Alcoholic beverages: temporary quantitative restrictions of excise duty beer imports into Finland till 31 December 2006 (amend. Directive 69/169/EEC)

2005/0175(CNS) - 14/09/2005 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE: Temporary quantitative restriction on beer imports into Finland.

PROPOSED ACT: Council Directive

CONTENT: In 2000, the Commission granted Finland a derogation to limit personal imports of beer by individuals from countries other than EU Member States. The amount was limited to 6 litres and the derogation was to last only until 31 December 2005. The purpose of the derogations was to soften fiscal, economic, social, health and public order problems and related in particular to cheep imports from Russia. Within this context, the Commission proposes to extend the derogation for one further year to last from 1 January 2006 until 31 December 2006. Finland will be authorised to apply a quantitative limit for beer imports by travellers from countries other than EU Member States, to be fixed at an amount of 16 litres. This, it is hoped, will help to soften the current fiscal and economic problems faced by Finland. The Commission is, however, imposing a time limit in order to:

- take account of Community rules, which seek to prevent competitive distortions resulting from the application of different limits when external frontiers linking the Community to third countries are crossed and,

- pending the outcome of a general review of the values and quantities of goods set down in Council Directive 69/169/EEC. Such a review may provide a permanent solution to the Finnish problem.

The proposal has no negative impact on the Community budget.