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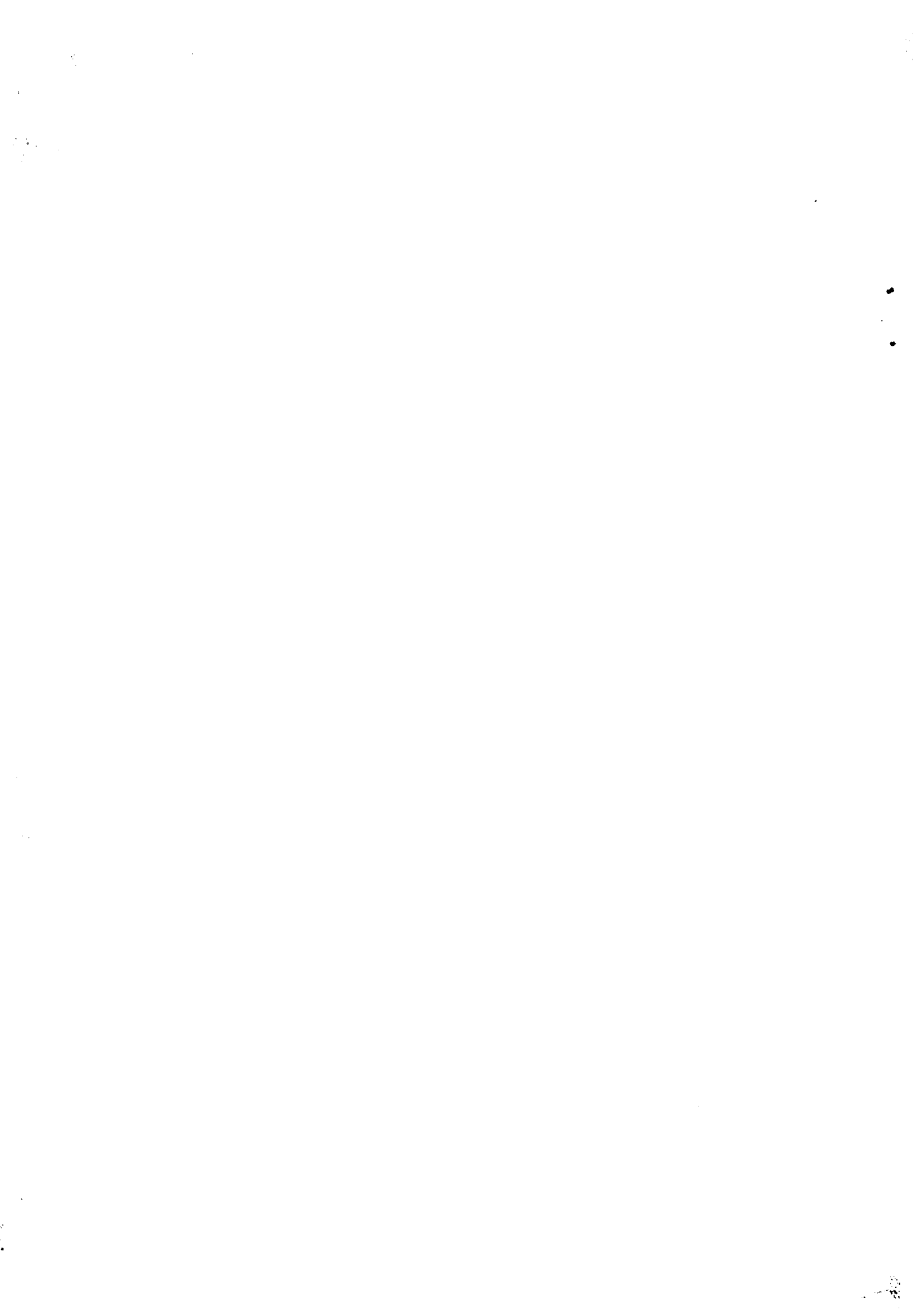
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Proposal for a
COUNCIL REGULATION
amending Regulation (EEC) No 1736/75 on the external
trade statistics of the Community and statistics of
trade between Member States

(submitted to the Council by the Commission)



