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**COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN
PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL
COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS**

Commission Legislative and Work Programme 2008

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1. INTRODUCTION

The EU is moving forward. Following the recent agreement at the informal European Council, a ratified Treaty of Lisbon will equip the EU better to tackle the challenges and deliver policies for the 21st century. The Lisbon strategy for growth and jobs is feeding through into improved economic performance. The EU has made a historic commitment to tackle climate change and bring about secure, competitive and sustainable energy. The Commission has started to frame policies for the future through the internal market review and the ongoing stocktaking of European society. The consultation now under way on the EU budget will help preparing the review of one of the EU's key levers for the next decade and beyond. Europe is also pressing ahead with new relationships with key partners in the neighbourhood, in Africa and worldwide. With the latest enlargement now concluded, the EU has a new critical mass and a new reach. There is a real consensus – shared by the informal European Council of October 2007 and the European Parliament's resolution on the Annual Policy Strategy for 2008 – that the focus should be on the capacity of an EU of 27 to make globalisation an opportunity for its citizens. This adds up to an excellent backdrop for the EU's ambitions for 2008.

A focused Work Programme

In 2008, the Commission will maintain its focus on delivering results within the overall strategic objectives set out at the start of its mandate: prosperity; solidarity; security and freedom, and a stronger Europe in the world¹. These objectives provide the core direction for the Commission's work, and the driving force to shape ambitious policies.

Most of the subjects at the forefront of the political agenda cut across the strategic objectives and contribute to several or all of them. Meanwhile, challenges for the EU such as tackling climate change, developing an Energy Policy for Europe or managing migration flows call for a comprehensive, flexible and coherent approach, expanding beyond traditional boundaries; they need to be addressed both through action by the EU institutions, with other key players in the EU, and through a global approach with partners around the world. The EU budget review to be presented in 2008/9, is another key example of where EU policies must be looked at holistically.

As in 2007, the Work Programme for 2008 is focused and concentrates on a limited number of new policy initiatives. It includes strategic initiatives that the Commission commits itself to deliver during the year, and priority initiatives to be delivered over a 12-18 month period.

¹ COM(2005) 12.

All strategic and priority initiatives announced in this Work Programme will be subject to the quality discipline of impact assessment. In addition, the requirement to assess the impact before an initiative is proposed will be further extended to include other initiatives. Impact assessments will be reviewed by the Impact Assessment Board². Impact assessments are made public, including whenever they lead to a proposal being dropped³.

When preparing this Work Programme, the Commission has taken full account of the results of the dialogue conducted with the European Parliament and the Council on the 2008 Annual Policy Strategy (APS)⁴, as well as of contributions received from national parliaments. This Programme is also the first to include inter-institutional communication priorities for 2008. To better reflect the current multi-annual nature of most of the activities of the Commission and in an effort to increase overall transparency, this Work Programme introduces a new chapter identifying issues on which the Commission will work in 2008 which could lead to new initiatives in the years ahead.

2. THE PRIORITIES FOR 2008

Growth and Jobs

The Lisbon strategy for growth and jobs remains the major vehicle for promoting a more prosperous, environmentally responsible and socially inclusive European Union, in partnership with the Member States. The 2008 Spring European Council will give the EU the opportunity to reflect on whether the Lisbon strategy needs refinement to address the challenges of globalisation most effectively. 2008 will also see the first results of a further effort to use the leverage of EU cohesion policy to implement the Lisbon strategy at regional level.

Raising employment towards the target for the employment rate set under the Lisbon strategy provides a basis for growth, improved quality of life and facing the challenge of an ageing population. This requires a combination of flexibility and security for workers and for employers, with incentives and opportunities for lifelong learning. At the same time, the EU needs to find new ways to promote access and opportunity in society, to address the risks and causes of social exclusion and poverty through policies for active inclusion, and to help to anticipate change. Adequate social protection should also be promoted.

Developing a knowledge society is a cornerstone of the growth and jobs strategy, and the Commission will continue to look at new ways to promote education, training, research and innovation as part of its Lisbon strategy.

The Single Market Review identified new initiatives, many of which will be presented in 2008, that will foster a Single Market built on a strong, innovative and competitive industrial

² Established in November 2006 under the authority of the Commission's President to provide independent quality support and control.

³ Examples of proposals not pursued in 2007 as a result of the impact assessment work are: the proposal aiming to modernise and reinforce the organisational framework for inland waterway transport in Europe, the proposed Recommendation on Proportionality between capital and control in companies, the proposal for a 14th Company Law Directive on the transfer of a company's registered office, or the proposal for a Decision on the protection of witnesses and individuals who cooperate with the judicial process.

⁴ COM(2007) 65.

base and maximising the full potential of services, where consumers and business benefit fully from well-functioning open markets ensuring a level playing field and where European standards can serve as inspiration at the international level. The Commission will focus on making markets work better, in the area of retail financial services and in areas where policies can achieve a maximum impact so as to allow consumers and companies alike, and in particular small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), to benefit fully from the internal market. This needs targeted action like more coordinated market surveillance to secure compliance of products and services with rules and standards, more systematic market and sector monitoring and a methodology to measure the performance of the internal market from a consumer perspective.

As small and medium size enterprises create most jobs and wealth in Europe, specific measures to improve their market performance will be prepared in a “Small Business Act”.

As from 1 January 2008, Cyprus and Malta will adopt the euro as their currency. The euro is a symbol of common identity, shared values and the success of European integration. Ten years from the launch of EMU, the Commission will undertake a *strategic review of the European Monetary Union*, with proposals for the future.

Sustainable Europe

Tackling climate change will be an integral part of the Commission’s priorities in 2008 to secure sustainable prosperity for Europe. But with climate change already under way, the EU needs to look at how public policies need to help the process of adaptation to new realities. The Commission will propose a *White Paper on the Adaptation to the impact of Climate Change*. A wide range of EU policies – such as human and animal health, agriculture, fisheries, biodiversity, energy, industry, research and tourism – will need to adjust, and the White Paper will seek to identify where change is most needed. Particular attention will be given to measures to encourage the *greening of the transport sector*. The implementation of the *Global Monitoring for Environment and Security (GMES)* will provide a powerful tool for this tuning of EU policies.

In view of the Spring Council in 2009, the Commission will present a 2nd *Strategic Energy Review*, which will serve as the basis for the new Energy Action Plan from 2010 onwards, and will include a review of the Energy Taxation Directive to better combine fiscal and environmental goals. Solidarity between Member States needs to be strengthened at a moment when natural resource constraints and the increased global demand threaten the security of supply.

