

WRITTEN QUESTION E-4006/05
by Simon Busuttil (PPE-DE)
to the Commission

Subject: The cruise liner industry in the EU

The cruise liner industry is increasingly becoming an important niche within the tourism industry. It is estimated that the industry generates some EUR 2 billion for EU ports and their hinterlands.

However, the industry is faced with unnecessary fiscal and administrative burdens when it comes to taxation in terms of the application and collection of excise duty and VAT under applicable EU law.

To obviate such burdens, cruise liner companies are systematically having to schedule calls to third country ports in order to turn the journey into an 'international trip' and thereby render it duty-free and free from the administrative burdens associated with collecting tax.

Is the Commission aware that this state of affairs is acting as a disincentive for cruise liner companies, obliging them to move their business to non-EU ports rather than keep business in the European Union?

What is the Commission's position on this matter and how does it intend to address this anomaly?