Czech Republic: membership application and partnership, 17 January 1996

1997/2180(COS) - 08/11/2000 - Supplementary non-legislative basic document

This Regular Report for 2000 on the Czech Republic is largely similar to that of the Commission's 1997 Opinion and subsequent reports; however, it differs from that of the previous years on three minor points. Firstly, the part of the present report assessing the Czech Republic's ability to assume the obligations of membership has been structured to follow the list of 29 negotiating chapters covering the acquis. Secondly, this part has been broadened to cover also the Czech Republic's administrative capacity to apply the acquis under each of the negotiating chapters (previously discussed in a separate section of the report). Thirdly, the report includes, for the first time, a section assessing the progress made by the Czech Republic in translating the acquis into its official language. This report takes into consideration progress since the 1999 regular report and looks at whether intended reforms referred to in the 1999 report have been carried out and it also examines new initiatives. With regard to the relations between the EU and the Czech Republic, it has continued to implement the Europe Agreement and contributed to the smooth functioning of the various joint institutions. In September 2000, an agreement of principle was reached on the move to the second stage of the transitional period of the Europe Agreement, indicating that the Czech Republic has further aligned its legislation on establishment and movement of capital with Community rules. Trade between the EU and the Czech Republic has continued to increase. As far as Community aid is concerned, in the years 2000-2002 total financial assistance to the Czech Republic will amount annually to EUR 79 million for Phare, EUR 22 million for SAPARD and between EUR 55 and EUR 80 million for ISPA. It should be noted that the Czech Republic continues to fulfil the Copenhagen political criteria. Recent significant developments include, in particular, a more effective collaboration between the government and Parliament. There has been progress in setting the legal framework for regional government. However, the reform of the public administration has not advanced significantly and therefore the short term priority of the Accession Partnership in this field has not been met. Furthermore, the fight against corruption and economic crime has so far been insufficient. Although the Czech Republic continues to respect human rights and freedoms and has developed its internal institutional framework in this field, there are still areas of concern such as overcrowding of the prison system and persistence of trafficking in women and children. Areas in which progress has been made include the situation of the Roma community, the market economy, the macroeconomic stability, restructuring and privatisation of banks, the internal market, free movement of goods, employment and social affairs, economic and social cohesion, intellectual property, innovation, transport, industry and agriculture. On the other hand, further progress is needed in areas such as the financial sector, audiovisual policy, the environment, and justice and home affairs.