

DECISION No 1/2024
OF THE JOINT COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONAL CONVENTION
ON PAN-EURO-MEDITERRANEAN PREFERENTIAL RULES OF ORIGIN

of 12 December 2024

amending Decision No 1/2023 of the Joint Committee
with respect to the use of movement certificates issued electronically
in the framework of that Convention applicable as of 1 January 2025

THE JOINT COMMITTEE,

Having regard to the Regional Convention on pan-Euro-Mediterranean preferential rules of origin¹, and in particular Article 4(3), point (a), thereof,

Whereas:

- (1) At the beginning of 2020, the Commission informed the Contracting Parties to the Regional Convention on pan-Euro-Mediterranean preferential rules of origin (the ‘Convention’) that, due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the subsequent suspension of contacts between the customs authorities and economic operators in a number of Contracting Parties, it was not possible for a majority of Contracting Parties to provide movement certificates for preferential origin purposes in the required form, namely signed by hand, stamped by customs in wet ink or in the correct paper format.
- (2) The vast majority of Contracting Parties considered it appropriate to adopt exceptional measures to ensure the full implementation of the preferential trade arrangements covered by the Convention. Those exceptional measures were applied on a reciprocal basis by the Contracting Parties that made use of the relevant provisions in the rules of origin.
- (3) During the COVID-19 pandemic, some Contracting Parties developed or adapted existing electronic systems to issue certificates electronically in order to balance the need for flexibility with the need for compliance with the requirements for the format of the movement certificates contained in Appendix I to the Convention.
- (4) The customs authorities of the Contracting Parties were invited to accept movement certificates for preferential origin purposes, issued electronically with a digital signature, stamp or cachet of the competent authorities, or a copy in paper or electronic form (scanned or available online) based on the flexibility provided for in Article 24 of Appendix I to the Convention.
- (5) The Joint Committee was informed, during its meeting held on 16 June 2022, of a request by a Contracting Party to maintain the good practices introduced under

¹ OJ EU L 54, 26.2.2013, p. 4.

the exceptional measures adopted during the COVID-19 pandemic in order for the economic operators to benefit from a digitalisation of movement certificates.

- (6) The Contracting Parties acknowledged that the experience gained in the use of movement certificates issued electronically in preferential trade under the exceptional measures adopted due to the COVID-19 pandemic was positive and committed to keep up the good practices introduced under such exceptional measures by working together towards introducing a common system based on electronic proofs of origin and electronic administrative cooperation within the pan-Euro-Mediterranean zone.
- (7) The Contracting Parties consider that moving to a system that issues movement certificates electronically and provides for electronic administrative cooperation under the framework of the Convention constitutes the first step towards a full digitalisation of proofs of origin at the scale of the pan-Euro-Mediterranean zone, especially in view of the forthcoming entry into force of the amendment of the Convention introduced by Decision No 1/2023 of the Joint Committee¹.
- (8) Systems designed for the electronic issuance of movement certificates should offer the possibility for the customs authorities of the Contracting Parties to check their authenticity instantly.
- (9) On 7 December 2023, the Joint Committee adopted Recommendation No 1/2023² on the use of movement certificates issued electronically under the framework of the Convention. Therefore, in order to provide a clear legal framework and to ensure consistency in the use of movement certificates issued electronically in the context of the transition from the current rules of the Convention to the revised rules of the Convention, which will enter into force on 1 January 2025, Decision No 1/2023 should be amended in order to allow for the incorporation of the general requirements on proofs of origin issued electronically into the revised rules of the Convention,

HAS ADOPTED THIS DECISION:

Article 1

- 1. Decision No 1/2023 shall be amended as set out in the Annex to this Decision.
- 2. The amendments to Decision No 1/2023 shall enter into force on 1 January 2025.

¹ Decision No 1/2023 of the Joint Committee of the Regional Convention on pan-Euro-Mediterranean Preferential Rules of Origin of 7 December 2023 on the amendment of the Regional Convention on pan-Euro-Mediterranean preferential rules of origin (OJ EU L 2024/390, 19.2.2024, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/dec/2024/390/oj>).

² Recommendation No 1/2023 of the Joint Committee of the Regional Convention on pan-Euro-Mediterranean preferential rules of origin of 7 December 2023 on the use of movement certificates issued electronically (OJ EU L 2024/243, 15.1.2024, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reco/2024/243/oj>).

Article 2

This Decision shall enter into force on the date of its adoption.

Done at Brussels, 12 December 2024

*For the Joint Committee
The Chair*

Maria Isabel GARCIA CATALAN

ANNEX

Sole Article

Amendment of Decision No 1/2023 of the Joint Committee of the Regional Convention on pan-Euro-Mediterranean Preferential Rules of Origin

In point (5) of the Sole Article of the Annex to Decision No 1/2023, paragraph 4 of Article 17 of Appendix I to the Regional Convention on pan-Euro-Mediterranean preferential rules of origin is replaced by the following:

- ‘4. For the purposes of paragraph 1, two or more Contracting Parties may agree to establish a system that allows proofs of origin listed in paragraph 1 to be issued electronically and/or submitted electronically.

Until such a system is established, the Contracting Parties shall accept movement certificates issued electronically when submitted at importation, provided that:

- (a) the movement certificates issued electronically are based on the specimen contained in Annex IV;
- (b) the customs authorities of the exporting Contracting Party provide for a secure online internet-based system to verify the authenticity of movement certificates issued electronically;
- (c) the movement certificates issued electronically bear a unique serial number and, if available, security features by which they can be identified; and
- (d) the date from which a Contracting Party starts the electronic issuance of movement certificates is specified in notices published in the *Official Journal of the European Union* (C series) and in accordance with the Contracting Parties’ own procedures.

A Contracting Party may decide to suspend the acceptance of movement certificates issued electronically where the conditions listed above are not fulfilled and shall in that case inform the other Contracting Parties thereof in advance, through the secretariat of the Joint Committee. In case of suspension, notices as referred to in point (d) shall indicate the starting date of the suspension.’.