Generalized system of preferences: revision of the system 1995-1997 for industrial products

1994/0209(CNS) - 18/11/1994 - Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading

Parliament approved the Commission proposal subject to 36 amendments. These amendments aimed mainly to: - amend the legal basis by adding a reference to Article 130w; - highlight the shortcomings of the present scheme; - stress that the generalised system of preferences was one form of financial assistance provided by the Union to the beneficiary countries and that when this regulation expired, the overall volume of preferential trade should be reviewed to meet the needs of the poorer developing countries; - ensure that the new offer was not applied to countries that had managed to integrate sufficiently into the world economy and whose per capita gross national product (GNP) was above USD 6 000 in 1991; - include transitional support for the former Soviet Union among the objectives; - include among the criteria the principles of prohibiting child labour and equal treatment of men and women, in order to strengthen support for countries making efforts in this field and for the temporary removal of the advantages of the scheme from those who did not respect these principles; - strengthen administrative cooperation and mutual assistance in customs matters with a view to checking the origin of products benefiting under the Community's generalised system of preferences and combating possible distortions of trade; - call on the Commission to devise criteria for an effective environmental policy for the developing countries; - take account of the financial consequences of the generalised system of preferences with a view to strengthening the principle of budgetary discipline; - stress the need to refer matters concerning the application of the scheme to an advisory committee on generalised preferences; - postpone from 1 January 1996 to 1 January 1997 the 50% reduction in the preferential margin obtained by applying Article 2 to imports of products originating in the countries and falling within the sectors listed in part I of Annex II; - bring forward from 1997 to 1996 the date for the application of the special incentive arrangements provided for in Article 5; - extend the arrangements provided for in Article 5 to countries which respected equal treatment of men and women, in line with International Labour Organisation Conventions Nos 100, 111 and 156 and the UN Convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women; - include the infringement of intellectual property rights and the manufacture of products which were the subject of legally recognised restrictive measures, in cases justifying the removal of the advantages of the scheme; - ensure that Parliament was informed of the decision taken by the Commission with regard to the renewal of Common Customs Tariff duties so that it could refer the decision to the Council, which, in turn and after consultation of the European Parliament, could amend this decision; - ensure that every year, during the presentation of the budget, the Commission informed Parliament of the measures taken to combat fraud.