Reasons for the proposal

1. Article 24, paragraph 2 of Council Regulation (EEC) No 1736/75 of 24 June 1975 on the external trade statistics of the Community and statistics of trade between Member States (1) fixed the statistical threshold at 250 units of account. It is to be noted, however, that as from 1 January 1977, statistics will be produced in European units of account. As this is an upper limit below which the Member States are free to fix their own thresholds in accordance with their own requirements, the need to carry out regular adjustments of the threshold did not figure in the debates preceding the adoption of the regulation. Hence Article 24 paragraph 3 only gave the Commission the power to standardize the statistical threshold in accordance with the procedure provided for in Article 41 of the same regulation. Since 1975, however, the rapid upward trend in prices has forced several Member States to raise their national threshold to the ceiling specified in Article 24. Unless inflationary pressure slackens off in the near future, these Member States are worried that the administrative economies achieved by their national statistical institutes by reason of the statistical threshold will be jeopardized if they are not allowed to exceed the 250 EUA barrier.
2. It thus seems reasonable to propose that the statistical threshold, as expressed in European units of account, be raised, the first stage being to a limit of 300 European units of account.
3. To avoid in the future the procedure attendant on amending a Council Regulation involving in this case consultation with the European Parliament - every time the economic situation requires the statistical threshold to be adjusted, it seems expedient to give the Commission the power to adapt the relevant Community regulations quickly to the changed situation.
4. To this end, it will suffice to extend the authority already accorded by paragraph 3 of Article 24 to those cases where it will be required to change the amount fixed by paragraph 2 into European units of account.

(1) OJ No L 183 of 14.7.1975, page 3

5. The use of the statistical threshold constitutes a simplification, enabling the Member States to disregard a large proportion of their primary statistical documentation - from the point of view of processing - without any significant loss of information. Consequently, their own self-interest requires that they and the Commission - acting together through the medium of the Committee on External Trade Statistics - come up with appropriate measures as soon as possible aimed at enabling this rationalized system to continue..

Proposal for a Council Regulation amending Regulation (EEC) No 1736/75 on the external trade statistics of the Community and statistics of trade between Member States

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES,

Having regard to the Treaty establishing the European Economic Community, and in particular Article 235 thereof;

Having regard to the proposal from the Commission;

Having regard to the Opinion of the European Parliament;

Whereas, with effect from 1 January 1977, the external trade statistics of the Community and statistics of trade between Member States are produced in European units of account (EUA) as defined by Commission Decision No 3289/75/ECSC of 18 December 1975 (1);

Whereas, since the adoption of Regulation (EEC) No 1736/75 of the Council of 24 June 1975 on the external trade statistics of the Community and statistics of trade between Member States (2), prices have developed in such a way that it is necessary to raise the statistical threshold from 250 to 300 EUA in order to enable the Member States to discontinue the statistical recording of consignments of minor or trivial value if they wish to make use of this option for reasons of economy;

Whereas the present situation as regards exchange rates has resulted in the statistical threshold, as expressed in European Units of Account, being adjusted more frequently and at shorter intervals than originally planned; whereas the system can be simplified by the inclusion of a provision for the statistical threshold to be adjusted under the procedure set out in Article 41 of Regulation (EEC) No 1736/75,

(1) OJ No L 327 of 19.12.1975, p. 4

(2) OJ No L 183 of 14.7.1975, p. 3

HAS ADOPTED THIS DECISION:

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Article 1

Article 24 of Regulation (EEC) No 1736/75 is amended to read as follows:

"Article 24

1. The statistical threshold shall be the limit, expressed in net weight and in value, below which no figures are compiled.
2. The statistical threshold may not exceed 1000 kg regardless of the statistical value of the goods nor 300 European units of account regardless of the net weight of the goods. Each Member State shall inform the Commission of the statistical threshold which it has adopted.
3. Such measures as may be required for purposes of changing the amount in European units of account fixed by paragraph 2, or of applying that paragraph, or of standardizing the statistical threshold shall be adopted in accordance with Article 41.
4. The European unit of account (EUA) is that defined by Commission Decision No 3289/75/ECSC of 18 December 1975 (1)."

Article 2

This Regulation shall enter into force on the third day following its publication in the Official Journal of the European Communities.

This Regulation shall be binding in its entirety and directly applicable in all Member States.

Done at Brussels,

For the Council
The President

(1) OJ No L 327 of 19.12.1975, p. 4