Customs 2000: Community action programme 1996-2000

1995/0087(COD) - 21/11/1995 - Modified legislative proposal

In its amended proposal, the Commission took over most of the amendments tabled by the European Parliament at first reading. The amendments were aimed at: - taking account of the fact that common protection of the external borders was a precondition for the creation of a European domestic market and that, in this respect, the Commission's proposal contained an essential aspect in terms of the complete removal of all barriers within the internal market by the year 2000; - harmonising checks both quantitatively and qualitatively in order to meet the programme's objectives. The Commission should provide a framework to coordinate post-clearance checks by drawing up a policy for retrospective checks made on transnational companies; - ensuring that, as regards recovery of customs duties and guarantees, regular reports were submitted on the difficulties encountered in this area by the customs authorities in the Member States, and proposing measures to improve the coordination of actions in all cases where Community guarantees were not sufficient in relation to the risks; - introducing measures to simplify customs procedures and adapt Community customs legislation to current economic trends; - computerising customs services; - improving working methods, particularly by establishing the cases where checks needed to be carried out before release was granted, facilitating access to information stored in the databases of other Member States and concluding memoranda of understanding with economic operators; - raising awareness throughout the Community of customs officials (including a distinctive symbol on uniforms consisting of the 12 stars); - assessing the possibility of establishing a permanent European Customs Academy; - cooperating with the associated CEECs (extending the Matthaeus programme to these countries); - ensuring that the Community's contribution to the programme was entered in Section III of the budget. The Commission would decide which operations were most cost-effective and keep the budgetary authority informed of these operations; - ensuring that experience was gained from the procedure of evaluating the programme and used to benefit the future development of Community legislation. None of the other amendments were accepted due to reasons of subsidiarity or because they came under Title VI of the Treaty on European Union.