Steel industry: aid code (implementing dec. 2496 /96/ECSC). 1998 Report

1999/2107(COS) - 18/03/2002

Article 8 of the Commission Decision establishing Community rules for State aid to the steel industry obliges the Commission to file this annual report. It covers decisions taken by the Commission in 2001 under the Steel Aid Code. The Commission took decisions concerning 24 cases, ten of which were approved without opening the investigating procedure, ten were subject to final decisions and the other four were decisions to initiate proceedings. The cases in which no objections were raised related to research and development activities in Belgium, Germany, Italy and the Netherlands as well as aid towards investments for environmental protection in Spain and Austria. Similarly, the participation by Belgium in the capital of a new company raised no objections. In four cases, the Commission opened new procedures concerning a case of non-notified intervention in Spain of a new company, two cases of research and development in Spain and in Italy, and a case of environmental tax law in the United Kingdom. The Commission took a final negative decision concerning the French law on tax credits for foreign investments made by steel companies, as it had done the year before in the case of a similar Spanish law. It took a final negative decision concerning the aid notified by Germany in favour of Brema Warmwalzwerk (environment) and of Eko-Stahl (R&D) and a partially negative decision concerning aid notified by Belgium in favour of Sidmar (environment). Three cases were closed taking note of the withdrawal of the aid notifications made by Germany and by Italy. Lastly, the Report notes that not all Member States have complied with Article 7 obliging them to report to the Commission on aid paid to the steel industry in 2000.