Estonia: membership application

1997/2177(COS) - 06/12/1999 - Document attached to the procedure

PURPOSE: presentation of the second 'accession partnership' for Estonia. CONTENT : Like its previous version, this partnership for the accession of Estonia resembles a work programme proposing priorities and objectives to be attained by the country in the short and the medium-term in order to become a member of the Union. These objectives take into account the evaluation of the 1998 accession partnership described in the last regular report on Estonia (1999). The short-term priorities (end of 2000) concern the alignment of legislation concerning its language and international standards and the Europe Agreement, and the integration of Russian-speaking non-citizens. On the economic front, priorities concern the restructuring of the bitumen sector and the privatisation of the energy sector, the acceleration of the property ownership process and the reform of pensions. Other priorities relate to the internal market (basically continuing the harmonisation process) ; agriculture (veterinary inspections), transport, environment, social affairs and employment, justice and home affairs (reform of penal law) and the strengthening of administrative and judiciary capacity (in particular the management and control of EU funds). In the medium term, the measures will concern following up efforts to, integrate non-citizens and the achievement of land reform. In the area of the single market, the complete liberalisation of goods and capital, the introduction of competition rules and consumer protection are priorities. Further measures are awaited in the area of agriculture, fishing, energy (the liberalisation of the gas and electricity sectors) transport, environment (waste management, industrial pollution) and improvement in the operation of the legal sector. With regard to the programming of financial resources, the partnership confirms aid granted in line with AGENDA 2000 and the various instruments provided therein (Phare, SAPARD and ISPA) in accordance with the rules already foreseen. It should be noted that assistance is only granted if the country respects the provisions of the EC-Estonia Association Agreement, makes progress towards satisfying the Copenhagen criteria and assures in the year 2000 the achievement of the specific priorities of this accession partnership.