

EUROPEAN PROPOSALS OF PARTICULAR RELEVANCE TO THE EUROPEAN AND EXTERNAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

Of particular significance

Date of deposit	Title	Summary
09/12/03	Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament concerning a New Legal Framework for Payments in the Internal Market (Consultative Document)	<p>This is a consultation document from the Commission on the general objectives and principles that should govern the modernisation and simplification of the regulatory framework applying to retail payment services in the Internal Market.</p> <p>The document then goes on to set out the current position in some detail, before outlining possible solutions to existing problems and inviting comments. These cover a wide range of areas including: right to provide payment service to the public; portability of bank account numbers; the evaluation of the security of payment instruments and components; direct debiting, data protection issues and digital signatures.</p> <p>The proposals largely deal with non-devolved aspects of the regulatory framework for business, however the Committee may wish to bring this document to the attention of the Economic Development and Transport Committee to enable them to consider what the impact on businesses in Wales might be.</p>

<p>22/12/03</p>	<p>Report from the Commission "Better Lawmaking 2003" pursuant to Article 9 of the Protocol on the application of the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality (11th report).</p>	<p>Since December 2002, the Commission has been required to report annually to the European Council on the application of subsidiarity and proportionality (in short, whether the correct means are applied to implementing a policy, and whether this is done at the right level of government - EU, national or regional), as defined in Article 5 of the EC Treaty.</p> <p>This report is divided into two parts. The first looks at the general framework for implementing better regulation (in particular the quality and accessibility of EU legislation), and reviews the progress made by the institutions in this area. The second part of the report focuses on the application of the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality. It gives an overview of the legal and institutional framework and assesses how the Commission, Parliament and Council apply the principles in their work.</p> <p>The Committee may wish to discuss this report in more detail.</p>
<p>12/01/04</p>	<p>Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament</p> <p>The World Summit on Sustainable Development one year on: implementing our commitments</p>	<p>This document sets out progress on implementing the Johannesburg World Summit on Sustainable Development commitments and outlines the actions undertaken by the EU, both internally and externally.</p> <p>The Committee does not need to take any action, but may wish to draw the document to the attention of the Environment, Planning and Countryside Committee.</p>

14/01/04	Communication from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions concerning the re-examination of Directive 93/104/EC concerning certain aspects of the organisation of working time	<p>The Working Time Directive (93/104/EC) lays down minimum requirements for the regulation of working time. The document aims to evaluate the application of derogations from derogations from the reference period for the application of Article 6 (maximum working week) and the option of not applying Article 6 if the worker agrees to carry out such work (opt-out); it aims to analyse the impact of the case law of the Court concerning the definition of working time and the qualification of time on cal; and it is a consultation on possible revision of the text of the Directive.</p> <p>The First Minister drew attention to the implications of these proposals at the last European and External Affairs Committee.</p> <p>Although the regulations implementing the working time directive are not devolved any changes could have a significant impact in Wales, e.g. in the Health Service and fire service. The Committee may wish to consider whether it, or subject committees, should give further consideration to this document.</p>
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To note

Date of deposit	Title	Summary
27/11/03	Preliminary draft amending Budget No.8 to the budget for 2003	<p>This is a draft amending budget for the Draft EU budget for 2004. The amendment covers an increase in staffing in Community institutions.</p> <p>The Committee does not need to take any action.</p>

27/11/03	Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament on some key issues in Europe's competitiveness - Towards an Integrated Approach	<p>This is a Commission document setting out key issues to increase Europe's competitiveness. The report outlines the challenges Europe faces on competitiveness. The report draws attention to two newer areas of concern on competitiveness: de-industrialisation, which is a process of structural change where there is a decline in the relative presence of the manufacturing sector in national income; and delocalisation, which is a process of transfer of production and of other manufacturing activities to locations outside the home country.</p> <p>The report goes on to outline the work on competitiveness that is already underway.</p> <p>The Commission will be doing continuing work in this area in 2004.</p> <p>The Committee does not need to take any action.</p>
03/12/03	The EU Economy:2003 Review - Summary and main conclusions.=	<p>This is a review of the EU's economy during 2003. The report focuses on four specific topics: recent macroeconomic and policy developments in the euro area, the drivers of productivity growth, education and growth, and wage flexibilities and wage interdependencies.</p> <p>The Committee does not need to take any action.</p>
09/12/03	Communication from the Commission to the Council and to the European Parliament : "Reviving the DDA Negotiations - the EU Perspective"	<p>This Communication sets out the Commission position on reviving World Trade Organisation negotiations on the Doha Development Agenda. Proposals include: a willingness to be flexible about the four Singapore issues; a commitment to significant movement on agricultural if other parties will reciprocate; continued emphasis on achieving progress on services and non-agricultural markets access, and on anti-dumping, subsidies and regional trade agreements.</p>