The reformed Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) will undergo a “*Health Check*”, to see whether the 2003 reform regarding the single payment scheme and certain agricultural markets and its implementation in the Member States need to be fine-tuned; this will also help to pave the way for the future design and priorities of the CAP.

The EU maritime policy is another example of how an integrated EU approach can draw together the threads of different policies for the sustainable development of all sea-based activities and coastal regions. The recast and strengthening of the control framework of the Common Fisheries Policy will represent a decisive step towards ensuring sustainable fishing.

An integrated approach to migration

The Commission will propose further steps towards a *common policy on migration*. Migration and social integration represent key challenges of the 21st century and require a multi-dimensional approach in order to realise the potential of migration for socio-economic development in both countries of origin and of destination. This means combining well-managed labour migration, supporting circular migration and promoting education and integration of migrants in the broader context of managing demographic change in our societies. It also requires effective action against illegal migration and human trafficking.

The EU needs to protect its external borders with common tools, to prevent illegal migration, and maximise efforts to counter human trafficking and reduce the tragic death toll of immigrants in the sea trying to reach our borders. In 2008 the work of the *External Borders Agency* will be evaluated and Member States will be supported in tackling illegal migration through a *European surveillance system*.

The Commission will be shaping the future of a coherent and efficient Common *European Asylum Policy*. This will notably include adapting the European legislation on reception conditions and assessment criteria, to achieve fuller harmonisation of national rules on eligibility criteria, and progress towards a single procedure for assessing applications for refugee status. This will allow for a true expression of European values of solidarity.

Putting the citizens first

One of the main objectives of this Commission is to put the citizen at the centre of the European project. This translates into different types of initiatives.

The Social Reality Stocktaking, alongside the internal market review, has been looking at the changes under way in Europe's economies and societies, with a view to identifying how the well-being of Europe's citizens can be best advanced in a globalised world. The stocktaking will be the basis for developing a modern social agenda for Europe – an agenda that promotes among others the reconciliation of professional, private and family life, and sets out how the EU can work in partnership with the Member States to fight discrimination and deliver access to opportunities for all Europeans.

The EU has to equip itself to handle effectively the security, health and safety risks inherent in an open world. The European dimension to health services will be taken forward with concrete initiatives on *patient safety* and *quality of health services*.

Internet and new media are in constant evolution. Communication and information infrastructures have become more tightly and globally interconnected. New technologies bring new possibilities, new applications and new challenges. A coherent European approach is key to develop new markets in a secure environment.

Finally, the 2008 year of Intercultural Dialogue will help to build new bridges and closer ties across Europe.

Europe as a world partner

Globalisation is creating new opportunities, and at the same time testing Europe's capacity to influence it and to manage its consequences. It has become ever clearer that internal and

external policy goals are intertwined as never before, underpinning the need for a modern and integrated vision on how to project, promote and protect Europe's interests and values successfully.

The Union's enlargement policy is extending peace and stability, prosperity, democracy, human rights and the rule of law across Europe. The European neighbourhood policy helps building a stable and prosperous neighbourhood, based on common principles and shared interests. The global competitiveness agenda contributes to creating lasting growth and jobs at home, promoting trade and unlocking development abroad. Europe is a world leader in the fight against poverty, in fostering sustainable development, human rights and good governance, as well as in providing humanitarian assistance. At the same time, the international dimension to addressing climate change, managing migration, combating terrorism, or boosting energy security is acknowledged as critical to success.

The Commission will report on progress made in the countries involved in accession negotiations and in the stabilisation and association process, and make the appropriate recommendations to adjust the EU's enlargement strategy. Particular attention will be required to support the implementation of the future status of Kosovo.

The *European neighbourhood policy* has become established as the central platform for deepening relationship with the countries it covers, from the Baltic to the Mediterranean. It will continue to support political, economic and social reforms in partner countries, providing a diversified response to their needs within a common policy framework. The Commission will produce a summary analysis of progress on the ground as well as annual reports on each country. It will implement its own undertakings to strengthen the incentives to partner countries, and continue to work closely with Member States to ensure that the EU plays its part effectively in implementing this policy.. Building on the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, the European neighbourhood policy also gives the Union the tools to further develop the longstanding regional dialogue and cooperation with all the countries of the Mediterranean region.

The EU-Africa summit in December 2007 should pave the way for a new phase in relations with an EU-Africa strategy to bring a new maturity to relations and to ensure that political, economic and development policies are geared to best effect. All available instruments will be geared towards turning the strategy into a tangible reality: the 10th EDF and its facilities and trust funds as well as the relevant Community budget instruments, bilateral contributions from EU and African states, interested third parties and international organisations and investments from the private sector. The Commission will also examine any new avenues to be followed in its work to implement the Millennium Development Goals. It will present an ambitious package on Financing for Development and on Aid Effectiveness in view of the top-level international meetings in Accra (September 2008) and Doha (December 2008).

3. DELIVERY: A DAILY TASK

New actions with a focus on political priorities are only one aspect of the Commission's work. Throughout the year, the Commission remains responsible for implementing and overseeing agreed policies, and for managing financial programmes and operational tasks. As guardian of the common European interest, it has direct responsibility for ensuring the *acquis* is properly applied. The Commission also has a responsibility to promote effective communication with European citizens and to explain the value of the European project. It will pursue its reform

agenda to provide a modern, efficient, accountable and transparent administration, able to build trust among European citizens. Delivering on the European Transparency initiative, the Commission will launch the Interest Representative Register in 2008 and pursue work to ensure full transparency on end beneficiaries of EU funds.

Implementing agreed policies

2008 will see detailed work to follow up on the initiatives taken by the Commission since the start of its mandate. This includes negotiations to take forward proposals already on the table with special attention given to a range of actions now coming on stream. It will be a crucial year for taking forward the Energy and Climate Change proposals presented by the Commission in 2007. Political agreement will be sought from the institutions on the legislation on the internal market and on how the EU will meet its targets on greenhouse gases and renewable energy, as well as on how to make a step change in energy technologies. The follow up to the Bali Conference on Climate Change will require intensive international negotiations to bring agreement closer on a successor regime to the Kyoto Protocol.

The implementation of the Registration, Evaluation and Authorization of Chemicals (REACH) legislation is a test case to show Europe's capacity to improve the health and environment for European citizens while enhancing the competitiveness of European industry.

