Customs 2000: Community action programme 1996-2000

1995/0087(COD) - 21/05/1996 - Commission opinion on Parliament's position at 2nd reading

The Commission stated in its opinion amending the proposal following the second reading by the European Parliament that it was able to incorporate, in full or in part, 15 of the 24 amendments approved by Parliament. The amendments incorporated relate to: - the title of the proposal; - extension of the common transit scheme to Poland, the Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovakia; - the development of an internal European market which is tantamount to a domestic market with open internal borders and jointly protected external borders; - the definition of Community criteria for controls; - the introduction of a European symbol for Community customs officials (twelve-star symbol of the Community); - the scope and the definition of what is meant by "customs administration" for the purposes of the directive; - cooperation with the customs administrations of associated countries who wish to accede to the Union; - the development of targeting and risk-analysis techniques and the approximation of inspection rates; - if applicable, an examination of the possibilities offered by the creation of a common, permanent European Customs Academy; - the extension of the programme MATTHAEUS to CEECs; - the use of sums retained as the cost of collecting own resources. However, the Commission did not incorporate amendments seeking to: - create a single European customs authority; - amend the personnel status of customs officials with a view to facilitating exchanges of officials between the administrations of the various Member States; - coordinate audits of customs services and draw up a joint policy of retrospective checks between the customs services; - present by 1 January 1996 a binding timetable for the computerization of customs offices and the Community transit system; - make provision for proposals on direct access to information stored in the databases of other Member States and on entering information in a single database; - harmonize the powers of customs officials; - make provision for a new distribution of appropriations for financing this programme. At the same time, the Commission refused to incorporate a series of amendments proposed by the European Parliament at second reading and already included by the Council in its common position (e.g. recovery of customs duties, customs control before release, conclusion of memoranda of understanding with economic operators etc.).