EU/ACP countries' Economic Partnership Agreements: exclusion of certain countries from trade preferences; Commission delegated powers

2011/0260(COD) - 03/05/2013 - Commission opinion on Parliament's position at 2nd reading

In its opinion on the European Parliament's amendments to the Council's position amending Annex I to Council Regulation (EC) No 1528/2007, the Commission states that it supports the Parliament’s position.

To recall, the proposal aims to amend the list of countries benefiting from the preferences (Annex I of the Regulation) by removing, on 1 January 2014, those which have still not taken the necessary steps towards ratification of an EPA. It is intended to ensure equitable treatment vis-à-vis EPA partners that are fully complying with their obligations (19 countries in total).

As regards the amendments proposed by the Parliament, the Commission expresses itself as follows:

- **delay of the date of entry into force**: at second reading, the European Parliament proposes to delay the entry into force of the amendment to the Market Access Regulation by ten months, i.e. to 1 October 2014. The Commission considers its original proposal of entry into force on 1 January 2014 preferable as any further delays increase the risks associated with extending a temporary arrangement that cannot provide a solid legal basis of ACP market access. However, with a view to ensuring inter-institutional unity and a broad majority for the adoption of the amendment proposal the **amendment is nevertheless acceptable**;
- **amendment to limit the delegation of powers**: in another amendment, Parliament limits in time the delegation of powers conferred to the Commission to five years with tacit renewal. While this is not the preferred approach of the Commission, this does not raise any particular problems in the case at hand and is **therefore acceptable**.

In conclusion, the Commission amends its proposal as set out above.