Car industry: uniform provisions concerning the approval of mechanical coupling components of combinations of vehicles, UN/ECE Regulation 55

2005/0002(AVC) - 28/01/2005 - Initial legislative proposal

PURPOSE : to enable the Community to accede to UN/ECE Regulation No. 55 on provisions concerning the approval of mechanical coupling components of combinations of vehicles.

PROPOSED ACT : Council Decision.

CONTENT : by Council Decision 97/836/EC of 27 November 1997, the EC became a contracting party to the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe's (UN/ECE's) Revised 1958 Agreement on 24 March 1998 and acceded to 78 regulations appended to that Agreement. That Decision took effect on 24 March 1998. Article 3(3) of that Decision states, in particular, that the Community may decide to implement a regulation to which it had not acceded when it acceded to the revised Agreement if the Council approves that regulation by a qualified majority after receiving the assent of the European Parliament.

UN/ECE Regulation No. 55 on provisions concerning the approval of mechanical coupling components of combinations of vehicles is aimed, in particular, at removing technical barriers to the trade in motor vehicles between the contracting parties while ensuring a high level of safety in the operation of vehicles. Although this Regulation was not included in the list of regulations recognised by the EC contained in Annex II to Decision 97/836/EC, the Commission considers that, as both European and UN requirements have changed since that time, it would now be desirable for the EC to accede thereto.

It is also provided that the Regulation concerned shall be incorporated into the approval system for motor vehicles.

It should be stressed that the EC will take its decision regarding accession to this Regulation on the basis of the documents that are available in the official languages of the UN/ECE (English, French and Russian). As the EC has become party to the 1958 UN/ECE agreement, it is required to observe the procedures provided for in that agreement. Therefore, only the French and English versions of Regulation No. 55 have been appended. Translations of this Regulation will be published at a later date.