Research and technological development is essential to promoting sustainable development and innovation and ensuring that Europe remains a competitive and prosperous society in the future. The implementation of the Framework programmes will continue in 2008 and initiatives will be taken to deepen the European Research Area, such as promoting the mobility of researchers, developing new infrastructures and launching the joint European – national programming of research on broad societal challenges. Within the broad-based strategy for innovation, the European Institute of Technology, which should move ever closer to become operational during 2008, will help to bridge the innovation gap between the EU and its major competitors through strategic research and education.

Following the turmoil in financial markets a number of issues have been identified where further analysis is required in order to assist policy makers and regulators draw appropriate conclusions which may involve suggestions for regulatory change. Among the issues the Commission will be working on in 2008, together with other actors at EU and international level, will be: transparency for investors, markets and regulators; valuation standards, including illiquid assets; prudential framework, risk management and supervision in the financial sector; as well as market functioning including the role of credit agencies.

2008 will be the year where the latest market reforms of the CAP will be implemented, continuing the trend of making European agriculture more sustainable and competitive. The implementation of all new 2007-2013 programmes in cohesion policy (452 programmes), in rural development (96 programmes) and fisheries will be vigorously pursued securing their enhanced contribution to growth and more and better jobs to the European citizens.

Work will also be continued in order to allow companies to choose an EU-wide tax base as set out in the 2008 Annual Policy Strategy. An impact assessment has been launched to examine the options and their implications.

The Commission will continue to press ahead with the completion of the Hague Programme for freedom, security and justice, and to encourage work on proposals still on the table to

accelerate. It also intends to bring forward a new phase in the EU's work to combat smuggling and consumption of illicit drugs.

The Action Plan for the new EU Integrated Maritime Policy adopted in 2007 by the Commission, will be progressively implemented through the related initiatives identified in this Work Programme and a new process of monitoring and reporting. The Commission will adopt and start implementing a 6 year Action Plan on EU Animal Health Strategy. The Commission will also clarify the legal framework for risk assessment on GMOs by the European Food Safety Authority.

The international scene

The EU has a series of strategically important negotiating streams which will be taken forward in 2008. *Accession negotiations with Turkey and Croatia* will continue on the basis of the agreed negotiating frameworks. The expected completion of the *network of Stabilisation and Association Agreements with the Western Balkans* will strengthen bilateral political and economic ties and accelerate reforms. A second set of *progress reports* will be submitted under the *European neighbourhood policy*. The benefits of the European Neighbourhood Policy remain open to Belarus, were it to engage in democratisation and respect for human rights and the rule of law.

The Commission will move ahead with its Global Europe agenda, continuing to press for a *WTO trade agreement* and at the same time working on an ambitious set of *bilateral negotiations*. 2008 will also be the first year of the *Economic Partnership Agreements* and the *10th European Development Fund*: new resources and a new focus on aid effectiveness and complementarity will play a fundamental part in delivering development inside the broader relationship now in place with ACP partners. Work in the area of *humanitarian assistance* will build on the Declaration “Towards a European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid”⁵.

The Commission will also continue its work with respect to the *preparation, launch, negotiation or conclusion of agreements* with, inter alia, Russia, Ukraine, Moldova, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Iraq, China, India, Indonesia, Thailand, Singapore, Vietnam, the Philippines, Malaysia, Brunei, Laos, Cambodia, ASEAN, the Gulf Cooperation Council, the Andean Community, Central America and Mercosur. The Commission will take the first steps to establish formal relations with Libya.

The Commission will remain active regarding political developments across the globe and continue its engagement in the *stabilisation and reconstruction efforts* in the Middle East, including through its role in the Quartet and as major donor in the region, as well as in Africa and South Asia. The Commission will also seek to further strengthen the transatlantic partnership, a crucial cornerstone of Europe's external relations and which has been given a new political push through the framework for advancing transatlantic economic integration adopted at the last EU-US summit.

Management of financial programmes

The EU budget is one of the key instruments to realise the EU's policy objectives. It benefits from continuity, as the Union's spending priorities have been agreed on a multi-annual basis. The annual budgetary process translates and fine-tunes the orientations reflected in the

⁵ COM(2007) 317.

financial framework, without changing the strategic direction. With the new generation of financial programmes largely in place, 2008 will be a year of consolidation and implementation.

The budget authority is shortly expected to take a decision on the Commission's proposals for the 2008 budget, amounting to around € 129 billion in commitments and € 122 billion in payments. More than 44% of commitment appropriations will be reserved for activities supporting growth and jobs in Europe through investment in areas like research, competitiveness and innovation, transport and energy networks, lifelong learning and economic and social cohesion. In addition to these commitments, the Commission will continue to manage the final phase of 2000-2006 programmes and projects. In the area of cohesion policy alone, this means responsibility for close to 380 structural fund programmes and 1 200 cohesion fund projects.

In implementing these funds, the Commission seeks to ensure the best use of limited resources so as to achieve better social and economic outcomes for European citizens and obtain the best value for money while ensuring a high level of budget execution. It is bound by and committed to the highest standards of sound financial management. Where the budget is implemented in shared management with the Member States, the Commission will give guidance as necessary. Where it cannot obtain the necessary assurance, the Commission will consider suspending payments to the relevant Member States.

Managing the Community acquis

Following on from the Communication "A Europe of results – Applying EC law"⁶ adopted last September, better enforcement of Community law, including through improvements in the dialogue with Member States to ensure timely implementation and effective and equitable application, will remain a priority for the Commission in 2008.

The Commission will continue to make great efforts to ensure compliance with EU legislation, with a special emphasis on transport, environment, food safety, animal health, animal welfare and plant health standards. The Commission attaches great importance to the cooperation with Member States to facilitate the implementation and enforcement of EU law, establishing mechanisms for prior monitoring of new national legislation, promoting active participation in the SOLVIT network and working with informal networks like the Forum of Judges. The launch of infringement cases is the ultimate expression of the Commission's fundamental task as guardian of the Treaties and directly connects with EU citizens' concerns. Many of these cases are triggered by complaints and petitions submitted by individual citizens, enterprises and NGOs.

By enforcing European competition rules in individual cases, the Commission will promote markets which work better for the benefit of consumers and overall competitiveness. The Commission will launch one or more new competition sector inquiries in markets where shortcomings have been identified. Under the State Aid Action Plan, the Commission will deliver initiatives to complete the shift towards more effective and simple rules on subsidies, firmly grounded in sound economic analysis.

⁶ COM(2007) 502.

4. WORKING TO SHAPE NEW POLICIES

To better reflect the current multi-annual nature of most of the activities of the Commission, this new chapter identifies subjects linked to the priorities on which services will work in 2008, through impact assessments of envisaged new actions, studies, stakeholders' consultations, which could lead to specific initiatives in the future.

