

Article 70

Competition and other economic provisions

1. The following are incompatible with the proper functioning of the Agreement, in so far as they may affect trade between the Community and Croatia:

- (i) all agreements between undertakings, decisions by associations of undertakings and concerted practices between undertakings which have as their object or effect the prevention, restriction or distortion of competition;
- (ii) abuse by one or more undertakings of a dominant position in the territories of the Community or of Croatia as a whole or in a substantial part thereof;
- (iii) any State aid which distorts or threatens to distort competition by favouring certain undertakings or certain products.

2. Any practices contrary to this Article shall be assessed on the basis of criteria arising from the application of the competition rules applicable in the Community, in particular from Articles 81, 82, 86 and 87 of the Treaty establishing the European Community and interpretative instruments adopted by the Community institutions.

3. The Parties shall ensure that an operationally independent public body is entrusted with the powers necessary for the full application of paragraph 1 (i) and (ii) of this article, regarding private and public undertakings and undertakings to which special rights have been granted.

4. Croatia shall establish an operationally independent authority which is entrusted with the powers necessary for the full application of paragraph 1 (iii) of this Article within one year from the date of entry into force of this Agreement. This authority shall have, inter alia, the powers to authorise State aid schemes and individual aid grants in conformity with paragraph 2 of this Article, as well as the powers to order the recovery of State aid that has been unlawfully granted.

5. Each Party shall ensure transparency in the area of State aid, inter alia by providing to the other Party a regular annual report, or equivalent, following the methodology and the presentation of the Community survey on State aid. Upon request by one Party, the other Party shall provide information on particular individual cases of public aid.

6. Croatia shall establish a comprehensive inventory of aid schemes instituted before the establishment of the authority referred to in paragraph 4 and shall align such aid schemes with the criteria referred to in paragraph 2 of this Article within a period of no more than four years from the entry into force of this Agreement.

7. (a) For the purposes of applying the provisions of paragraph 1(iii), the Parties recognise that during the first four years after the entry into force of this Agreement, any public aid granted by Croatia shall be assessed taking into account the fact that Croatia shall be regarded as an area identical to those areas of the Community described in Article 87(3)(a) of the Treaty establishing the European Community.

(b) Within three years from the entry into force of this Agreement, Croatia shall submit to the Commission of the European Communities its GDP per capita figures

harmonised at NUTS II level. The authority referred to in paragraph 4 and the Commission of the European Communities shall then jointly evaluate the eligibility of the regions of Croatia as well as the maximum aid intensities in relation thereto in order to draw up the regional aid map on the basis of the relevant Community guidelines.

8. With regard to products referred to in Chapters II of Title IV:

- paragraph 1 (iii) shall not apply;
- any practices contrary to paragraph 1(i) shall be assessed according to the criteria established by the Community on the basis of Articles 36 and 37 of the Treaty establishing the European Community and specific Community instruments adopted on this basis.

9. If one of the Parties considers that a particular practice is incompatible with the terms of paragraph 1 of this Article, it may take appropriate measures after consultation within the Stabilisation and Association Council or after thirty working days following referral for such consultation.

Nothing in this Article shall prejudice or affect in any way the taking, by either Party, of antidumping or countervailing measures in accordance with the relevant Articles of GATT 1994 and WTO Agreement on Subsidies and Countervailing Measures or related internal legislation.

Article 40 State monopolies

Croatia shall progressively adjust any State monopolies of a commercial character so as to ensure that, by the end of the fourth year following the entry into force of this Agreement, no discrimination regarding the conditions under which goods are procured and marketed exists between nationals of the Member States and Croatia. The Stabilisation and Association Council shall be informed about the measures adopted to attain this objective.