Marrakesh Agreement establishing the World Trade Organization (WTO): Agreement on Trade Facilitation. Protocol

2015/0029(NLE) - 09/09/2015 - Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 569 votes to 99, with 27 abstentions, a legislative resolution on the draft Council decision on the conclusion, on behalf of the European Union, of the Protocol Amending the Marrakesh Agreement Establishing the World Trade Organization.

In line with the Committee on International Trade, Parliament **gave its consent to the conclusion of the Agreement**.

The trade facilitation agreement (TFA) which was concluded at the 9th WTO Ministerial Conference in December 2013 is the first multilateral agreement since the WTO was established in 1995. The issue first appeared on the WTO agenda during the Ministerial in Singapore in 1996 and subsequently found its way into the Doha Declaration where WTO members committed to concluding a deal on this issue.

The agreement demonstrates the ability to be innovative in recognising differences in implementation capacity across nations by calling on developing and least developed countries to determine when they will apply specific provisions of the agreement and by linking implementation of some disciplines to the delivery of assistance from developed nations.

The TFA will require increased transparency and greater cooperation between customs authorities. It focuses on cooperation aimed at achieving a set of good practices that governments can support and comply with.

In order for the TFA to enter into force, it needs to be ratified by two thirds of the 160 WTO members who agreed it at the 9th Ministerial Conference.