The Commission is working in many different areas linked to an agenda for sustainable competitiveness as part of efforts to promote sustainable development. This includes looking at how standards can mainstream environmental goals, sustainable access to raw materials beyond the area of energy, and examining ways to address the consequences of climate change on health. As a follow up to the Green Paper on Agricultural Product Quality, the Commission will consider how optimising quality can better meet consumer demand and add value to the agricultural production. The Commission will also present a green paper on territorial cohesion, a concept acknowledged by the Treaty of Lisbon.

At the request of the Agriculture Council the Commission is working on an initiative on the consumption of fruit in schools. An impact assessment is being prepared and subject to the outcome a proposal will be made.

The conclusions of the social reality stocktaking will carry through into the modernisation of EU social policies, reflecting the challenges of globalisation and the need to anticipate and manage change.

The Treaty of Lisbon will provide a new impetus to the area of freedom, security and justice. The priorities and objectives for the future development of the EU policy will have to be defined, and the means and initiatives to best achieve them will need to be determined. The Commission will present a *Communication on the next multi-annual strategy to establish an area of freedom, security and justice*.

Further to the consultation on future priorities for the Action Plan on Company Law and Corporate Governance, and to respond to the high demand, the Commission will carry out a feasibility study on a European Foundation Statute. In 2008 the Commission will also focus on preparatory work relating to judicial cooperation in civil matters with third countries, including a legal mechanism to deal with bilateral agreements of Member States with third countries in specific sectors as well as cooperation with international organisations such as the Council of Europe.

During 2008, work will be launched on the review of the Merger Regulation, of the Procedural Regulation 1/2003 and several anti-trust Block Exemption Regulations. In the area of state aid, consultations will be launched to review the guidelines on state aid for rescuing and restructuring firms in difficulty and the Shipbuilding Framework.

The Commission is also looking at ways to maximise the potential for coordination on crisis response, including crisis prevention and preparedness. It also intends to clarify rules on the protection of personal data.

The Commission is also reflecting on a substantial revision of the Overseas Association Decision, within the limits of the EC Treaty concerning the future relations between the EU and the Overseas Countries and Territories.

The Commission will start the preparation of activities for the European Year of Creativity and Innovation in 2009. In this connection, a broad range of community programmes, notably Lifelong Learning, Culture, Youth in Action and Europe for Citizens, will contribute to raising awareness about how education and culture can support innovation and creativity.

Finally the Commission will prepare the 2008-2009 Budget Review to optimise Europe's capacities to address the key challenges of the next decade.

5. BETTER REGULATION: SIMPLIFICATION, CODIFICATION, WITHDRAWALS AND MEASUREMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS

Improving the regulatory environment in Europe is a core priority of the Commission. Its ambitious Better Regulation agenda, aiming at delivering quality initiatives and at modernising and simplifying the stock of existing legislation, is anchored in the Lisbon strategy for jobs and growth. Economic, social and environmental impacts are assessed in an integrated and balanced way together with a measurement of administrative costs of draft legislation whenever such costs are likely to be substantial. Impact assessments also support the Commission's simplification programme⁷ by identifying the simplification potential of existing legislation.

A strategic review of Better Regulation

In view of the Spring European Council, in early 2008 a strategic review will present the progress made in 2007 under the different strands of the Better Regulation agenda, taking account of the views expressed by the other EU-institutions and stakeholders. The review will in particular update and strengthen the Commission's Simplification Rolling Programme and report on the implementation of the Action Programme for reducing administrative burdens⁸ as well as taking stock of the new arrangements governing impact assessment since the setting up of the Impact Assessment Board.

Screening of pending proposals

Having carried out in this year's exercise a screening of proposals pending before the legislator which were adopted by the Commission up to end of 2005, in line with its commitment to the European Parliament, the Commission has included in the CLWP the list of 30 pending proposals it intends to withdraw together with the specific justifications. The Commission will continue to monitor proposals pending in the legislative process with a view to withdrawal or taking any other action in line with its political priorities and better regulation standards.

Simplification

Implementation of the Simplification Rolling Programme is progressing well. Out of 47 simplification initiatives foreseen for adoption by the Commission in 2007, 44 - of which 19 already adopted and 25 still planned - will have been adopted by the end of the year (94% success rate). Amongst the more recent achievements, the revision of EU insurance law (SOLVENCY II) and the repeal of the GSM Directive will have direct impact for companies

⁷ COM(2005) 535 and COM(2006) 690.

⁸ COM(2007) 23.

and citizens. The delivery of the initiatives set out in the programme will continue in 2008 and renewed effort will be made to reinforce the multi-annual programme, including with an increasing number of simplification proposals to reduce administrative burdens. 45 initiatives are foreseen for Commission adoption in 2008. 15 of those are brand new and cover various policy areas such as agriculture, automotives, public health, environment and energy.

The programme aims at bringing real advantages to Europeans – for example, proposals will

- simplify the current rules on waste electrical goods to make it easier for manufacturers, retailers and consumers to meet their environmental obligations;
- bring about a significant simplification of the current biocides legislative framework and address concerns regarding complexity and costs, as well as availability of certain biocidal products;
- repeal some 50 technical Directives in the automotive sector and replace them, where appropriate, with references to UNECE Regulations;
- reduce the administrative burden for industry by simplifying the rules for pharmaceutical products;
- alleviate the statistical reporting of economic operators (Intrastat), in particular SMEs;
- consolidate and expand the areas in which national, regional and local authorities can grant support without needing the Commission's prior approval through the simplification of the General Block Exemption Regulation on State aid.

Administrative costs reduction

The Action Programme launched in 2007 aims at reducing administrative burdens on businesses in the EU by 25% in 2012. Small and medium enterprises will benefit most from this reduction. To ensure close involvement of stakeholders, the Commission developed a website available in all EU official languages, where businesses across Europe can submit suggestions to reduce administrative burdens⁹. In addition to this online consultation, the Commission set up a “High Level Group of Independent Stakeholders on Administrative Burdens” to advice on the implementation of the Action Programme, which should lead to further refinement.

