



Argentina clarifies import documentation procedures for imports of clothing

In May 2010 Argentina definitively removed a long-standing barrier which had caused harm to the European clothing industry with regard to customs documentation and procedures.

At the beginning of the 2000's, Argentina imposed strict requirements for the determination of origin on the import of products manufactured outside the EU but exported to Argentina from the EU (so-called triangular trade). Following a formal investigation under the Trade Barriers Regulation, initiated by the European Commission in 1999, in 2007 Argentina and the EU agreed on simplified rules on legalisation of the required customs documentation, including certificates of origin.

Since 2009, however, certain Argentinean consulates in the European Union applied different and contradictory practices regarding the legalisation of customs documentation for shipments of triangular-trade goods, notably clothing. In particular, they requested an invoice from the original manufacturer as well as an original certificate of origin, legalised in the country of manufacture. This practice was extremely burdensome for EU exporters and in some cases it prevented the export of goods from the EU territory which had been produced in a third country.

The European Commission raised the problem in bilateral contacts with Argentina through the EU Delegation in Buenos Aires, as well as at the Joint Committee meetings in 2009 and 2010. As a result, the Argentinean Ministry of Foreign Affairs provided clarifying instructions to its consulates, to bring the practices into line with the solutions previously agreed with the EU. According to the industry, in the past few months no further disruptions to trade, linked to these procedures, have been detected.

The EU's total exports of clothing (in value terms) to Argentina, where numerous barriers continue to hamper market access, dropped from 60 million Euros in 2008 to 49 million Euros in 2009, while exports grew gradually in the first six months of 2010, to the value of 31 million Euros.

The European Commission will continue to address the remaining barriers to trade with Argentina, notably non-automatic import licences and practices linked thereto such as delays and export obligations.

For further information: <mailto:trade-market-access@ec.europa.eu>

Disclaimer: The European Commission services issue this flash note to enhance information about its initiatives and activities. Our goal is to keep this information timely and accurate. If errors are brought to our attention, we will try to correct them. However the Commission accepts no responsibility or liability whatsoever with regard to the information in this flash note. The disclaimer, the copyright notice and the statement on Personal Data Protection that you can find at http://ec.europa.eu/geninfo/legal_notices_en.htm applies accordingly to this flash and the data collected for its distribution