EC/Czech Republic Europe agreement

1993/1206(AVC) - 19/12/1994 - Final act

The Council approved this decision concerning the conclusion of a new association agreement (or Europe agreement) between the EEC, ECSC, Euratom and the Czech Republic, following the partition of the Czech and Slovak Federative Republic into two separate republics. It was a mixed agreement covering areas of Community and national responsibility, concluded for an unlimited period. It aimed essentially to establish a free trade area between the Community and its Member States and the Czech Republic. It included for the first time political dialogue and increased cultural cooperation. It also included a clause on respect for democratic principles, human rights and minorities as well as respect for the principle of the market economy as key elements of association. The agreement had as a framework the future accession of the Czech Republic to the European Community. In particular, the agreement provided for: - a transitional period of 10 years consisting of two periods of five years, - the creation of a free trade area covering all products with a mutual yet asymmetrical liberalisation process between the parties, - separate protocols for sensitive products (textiles, coal and steel, and processed agricultural products), - the improvement of the situation of Czech workers residing legally in the Community, - national treatment with regard to free establishment and the provision of services by Czech operators operating in the Community, - the liberalisation of the movement of capital and payments and the harmonisation of legislation, - increased financial cooperation through the allocation of non-refundable aid (e.g. Phare), EIB loans or actions providing technical macro-economic assistance, - an association council meeting at least once a year which would have certain decision-making powers. The agreement could be suspended at any moment for so-called "special emergency" reasons (the cases of "special emergency" were set out in the annex). This agreement replaced the former economic and trade cooperation agreement concluded between the Community and the Czech and Slovak Federative Republic (CSFR), signed on 7 May 1990, as well as the protocol between the ECSC and the CSFR signed on 28 June 1991 before the entry into force of the present agreement. Following the conclusion of the ratification procedures by the contracting parties, this agreement entered into force on 1 January 1995.