

**Question for written answer E-000243/2018  
to the Commission**  
Rule 130  
**Adam Szejnfeld (PPE)**

Subject: Country of origin labelling as an instrument of protectionism in the EU

In recent years it has become increasingly common for Member States to take legal or administrative steps that are inconsistent with the spirit and principles of the single market. Those steps include indicating the country of origin using 'MADE IN...' labels.

Under EU rules, country of origin rules may only be introduced for foodstuffs, where there is evidence of a link between the country of origin and the quality of the product. The Commission has, however, authorised a few countries to test a requirement to include information on the origin of meat and dairy products. Unfortunately, some of those countries are taking advantage of the situation and want to bring in new labelling rules for other products as well, including non-food items.

Where the vast majority of products is concerned, the country of origin has no impact whatsoever on the quality of those products. This is because quality does not depend on the country concerned, but on the production processes that companies use. 'MADE IN...' labels are not therefore about information for consumers: they are a market competition tool. To subliminally suggest that products from a given country are better than those produced in other countries is to undermine the foundations of the single market within the EU as a whole.

In the light of the foregoing, what steps is the Commission intending to take to prevent a situation in which indicating the country of origin using 'MADE IN...' labels becomes an instrument of protectionism in the EU?