Competition policy. 26th report 1996

1997/2069(COS) - 09/10/1997

The committee unanimously adopted the motion for a resolution concerning the 26th report by the Commission on competition policy (1996). While endorsing the basic objective set out in the Commission's report to encourage market flexibility while developing possibilities of initiative and innovation the rapporteur, Mr Areitio Toledo (PPE, E) calls for greater cooperation with the national authorities in implementing competition policy and for procedures to encourage progressive decentralization. In addition, the Commission should seek to establish closer relations between the Union, the United States and Japan through its competition policy in order to avoid any potential friction over technology, trade relations and financial dependence. The rapporteur also stresses the need for clear Commission guidelines on what changes the Amsterdam Treaty has introduced in the competition field, particularly with regard to services of general economic interest (Article 7d). Other criticisms concern the manner in which the Commission has considered the question of cartels. In addition, the rapporteur deplores the absence of a genuine internal market concerning distribution and after-sales service in the automobile sector. Finally, concerning state aid, the rapporteur calls for a system of monitoring to increase transparency concerning all national aid independently of their nature or objectives, proposing the introduction of a code of conduct similar to that proposed by the Commission concerning tax aids.