised 1958 Agreement": technical prescriptions for wheeled vehicles, equipment and parts, and reciprocal recognition of approvals; aligning the Decision with the TFEU

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PURPOSE: to adapt Council Decision 97/836/EC to the decision making procedures regarding international agreements set out in the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU).

PROPOSED ACT: Council Decision.

BACKGROUND: at international level, the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) develops harmonised requirements, intended to remove technical barriers to the trade in motor vehicles between the Contracting Parties to the Revised 1958 Agreement and to ensure that such vehicles offer a high level of safety and environmental protection.

The changes to the Treaties and in particular the adoption of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union have substantially altered the decision making procedure to be followed for the conclusion of agreements between the Union and international organisations, making it necessary to adapt Decision 97/836/EC to the new procedures.

Decision 97/836/EC should therefore be amended accordingly.

IMPACT ASSESSMENT: IMPACT ASSESSMENT: no Impact Assessment was conducted for this proposal. In developing the proposal the European Commission has consulted stakeholders, in the framework of the Technical Committee - Motor Vehicles.

LEGAL BASIS: Articles 207(3) and 218(6)(a)(v) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU).

CONTENT: the proposal amends Council Decision 97/836/EC to reflect the changes introduced by the TFEU to the decision making procedure to be followed for the establishment of the position of the Union when voting Regulations to be adopted by the UNECE and the conclusion of agreements between the Union and international organisations.

The objective of this proposal is to simplify and expedite the procedure regarding the voting of UNECE Regulations by the Commission on behalf of the Union, hence reducing the delay in the adoption of these acts in the framework of the UNECE. This is important as the EU vehicle type-approval system currently relies more and more on UNECE Regulations, which are replacing EU legislation (see Regulation (EC) No 661/2009 on General Safety).

In addition, quicker adoption of legislation will allow for faster responses to regulatory requests from the operators.

BUDGETARY IMPLICATIONS: the proposal has no implication for the Union budget.