EC/Lithuania Europe agreement: free competition and undertakings (art. 64 1 and 2 of the Agreement)

1998/0075(CNS) - 24/11/1998

The Committee endorsed unanimously the report by Mr ELCHLEPP (PSE,D) recommending to the plenary the approval of the Commission·s proposals concerning the position to be taken by the Community, within the Association Council established by the Association Agreement with Lithuania on the rules for the implementation of the provision in this Agreement that the party shall conduct a competition policy and apply public aid in accordance with identical basic principles. The Association Agreement was signed in June 1995 and entered into force on 1 February 1998, following its ratification by the European Parliament and the parliament of the Member State. The Draft Decisions of the respective Association Council as proposed by the Commission lay down fundamental principles of competition policy, the competent competition authorities, procedures for consultation and information in cases of mutual interest and cooperation between authorities. The Association Agreement lays down that the Association Council for each country shall adopt the necessary implementing provisions by the end of 1997. Although this deadline expired at the beginning of the year, the rapporteur takes the view that it is crucial that the European Parliament delivers its opinion as quickly as possible, so that the timetable for introduction of competition rules in Lithuania can be brought into line with the timetable for the other associated countries of Central and Eastern Europe.