

Brussels, 30 September 2010

Free movement of goods - Commission requests Sweden to comply with EU rules as regards metal detectors

The European Commission has today decided to request Sweden to amend its legislation on the use of metal detectors so as to ensure its compliance with EU rules on the free movement of goods. The Commission considers that Sweden's current legislation, that places strict limits on the use and transport of metal detectors, is disproportionate to the public policy objective of protecting archaeological and historical sites, and so constitutes an unjustified barrier to imports of metal detectors into Sweden. The request takes the form of a reasoned opinion under EU infringement procedures. If Sweden does not inform the Commission within two months of measures taken to ensure full compliance with its obligations under EU law, the Commission may decide to refer Sweden to the EU's Court of Justice.

The Swedish Heritage Conservation Act states that metal detectors may neither be used nor carried on the sites of ancient monuments and remains, except when travelling on a road that is open to the general public. Imports of metal detectors into Sweden are affected by this general ban on the use and the carrying of these devices.

While the Commission supports the necessity to protect national treasures of archaeological and historical value, it believes however that Sweden could prevent the risks of plundering of heritage sites by other measures more appropriate and less restrictive of the free movement of goods. The free movement of goods is established in Articles 34 and 36 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union.

More information

http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/single-market-goods/free-movement-non-harmonised-sectors/index_en.htm

For more information on EU infringement procedures, see [MEMO/10/457](#).