6. COMMUNICATING EUROPE

Over the last two years, the Commission has strengthened its efforts to better communicate Europe and to involve the citizen in the decision-making process. These efforts will be pursued and consolidated in 2008, with an emphasis on partnership¹⁰ with other institutions and on working locally. For the first time, interinstitutional communication priorities are proposed. As decided in the APS 2008, the main communication priorities for 2008 will reflect the Commission's political priorities as well as research findings from Eurobarometer,

⁹ <http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/admin-burdens-reduction/>

¹⁰ As suggested by the Commission in its Communication on Communicating Europe in Partnership, 3 October 2007.

and recent experience from Plan D projects that reflect citizens' interests and the recent experience gained on effective communication. A higher turn-out in the 2009 elections than in 2004 is also an important goal to which the communication efforts of all EU institutions should contribute.

Recent research shows that the main concerns for EU citizens are the social dimension of the EU in the context of globalisation, in particular jobs and the fear of unemployment, as well as migration and issues related to citizens' security. Interest in energy and climate change is increasing, with widespread support for the energy/climate change package of proposals. In accordance with the cross-cutting policy-making approach favoured by the Commission, challenges such as globalisation and achieving sustainable development in its three dimensions (economic, social and environmental) will have to be integrated in any communication priority. At the same time, communication must "go local" and the Commission will pursue its efforts to adapt its messages to different audiences, sectors or countries.

Following the successful conclusion of the Intergovernmental Conference for a new EU Treaty, communication efforts will aim at both providing full and comprehensive information and maintaining a permanent dialogue with the European citizens, and will be reinforced during the ratification process in full collaboration with national authorities.

Communication priorities for 2008 appear in Annex 4.

ANNEX 1 – List of strategic and priority initiatives

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

Title	Type of proposal or act	Description of scope and objectives
Annual Progress Report on the Lisbon Strategy	Non-Legislative action/ Other	The annual report sets our progress achieved both at Community and Member States level, whilst identifying a limited number of actions for decision. It is the main document for discussion at the Spring Council. In this context, the importance of education and training will be highlighted.
White Paper on Adaptation to Climate Change	Non-legislative action/White Paper	Policy statement covering measures to ensure adaptation to climate change in a broad range of areas fundamental to the EU way of life (e.g. industry, agriculture, energy, fisheries, forestry, tourism, social policy), reduce their vulnerability, increase their resilience to the inevitable negative impacts of climate change and anticipate and accompany those changes. The objective is to avoid significant effects on human health, biodiversity and habitats, and on EU citizens' quality of life. Measures in the White Paper will also imply changes in existing Community policies.
Green transport package: a) Communication on greening the transport sector b) Communication on the internalisation of external costs of transport	Non-Legislative action/Communication	a) This Communication will present the main findings of three initiatives in the area of transport (Internalisation of external costs, Green Propulsion and ITS Action Plan) and will draw possible recommendations for the future. b) This second Communication will provide a generally applicable, transparent and comprehensible model for the assessment of external costs of various modes of transport. It will analyse how internalisation measures can correct a specific type of market failure that is very relevant in the transport field and which consists in the presence of large negative externalities. The Communication will short-list available policy tools to address the issue (ETS, taxes, charges etc. and combinations of individual policy tools) and analyse the likely economic, social and environmental impacts of each of the short-listed options. It may be accompanied with legislative proposals or announce that they will be presented later in 2008.
Energy package: a) 2 nd Strategic Energy Review Communication b) Revision of oil stocks legislation (*) c) Recasting of Directive 2002/91/EC of 16 December 2002 on the Energy Performance of Buildings (*)	a) Non-legislative action/Communication b) Legislative proposal/Directive Legal Basis: EC Treaty Art. 99; Art. 100(1) c) Legislative proposal/Directive Legal Basis: EU Treaty, Art. 175(1)	a) The Review will assess the progress towards strategic objectives agreed in March 2007, including how the internal market is taking shape, action to increase the share of renewable energy in the energy mix, trends in greenhouse gas emissions from energy, key energy technology developments and achievements in the EU's external energy policy. It will help in formulating recommendations for future policy development, and in taking forward further work on an EU energy policy for Europe. It will particularly examine how the security of energy supply of the European Union may be enhanced by a fully functioning internal market, by improved and diversified infrastructures and interconnections, including storage and LNG terminals, by better stocks management, by solidarity mechanisms, by a more diversified energy mix, through technological development helping the renewables market penetration and helping

d) Review of the Energy Taxation Directive	d) Legislative proposal/Directive Legal Basis: EU Treaty, Art. 93	reducing carbon emissions from energy (eg CCS technologies). It will also examine the international dimension and all the relevant bilateral and multilateral agreements contributing to EU security of supply. b) Proposal of a new Directive on oil stocks for coping with emergency situations in the EU in order to replace existing legislation dating in parts back to 1960s (while codified in 2006 as Directive 2006/67/EC). The objective is to create an effective policy tool for coping with oil supply disruptions affecting the EU in a manner corresponding to actual circumstances. c) The Energy Performance of Buildings Directive makes certificates for the energy performance of buildings mandatory and requests (non-specified) minimum energy performance requirements for new buildings and existing building which undergo major renovation. Furthermore, the Directive requests regular inspections of boilers and air-conditioning systems in order to guarantee an energy efficient operation of these appliances. An updated Directive could strengthen and specify some of these requirements and could add financing aspects to the Directive. An Impact Assessment shall specify and analyse these possible amendments. d) Energy taxation offers the potential for the EU to combine the incentive role of taxation in favour of more energy-efficient and environment-friendly energy consumption, with the ability to generate revenue. As follow up of the green paper on market-based instruments for environment and related policy purposes (COM(2007)140) the objective of the review is to make Energy Taxation Directive a more supportive and effective instrument of the EU energy and climate change objectives.
Legislative proposals arising from the Communication on the <i>Health Check</i> in the Common Agricultural Policy (*)	Legislative proposal/Regulation Legal basis: Art. 37 EC Treaty	Following the 2007 Communication on the 'Health Check' in the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) the legislative proposals will provide options aimed at making the Single Payment Scheme more effective, adapting the market support instruments and addressing the new challenges facing the sector. The "Health Check" is not a fundamental reform; rather it essentially aims to ensure that the CAP functions effectively and simplified where possible. This initiative arises from the review clauses regarding the Single Payment Scheme and certain agricultural markets that were included in the 2003/2004 CAP reforms.
Migration package: a) Communication on Entry/exit system and other border management tools (e.g. Electronic Travel Authorization)	Non-Legislative action/Communication	a) The main aims are to strengthen border control procedures on third-country nationals to help better management of migration flows, preventing illegal immigration, as well as any possible threats to the security of the EU and to facilitate border crossing (both on arrival and on departure from the EU) to both EU citizens and third-country nationals <i>bona fide</i> travellers, thus allowing to better focus resources on border controls. b) Creating a truly integrated management of the external borders at European level. Improvement of the operational cooperation among the Services of Member States responsible for controlling the external borders of the European Union and managing migration. Curbing illegal immigration along the external borders, suppressing smuggling in human beings into the territory of the Union taking duly into account the humanitarian dimension (e.g. saving lives put at risk whilst crossing the external borders illegally) of this phenomena. On the basis of the evaluation of FRONTEX and in particular of the evaluation of the teams of national experts (RABIT), the feasibility of establishing a European system of border guards should be

