Horizontal state aid: application of Articles 92 and 93 of the EC Treaty

1997/0203(CNS) - 07/05/1998 - Final act

OBJECTIVE: to institute a more effective policy on monitoring State aid. COMMUNITY MEASURE: Council Regulation (EC) No 994/98 on the application of Articles 92 and 93 of the Treaty establishing the European Community to certain categories of horizontal State aid. SUBSTANCE: the Regulation provides a framework for the adoption by the Commission of individual Regulations granting group exemptions. It lays down the categories of aid in respect of which the Commission may grant exemptions, namely aid to the following sectors: - small and medium-sized enterprises; - research and development; - environmental protection; - employment and training; - regional aid schemes which comply with the map approved by the Commission for each Member State. Exemption Regulations must specify for each category of aid: - the purpose of the aid; - the categories of beneficiaries; - thresholds expressed either in terms of aid intensities in relation to a set of eligible costs or in terms of maximum amounts; - the conditions governing the cumulation of aid; - conditions of monitoring. In addition, exemption Regulations may notably: - attach further conditions for the compatibility of aid exempted under such Regulations; - set thresholds for the notification of awards of individual aid; - exclude certain sectors from the scope of the Regulation. The Regulation lays down that the Commission may also adopt a Regulation granting exemption from the notification procedure for aid below a certain amount ('de minimis' aid). As regards monitoring of aid exempted from the notification obligation, the Commission will in its Regulations impose detailed rules on Member States regarding the communication of the required information on the application of group exemptions; in particular they will be required to: - facilitate monitoring of the application of group exemptions (system for recording and compiling all relevant information); - provide the Commission with information on the application of group exemptions in computerised form; - publish in their national official journal information on the application of group exemptions. ENTRY INTO FORCE: 15/05/1998.