

WRITTEN QUESTION E-3873/05
by Reinhard Rack (PPE-DE)
to the Commission

Subject: Absence of customs relief for author's and review copies under the present regulation on reliefs from customs duty (EEC 918/83)

Under European Community law, customs arrangements are regulated at Community level for all the Member States. Relief from customs duty is governed by the Regulation setting up a Community system of reliefs from customs duty (EEC 918/83¹).

However, this regulation makes no mention of relief for author's and review copies of publications.

This means that it makes no difference whether the imported goods were bought or presented free of charge to the importer. The only deciding factor is the process of importation, and the resulting movement of goods. Before accession, Austrian customs law granted relief from customs duty for author's and review copies.

It was, and is, extremely helpful in international scientific exchange to be able to give colleagues to whom one would like to show a piece of work access to it free of charge.

With the charging of customs duties, any such offering becomes a poisoned chalice.

Is the Commission aware that the regulation on reliefs from customs duty does not grant any relief for author's or review copies?

What steps does the Commission intend to take to remedy this situation?

Could customs relief not be extended to author's and review copies, along the lines of the former Austrian arrangement?

¹ OJ L 105, 23.4.1983, p. 1.