b) Report on the evaluation and future development of Frontex c) Communication on European Border Surveillance System		assessed. c) In the Communication, the Commission is intending to propose the setting up of a European Border Surveillance System in three phases: 1) Interlinking and streamlining existing reporting and surveillance systems and mechanisms at Member States level (2008-2009) 2) Development and implementation of common tools and applications for border surveillance at EU level (2008-2013) 3) Creation of a common information sharing environment for the maritime domain, covering the Mediterranean Sea and the Black Sea (2012-2013) This 3-phased approach for the creation of a European border surveillance system should noticeably increase internal security in the Schengen area by preventing illegal immigration, trafficking of human beings, terrorism etc., but also reduce considerably the tragic death toll of illegal immigrants by rescuing more lives at sea.
Asylum package: a) Policy Plan on Asylum, b) proposal amending Council Directive 2003/9/EC on reception conditions for asylum-seekers, c) proposal amending Council Regulation (EC) No 343/2003 on the criteria and mechanisms to determine the Member State responsible for assessing asylum applications d) modification of the asylum procedures directive; e) modification of the directive on the recognition of refugee status and on the approximation of forms of subsidiary protection	a) Non-Legislative action/Communication b) Legislative proposal/Directive Legal basis: EC Treaty, Art. 63(1)(b) c) Legislative proposal/Directive Legal basis: EC Treaty, Art. 63(1)(a) d) Legislative proposal/Directive Legal basis: EC Treaty, Art. 63(1)(d) e) Legislative proposal/Directive Legal Basis: EC Treaty, Art. 63(c), 2(a), 3(a)	a) The objective of the policy plan is to outline a possible "blueprint" for the Common European Asylum System (ECAS), which will depend largely on the outcome of the discussions on the Green Paper published on 6 June 2007. It will include proposals for the relevant long term components of the CEAS as described in the Hague Programme, <i>inter alia</i> the common asylum procedure, the uniform status for refugees and for beneficiaries of subsidiary protection and the European support office for all forms of cooperation between Member States. b) c) d) e) The proposals – on the basis of the experiences of its transposition and application by Member States and the outcome of the consultation on the Green Paper on the future Common European Asylum System – intend to amend / clarify certain provisions of the current Directives, to make them more efficient and to solve certain problems of application in order to further harmonise the relevant standards as well as to ensure coherency with the evolving asylum acquis.
Health package: a) Communication and Council Recommendation on Patient Safety and Quality of Health Services	a) Non-Legislative action/Communication b) Non-Legislative action/Recommendation	a) The two primary objectives of the initiative on Patient Safety and Quality of Health Services are (i) to support Member States in ensuring the highest possible levels of patient safety throughout EU health systems by providing necessary and relevant practical and legal tools and mechanisms for the Member States, as well as the key stakeholders, to take appropriate actions to improve safety and quality of care and (ii) to improve EU citizens' confidence that they have sufficient information available on the safety of EU health systems,

b) Council recommendation on health care associated infections		including healthcare providers in their own country and in other Member States. b) The recommendation on health care associated infections would propose a number of specific measures to be implemented by the Member States in order to contain the spread of Healthcare-Associated infections: control and preventive measures, infection prevention, control programmes, establish or strengthen active surveillance systems and foster education, training, research and information exchange on prevention and control.
2008 'Enlargement Package': a) Strategy Paper on Enlargement b) Progress Reports	a) Non-legislative action/ Communication b) Non-legislative action/ Other	a) The "Strategy Paper" comprises the main findings of the Progress Reports and includes proposals for policy recommendations. b) The Progress Reports assess the progress made by Croatia and Turkey and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia towards accession as well as the progress made in implementing the Stabilization and Association process by Albania, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia and by Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244).
European Neighbourhood Policy: country progress reports	Non-legislative action/ Other	The Commission will continue to support political, economic and social reforms in Neighbourhood countries, providing a diversified response to their needs within a common policy framework, implementing its own undertakings to strengthen the incentives to partner countries, and working closely with Member States to ensure effective delivery of this policy. The Commission will produce an analysis of progress on the ground as well as a second set of progress reports on Israel, Jordan, Moldova, Morocco, Palestinian Authority, Tunisia and Ukraine, and for the first time on Armenia, Azerbaijan, Egypt, Georgia and Lebanon.
Communication 'Concrete follow up measures to the Joint EU-Africa Strategy'	Non-legislative action/ Communication	The Communication will present the second evaluation of the EU Strategy for Africa implementation. It will integrate the priorities identified in the first action plan implementing the Joint EU-Africa Strategy and set the necessary guidelines for their implementation. The Communication will be based on a questionnaire circulated to Member States in early 2008 so as to create and EU monitoring document. Adequate synergies with the Monterrey Communication shall be ensured.
Better Regulation Package: a) Strategic Review b) Second progress report on simplification c) Progress Report on Administrative Burden	a) Non-legislative action/ Communication b) Non-legislative action/ Communication c) b) Non-legislative action/ Other	a) A Communication will present the state of play of the Commission's better regulation agenda (including the first experiences with the Impact Assessment Board) and announce new initiatives within that agenda. b) This initiative includes an overview of the state of play of the simplification rolling programme as well as new proposals for simplification. At inter-institutional level, progress of adoption of simplification proposals will also be reviewed. It will also present a state of play of the indicative codification programme 2006-2008. c) In January 2007, the Commission presented an ambitious Action Programme to reduce by 25% administrative burdens imposed by legislation in the EU. This reduction should be achieved jointly by the EU and Member States by 2012. The Action Programme sets out how to identify, assess and reduce information obligations put on business. It provides a list of approx. 40 pieces of legislation and 13 priority areas believed to account for 80% of administrative costs on businesses. In order to produce concrete results on the short

		term, the Programme also identifies a first series of ‘fast track actions’. These actions are intended to generate significant benefits through relatively minor changes in the underlying legislation.
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(26 initiatives regrouped in 12 packages)

