

# Customs: action programme Customs 2007, 2003-2007

2002/0029(COD) - 20/06/2002

The committee unanimously adopted the report by Janelly FOURTOU (EPP-ED, F) broadly approving the proposal under the codecision procedure (1st reading), subject to a number of amendments largely aimed at clarifying and improving the drafting and structure of the proposal. The committee stressed that the primary aim of the programme was to support action taken by the Member States to guarantee the effective functioning of the internal market. It sought to broaden the scope of the proposal by adding a number of new objectives, namely: to coordinate action so as to ensure that customs activity matched the needs of the internal market; to meet the demands placed on the Member States' customs administrations by globalisation and increasing volumes of trade and to help strengthen the competitive environment of the EU; to provide the necessary protection of the EU's financial interests as well as a safe and secure environment for its citizens; and to support the integration of new Member States. The committee also felt that the common approach regarding the customs policy should be continuously adapted to new developments in partnership between the Commission and the Member States in the Customs Policy Group (to be composed of the heads of customs administrations from the Commission and the Member States). The committee voted to add as a new programme priority the need to improve the coordination of and cooperation between laboratories carrying out analysis for customs purposes in order to ensure a uniform and unambiguous tariff classification throughout the EU. Moreover, it supported the creation of an electronic customs environment ('e-customs') and said that third countries should be given assistance in order to modernise their customs services and procedures. Finally, the committee felt that the Customs 2007 Committee, which was to be set up to assist the Commission, should be able to adopt its own rules of procedure rather than being chaired by the Commission's representatives as laid down in the proposal.