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

1998/0076(CNS) - 24/11/1998

The Committee endorsed unanimously the report by Mr SEPPÄNEN (GUE/NGL,FIN) 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 Latvia on the rules for the implementation of the provision in that Agreement that the parties shall conduct a competition policy and apply public aid in accordance with identical basic principles (consultation procedure).The Association Agreements were signed in June 1995 and entered into force on 1 February 1998, following their ratification by the European Parliament and the parliaments of all Member States. The Draft Decisions of the respective Association Councils 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 Agreements lay 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 rapporteurs take 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 the Baltic States can be brought into line with the timetable for the other associated countries of Central and Eastern Europe.