

EN
E-001277/2016
Answer given by Mr Moscovici
on behalf of the Commission
(15.4.2016)

With a view to ensuring uniform classification of goods across the European Union, the Commission has indeed adopted Explanatory notes to the Combined Nomenclature of the European Union¹ setting out criteria to distinguish between "still image cameras with a video camera function" and "video camera recorders with a still image function", the length of the single sequence of video being just one of them. Video camera recorders are subject to import duty of 4,9% or 14%, still image cameras are duty free.

Following recent technical developments, those criteria are currently being revised. While certain criteria may seem outdated, the combination of the quality of the video image and the length of the video (at least 30 minutes) are deemed to be objective and verifiable criteria which are applied in a uniform manner across Member States. The Commission is not aware of technical limitations to those devices developed by the industry to evade import duties. It is therefore intended to maintain those criteria.

The Common Customs Tariff duties are fixed by the Council on proposals of the Commission. The Commission can in this context confirm that the product is part of the coverage of the revised WTO² Information Technology Agreement, which has been negotiated by the Commission. This means that the customs duties for camcorder will be removed after the revised agreement enters into force and thus in extension benefit EU consumers.

¹ Explanatory Note to the Combined Nomenclature (2007/C 248/05, OJ C 248, 23.10.2007, p. 5)

² World Trade Organization