(*) Initiatives also contributing to the simplification programme, see Annex 2

PRIORITY INITIATIVES

Title	Type of proposal or act	Description of scope and objectives
Budget review	Non-legislative action/ Communication	The objective is to examine what reforms are needed to optimise Europe's contribution in addressing key challenges of the next decade, based on the principles of added value in pursuing the common interest and effectiveness of spending. This analysis is therefore potentially an important input to proposals to be presented by the next Commission for a new multi-annual financial framework, covering the period from 2014 onwards.
Commission Communication on EMU@10 -	Non-legislative action/ Communication	In the spring of 2008, it will be 10 years that the decisions on the transition to the 3rd stage of EMU were taken and on its initial participants. After 10 years, the time seems ripe for an in-depth strategic review of the functioning of EMU so far with a view to drawing lessons for its future functioning. The Commission Communication should draw out the main findings from this review and present the main recommendations for the future, based on the in-depth review of EMU.
Green Paper on European territorial cohesion	Non-legislative/ paper Green	The objectives of this action are: • to analyse from an institutional, political and operational perspective the way in which Member States understand and apply the concept of territorial cohesion. This work will be mainly based on questionnaires and analysis of operational programmes. • to provide a common definition of the concept and to propose possible tools for a better integration of this territorial dimension in the Structural funds and in some sectoral policies having a territorial impact. • to initiate an in-depth dialogue between Member States and the Commission.
Amendment of Capital Requirements Directives 2006/48/EC and 2006/49/EC	Legislative proposal/ Directive Legal Basis: EC Treaty, Art. 47(2)	Revision of a number of important sections of the Capital Requirement Directive (CRD) to update and reduce regulatory burdens for Member States and the banking industry: • Improved framework for co-operation and the exchange of information between supervisors (in particular, emergency situations). Access of host supervisors to branch information; • Revision of the large exposure requirements; • Prudential treatment for hybrid capital instruments eligible in tier 1 capital; • Extension of waivers for cooperative banks; • Clarification and technical adjustments of the CRD (including default risk treatment in the trading book).

Regulation for a European Private Company Statute	Legislative proposal/ Regulation Legal Basis: EC Treaty Art. 308	The objective of the European Private Company is to enhance the mobility and competitiveness of European SMEs. Providing SMEs with common rules in Member States would make it easier for them to conduct cross-border business by facilitating the formation of new businesses in other Member States and/or the restructuring of existing businesses into simpler structures. Operating across Member States with the same corporate rules could reduce compliance costs, and make the creation and operation of companies in the EU simpler and cheaper.
Communication “Small Business Act (SBA) for Europe”	Non-Legislative action/ Communication	The Small Business Act for Europe will combine a mix of general principles (for example, specific treatment for SMEs in legislation according to 'Think Small First' principle, reduce obstacles to go cross border, improved access to EU programmes and increase SMEs access to innovation and growth), legal actions (for example proposal for a European Company Statute) and concrete actions to be taken both by Member States and the Commission (for example improving SMEs access to public procurement).
Review of existing legislation on VAT reduced rates	Legislative proposal/ Directive Legal Basis: EC Treaty Art. 93	On the basis of the results of an independent think tank study on the impact of reduced rates notably in terms of job creation, economic growth and the proper functioning of the internal market, the Commission adopted a Communication on other VAT rates than the standard rate (COM(2007) 380) with a view to launch a debate in the Council, the European Parliament and with other stakeholders. All relevant views collected on this very sensitive issue will serve to initiate a sustainable and well balanced proposal in the medium term on VAT reduced rates.
Pharmaceuticals Package: a) Communication on the future of the single market in pharmaceuticals for human use b) Directive on Pharmaceuticals - Information to patients c) Strengthening and rationalising EU Pharmacovigilance	a) Non-legislative action/ Communication b) Legislative proposal/ Directive Legal Basis: EC Treaty Art. 95 c) Legislative proposals/ Directive and Regulation Legal basis: EC Treaty Art. 95	a) The objectives of this Communication are to provide an opportunity to review, in brief, the achievements since 2004, to outline the challenges ahead and to set out deliverables for the Commission and Member States over the next few years. b) The aim of this directive is to establish harmonised rules taking account of developments in society (empowered patients seeking more information) and technology (increased use of the internet). c) The objectives of these initiatives are to rationalise and strengthen public health protection, to improve the functioning of the Internal Market and the safety of pharmaceuticals that flow across the EU.
Commission Recommendation on Active Inclusion	Non-legislative action/ Recommendation	At the start of 2008, political attention within the EU will be driven by the lessons drawn by the Commission from the Social Reality Stocktaking exercise. This initiative constitutes the final stage of a process initiated in 2006 with Art. 138-based consultation on active inclusion of people furthest from the labour market, which was based on three pillars, namely (a) a link to the labour market through job opportunities or vocational training, (b) income support at a level that is sufficient for people to have a dignified life, and (c) better access to quality services. In the framework of the Lisbon strategy, this initiative is complementary to the flexicurity approach by reaching out to people further from the labour market.

Proposal for a Regulation on a Dedicated Legal Framework for the Construction and Operation of new Pan-European Research Infrastructures	Legislative proposal/ Regulation Legal Basis: EC Treaty, Art. 171	The purpose of the legislation should be to facilitate the formation of European consortia for the construction and operation of research facilities of Pan-European interest and necessary for the efficient execution of Community research programmes. Complementing national or inter-governmental schemes, the EC regulation would provide a common and easy-to-use legal framework, leaving a large degree of flexibility to the individual consortia to set up the adequate rules for the specific infrastructure at European level. The framework regulation is based on Article 171 EC: it will set out the main characteristics of the Pan-European research infrastructures, as well as the rules and procedures governing their establishment, necessary for the efficient execution of Community programmes. The framework regulation would allow current issues related to Community research such as liability, taxation and staffing issues, to be dealt with, and it would also highlight the catalysing role of the European Commission in the setting-up of new legal entities at European level.
Communication “Towards joint programming of research”	Non-Legislative action/ Communication	The objective would be to increase the value of well chosen national investments in research through joint programming so that these joint programmes reach the critical mass, scale and scope required to have an impact at a global level.
Euro area initiatives: a) Convergence Report – 2008 b) (Possible) proposal(s) for Council Decision(s) under Art. 122(2) on euro area entry of one or more new Member States c) Possible Proposals for a Council Regulation amending Regulation (EC) No 2866/98 on the conversion rates between the euro and the currencies of the Member States adopting the euro	a) Non-legislative action/ Communication b) Legislative proposal/ Decision Legal Basis: EC Treaty, Art. 122(2) c) Legislative proposal/ Regulation Legal Basis: Art. 123(5) EC Treaty	a) At least every two years, or at a request of a Member State, the Commission and the ECB each prepare a convergence report in accordance with the procedure laid down in Article 122(2). The reports examine to which extent the Member States with derogation have achieved a high degree of sustainable convergence. The compatibility of their national legislation with Community law also forms part of the assessment. The next regular two-yearly report foreseen in 2008 (the latest having been published in December 2006). Positive convergence assessment on one or more Member States might lead to euro area enlargement. b) If one or more Member States are deemed to fulfil the conditions for euro adoption, their derogation is abrogated by the Council. c) If one or more Member States are deemed to fulfil the conditions for euro adoption, the Council decides on conversion rates of new euro area entrants in accordance with Art. 123(5). Euro area enlargement Secondary legislation related to euro adoption.
Communication launching the GMES (Global Monitoring for Environment and Security) programme and its long-term governance and financing framework	Non-legislative action/ Communication	The Communication will shape the long term sustainability of GMES covering: a programmatic framework to follow up the preparatory action, the coordination of contributions in the space and in-situ observation infrastructures for the guaranteed provision of data and the long-term GMES governance scheme. It may be accompanied or followed by legislative proposals to implement it.

