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Bulletin EU 12-2005

Common commercial policy (14/19)

1.6.30. Proposal for a Council regulation on the indication of the country of origin of certain products imported from third countries.

Adopted by the Commission on 16 December. This proposal for a regulation is intended to fill the vacuum in Community law as regards the use of origin marking for industrial products. At present, Community producers of origin-sensitive consumer goods are unable to capitalise on the advantages of producing within the European Community and miss out on an opportunity to prevent false or misleading origin claims. The regulation would introduce a compulsory origin marking scheme covering a number of sectors which see benefit in the initiative, and would be applicable to imported goods only. By improving transparency and consumer information about the origin of goods, the system will also contribute to the Lisbon agenda's objective of strengthening the competitiveness of European products. The proposed regulation opts for a definition of the country of origin based on the EC non-preferential rules of origin, as applied for other customs purposes, and limits the conditions for marking products to the minimum needed to make sure that origin marks are easily detected and understood by the consumer and at the same time difficult to replace or fake.

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