EU/US Agreement: coordination of energy-efficiency labelling programmes for office equipment

2012/0048(NLE) - 13/11/2012 - Final act

PURPOSE: the conclusion of an Agreement between the United States of America and the EU on the coordination of energy-efficiency labelling programmes for office equipment.

NON-LEGISLATIVE ACT: Council Decision 2013/107/EU on the signing and conclusion of the Agreement between the Government of the United States of America and the European Union on the coordination of energy-efficiency labelling programmes for office equipment.

BACKGROUND: on 12 July 2011 the Council authorised the Commission to negotiate an Agreement between the United States of America and the European Union on the coordination of energy-efficiency labelling programmes for office equipment. The negotiations have been concluded and the Agreement was initialled by both Parties on 29 November 2011.

The Agreement should be approved on behalf of the European Union.

CONTENT: under this Decision, the Agreement between the United States of America and the EU on the coordination of energy-efficiency labelling programmes for office equipment is approved on behalf of the Union.

Scope of the Agreement: office equipment will account for a growing share of energy consumption in the future as new applications and functionalities appear. In order to meet the Union objective of saving 20 % of its energy consumption compared to projections for 2020, as endorsed at the Spring 2007 European Council, **the energy performance of office equipment has to be further optimised**.

To date, the main means of improving the energy consumption of office equipment has been the **EU Energy Star Programme**. This was established by the US Environmental Protection Agency and is implemented in the EU on the basis of an Agreement between the US and the EU, which was renewed in 2006 for a period of 5 years. From 2008, the programme was reinforced by Regulation (EC) No 106/2008 on a Community energy-efficiency labelling programme for office equipment, most recently amended by Regulation No 174/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council.

Given that manufacturers participating in the EU Energy Star programme are mostly small and medium-sized enterprises, product registration in the Union should continue to be unburden some and based on self-certification. This should be coupled with stronger enforcement of the EU Energy Star programme by the Commission in cooperation with Member States.

Management and enforcement of the Agreement: since office equipment is a fast evolving market, **it is essential to frequently reassess the potential for maximising energy savings and environmental benefits** by stimulating the supply of, and demand for, energy- efficient products. It is therefore necessary to empower the Commission, assisted by a Union advisory board composed of national representatives and of all interested parties, to regularly reassess and upgrade the Common Specifications of office equipment set out in the Agreement.

Management entity: pursuant to the Agreement, the United States of America and the Union are each to designate a management entity responsible for implementation of the Agreement. To that effect the Union should designate the Commission as a management entity.

Internal Union procedures are foreseen to ensure the proper operation of the Agreement.

ENTRY INTO FORCE: the Decision enters into force on 27 March 2013.