Non-application of customs duties on imports of certain goods

2025/0260(COD) - 28/08/2025 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE: to maintain additional opportunities for EU and US operators and avoid the deterioration of trade relations with the United States by eliminating or reducing customs duties.

PROPOSED ACT: Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council.

ROLE OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT: the European Parliament decides in accordance with the ordinary legislative procedure and on an equal footing with the Council.

BACKGROUND: by means of Regulation (EU) 2020/2131 on the elimination of customs duties on certain goods, customs duties on imports of certain types of lobsters and crayfish were eliminated for a period of five years, until 31 July 2025. This is the result of a joint statement by the European Union and the United States of 21 August 2020 announcing the elimination or reduction of customs duties for a limited number of tariff lines. By Presidential Proclamation of 22 December 2020, the United States granted, in return, duty-free treatment of comparable economic value on products such as ready-made meals, certain crystal articles, surface preparations, propellant powders, cigarette lighters, and lighter parts.

As part of a political agreement announced by Commission President, Ursula von der Leyen, and US President, Donald Trump, on 27 July 2025, and in accordance with the Joint Statement of 21 August 2025, the Union expressed its intention to take immediate steps to extend the Joint Statement of the Union and the United States of 21 August 2020 with regard to lobsters and crayfish, with a broader scope to include processed (i.e. cooked) lobsters and crayfish.

CONTENT: this proposal for a regulation aims to extend the duty-free treatment for **lobster** and henceforth to include **processed (i.e. cooked) lobster**.

For the Union, lobsters and crayfish, including processed (i.e. cooked) lobsters and crayfish, are not a sensitive product, as the Union continues to be a net importer of the products covered by the proposed regulation. In 2024, the Union imported EUR 72 million worth of these lobsters and crayfish from the United States (22% of total extra-Union imports), while the total trade concerned was approximately EUR 342 million in 2024 (approximately EUR 320 million of imports into the Union and EUR 21 million of exports from the Union). The continued non-application of import duties and the extension of its scope to processed (i.e., cooked) lobsters and crayfish will continue to support the agri-food industry and the hospitality sector.

A parallel proposal for a regulation aims to eliminate customs duties on US industrial products and grant preferential market access for a range of non-sensitive US seafood and agricultural products.

Budgetary implication

The further liberalisation of industrial tariffs will have a limited negative impact on the EU budget.

Between 2020 and May 2025, the EU waived EUR 37.3 million in duties, including EUR 26.5 million related to US imports. The amount of duties that the European Union would forego, taking into account

the extension of the scope to cooked/processed lobsters and crayfish, applied during the same period (August 2020 to May 2025), would amount to an additional EUR 242 000, almost entirely from US imports.

On this basis, the annual budgetary impact of not applying customs duties to cooked/processed lobsters and crayfish is estimated at approximately **EUR 48 000**, and the annual budgetary impact of not applying customs duties to all goods listed in the Annex to the proposed regulation is estimated at approximately **EUR 7.5 million**.