		The Committee does not need to take any action.
16/12/03	Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament on preparing for the participation of the Western Balkan countries in Community programmes and agencies	<p>All of the 5 Western Balkan regions will sooner or later be recognised as potential applicants to the EU. All now have association/stabilisation agreements with the EU.</p> <p>This document lays out the Commission's view on how these regions can be involved in Community programmes and agencies. This is particularly significant in the light of EU enlargement on 1 May 2004.</p> <p>The Committee does not need to take any action.</p>
16/12/03	Proposal for a Council Regulation concerning the compilation and transmission of data on the quarterly government debt	<p>This is a proposal for a draft Regulation to change the way information on Member State Government debt is collected. The proposal expands the definition of Government debt to cover quarterly, as well as annual, debt and it sets time limits for the provision of information to the Commission.</p> <p>The proposal deals with issues that are not devolved and the Committee does not need to take any action.</p>
17/12/03	Amending Letter No.1 to the Preliminary Draft Budget for 2004: Volume 1, General statement of Revenue - Volume 4, Statement of Revenue and Expenditure by Section (Section III - Commission)	<p>This letter proposals amendments to the Draft EU budget for 2004. Amendments include the a adding provision to cover aid for the reconstruction of Iraq, changes to the arrangements for loans previously granted to countries which are now about to accede to the EU among other things.</p> <p>The Committee does not need to take any action.</p>

<p>18/12/03</p>	<p>Amending Letter No.2 to the Preliminary Draft Budget for 2004:</p> <p>Volume 1, General statement of Revenue - Volume 4, Statement of Revenue and Expenditure by Section (Section III - Commission).</p>	<p>This letter proposals amendments to the Draft EU budget for 2004. In particular it makes changes to spending on agricultural and rural development, the CAP budget and the budget for activity related to international fishing agreements.</p> <p>The Committee does not need to take any action.</p>
<p>18/12/03</p>	<p>Amending Letter No.3 to the Preliminary Draft Budget for 2004:</p> <p>Volume 1, General statement of Revenue - Statement of Revenue and Expenditure by Section</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Section I - Parliament - Section II - Council - Section III - Commission - Section IV - Court of Justice - Section V - Court of Auditors - Section VI - Economic and Social Committee - Section VII - Committee of the Regions - Section VIII - Part A - European Ombudsman - Section VIII - Part A - Ombudsman - Section VIII - Part B - European Data-protection Supervisor 	<p>This letter updates the EU budget for 2004 in the light of a Conciliation Committee decision to create a new temporary "Special levy", which will operate from 1 January 2004 - 30 April 2004. This letter creates a specific budget line for the revenue to be recorded in within the general statement of revenue.</p> <p>The Committee does not need to take any action.</p>

<p>18/12/03</p>	<p>Official Journal of the European Union - 2003/C286/01:</p> <p>Court of Auditors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Report on the activities financed from the budget, together with the institutions' replies. - Report on the activities of the sixth, seventh and eighth European Development Funds, together with the institutions' replies. 	<p>This is the Court of Auditors annual Report on the EU budget for 2002 and its report on the EDF. It gives their assessment of the state of the EU's accounts and includes details of qualifications to the statement of assurance.</p> <p>The Committee does not need to take any action.</p>
<p>07/01/04</p>	<p>Report from the Commission to the Council and to the European Parliament on the borrowing and lending activities of the Community in 2002</p>	<p>This report summarises the Community's borrowing and lending activity in 2002. The reports notes that borrowing by European institutions increased in 2002 by 17.2% to € 38,1 billion. The Community lends funds to non-member countries across the world, either in the form of bilateral loans to help re-establish a country's macroeconomic balance or ordinary loans either by directly financing individual projects or through global loans to banks, which then allocate funds to smaller-scale local projects.</p> <p>The Committee does not need to take any action.</p>
<p>07/01/04</p>	<p>Green Paper on the future of rules of origin in preferential trade arrangements</p>	<p>This is a green paper which outlines the Commission's proposals for a reform of preferential trade agreements. In particular it examines possible changes to the rules preferential tariffs based on the country of origin of particular goods.</p> <p>The Committee does not need to take any action.</p>

12/01/04	<p>Communication from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on Modernising Social Protection for More and Better Jobs: a comprehensive approach contributing to making work pay</p>	<p>This document fulfils a request made at the Council meeting in March 2003 for the Commission "to report in time for the 2004 Spring European Council on the improvement in the overall framework for social protection policies through a greater emphasis on the effectiveness of incentives (e.g. benefit systems, reconciliation of family and work life, measures for older people) and the identification of best practice".</p> <p>The report analyses the impact that benefit systems and other factors have on people's work choices. It draws attention to policy lessons that Member States can learn on how to make work more attractive, including ways in which benefits systems could be modified.</p> <p>The Committee does not need to take any action.</p>
14/01/04	<p>Commission Staff Working paper Annex to the General Report on pre accession assistance (PHARE - ISPA - SAPARD) in 2002 - Country Sections</p>	<p>The report contains details of financial assistance paid to accession countries.</p> <p>The Committee does not need to take any action.</p>
14/01/04	<p>Report from the commission General Report on pre - accession assistance (PHARE - ISPA - SAPARD) in 2002</p>	<p>The report contains details of financial assistance paid to accession countries.</p> <p>The Committee does not need to take any action.</p>