# Internal market SLIM: results of the 2nd phase and follow-up of the implementation of 1st phase. Report

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The present working document summarizes the progress achieved in implementing the recommendations made during the first phase of the SLIM initiative (Simple Legislation for the Internal Market), launched by the Commission in May 1996. It also describes the areas selected for a second phase, explains the reasons behind the selection, sets out a timetable and describes some of the practical aspects of the SLIM teams' work. The progress in implementing the recommendations made during the first phase can be summarized as follows: 1) Intrastat: the recommendations of the Intrastat team included simplifying or no longer collecting certain data as from 1 January 1998, substantially reducing the number of subheadings in the nomenclature to be used from that date, and launching studies with a view to modifying the collection system or introducing a new one to reduce the burden on businesses. The Commission remains committed to the need for a simplified nomenclature. It has held discussions with an advisory group comprising Member State and industry representatives, with the aim of drafting a proposal by June 1997 which would take account of the needs of data users and providers. As far as simplification of data collection is concerned, the Commission is due to adopt two draft regulations amending Regulation No 3330/91/EEC soon. 2) Ornamental plants: the SLIM team is unanimous as regards the need to simplify and clarify the existing text. There should be differing forms and degrees of control at different stages of the production /distribution process, the rules applicable to the species covered should take account of their economic importance, the rules on varietal authenticity should be clarified, and the regime governing imports from third countries should be reviewed. The Commission will present a draft revised directive in May 1997, in which these aspects will be addressed and the text generally simplified . 3) Construction products: the option favoured by the Commission is to combine a short-term acceleration in the setting of standards with a long-term revision of the Directive, in order to bring it into line with the principles of the 'new approach'. The Commission has already initiated work to speed up the setting of standards. 4) Recognition of diplomas: the Commission will present proposals before the end of the year with a view to simplifying the updating of lists of diplomas which benefit from automatic recognition and streamlining the advisory committees. A hearing with interested parties will be held towards the end of the year. The Commission also intends to carry out an investigation into the administrative and legal formalities surrounding the recognition procedure under the sectoral directives; a similar exercise is already under way for the general system. Regarding the selection of areas, it has been agreed that Phase II of SLIM should cover the following sectors: value-added tax obligations, banking services, the combined nomenclature for external trade, and fertilizers. The teams will begin work in May 1997 and will deliver their reports by the end of October. The conclusions and recommendations contained in these reports will be the subject of a Commission Communication to the Internal Market Council in November.