Sustainability package: a) Communication and Action Plan on Sustainable Industrial Policy (SIP) b) Sustainable Production and Consumption (SPC) Action Plan	a) Non-legislative action/ Communication b) Non-legislative action/ Communication	The SIP/SCP initiative consists of an integrated strategy to help the EU economy become more environmentally sustainable and competitive. The strategy covers innovation, the internal market and the external dimension, including production and consumption patterns. This initiative will set out the approach, map out action plans for delivery and may include legislative proposals. A key element of the initiative will be the launch of a new product policy setting dynamic sustainability requirements, through an extension of the Energy-using products Directive, coupled with voluntary "performance standards". These will be leveraged internationally through international sectoral agreements. There will also be important measures to stimulate innovation (e.g. a European Environmental Technology Verification Scheme), stimulate smarter consumption (including through the revision of the Ecolabel) and measures to help Industry to make production processes more sustainable (including through the revision of the EMAS scheme and through the SME Environmental compliance programme) and initiatives towards more sustainable public and private procurement.
Regulation (EC) No 761/2001 of the European parliament and of the Council of 19 March 2001 allowing voluntary participation by organisations in a Community eco-management and audit scheme (EMAS) (*)	Legislative proposal/ Regulation Legal Basis: Art. 175 EC Treaty	The revision aims at improving environmental performance of the organisations participating and increasing participation from both industrial and public sector. Legal compliance and environmental performance improvement of the participating organisations will be facilitated by providing access to advice on environmental legal obligations and guidance on the best environmental management practice. Among other benefits for participating organisations, administrative burden will be reduced for large corporations by allowing corporate registration and for small organisations by cluster registration. Synergies with other environmental management systems will be facilitated. Incentives and regulatory relief for participating organisations by the Member States will be encouraged.
Regulation (EC) No 1980/2000 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 July 2000 on a revised Community eco-label award (*)	Legislative proposal/ Regulation Legal Basis: Art. 175(1) EC Treaty	The revision aims at enhancing effectiveness and market impact by increasing the range of eligible product groups and the number of eco-labelled goods and services actually available to the consumer. The procedure of developing and adopting eco-label criteria will be thoroughly changed and simplified. Economic stakeholders will be involved to a greater extent into the process, thereby increasing ownership and self-regulatory aspects of the scheme, whereas the administrative burden put on Member States will be reduced. Synergies with existing eco-labels at national level will be facilitated and limits will be put on the costs and fees Member States' authorities may charge on the applicant. Furthermore, the criteria should be defined in such a way that they can be easily used for the purpose of green public procurement.
Biodiversity package: a) Mid-term report on the implementation of the Biodiversity Action Plan b) Communication on policy options to tackle invasive alien species	a) Non-legislative action/ Other b) Non-legislative action/ Communication	a) The Biodiversity Action Plan requires the Commission to report on its implementation in 2008, taking into account Member States reports and other data. The objective is to provide an informed overview of the current rate of progress of the Action Plan, highlighting areas of concern in the light of the 2010 commitment. b) This Communication aims to present the different policy options available to reduce the threat to EU natural heritage from the arrival within the EU of non-native species. On the basis of a study that is currently taking place, further actions against invasive species will be proposed in 2009-10. The objective is to prevent and control the ingress of invasive alien species, thus protecting European biodiversity.

Green Paper on agricultural product quality policy	Non-Legislative action/ Green Paper	The Green Paper will explore ideas and options for farmers and producers who want to orient their production towards quality and thereby better meet consumer demand and add value to their production. The document will ask for contributions, views and proposals for developing measures and the appropriate legal framework to facilitate a shift to quality production and marketing. It will build on the outcome of the Food Quality Certification Conference (5-6.2.2007, Brussels) and respond to calls for EU agriculture to follow a path of greater market orientation. The Green Paper will also seek the views of stakeholders on the development of existing EC quality schemes for geographical indications and traditional specialities.
Council Regulation - Review of the Less Favoured Areas Scheme (delimitation of designated areas)	Legislative proposal/ Regulation Legal Basis: EC Treaty, Art. 37	Support for Less Favoured Areas (LFAs) is granted with the objective to contribute through the continued use of agricultural land to maintaining the countryside, as well as to maintaining and promoting sustainable farming systems. It is a vital part of the Rural Development Policy. The initiative will result in an improved delimitation system for areas with handicaps, thus adjusting the measure to changed circumstances.
Communication on Sustainable Development of Community Aquaculture	Non-legislative action/ Communication	The Communication would build on the 2002 strategy (COM(2002) 511), and note that its growth objectives have not been fully met as foreseen, while the environment and health ones have been generally been better addressed. The aim would therefore be to identify the main constraints and challenges hampering sustainable growth and to assess which role should be played by all actors, in particular by public authorities in contributing to establish the most transparent and predictable business and legal environment which is needed by entrepreneurs to invest and develop. (This initiative is part of the Integrated Maritime Policy Action Plan)
Modernisation and recast of the CFP control system under Regulation (EC) No 2847/93 (*)	Legislative Proposal/Regulation Legal Basis: EC Treaty, Art. 37	The main objectives are the strengthening , harmonisation and simplification of existing rules in the fisheries control area. The modernisation of the procedures will facilitate a better enforcement and alleviate the burden and constraints for the sector and public administrations by increasing the use of IT tools to reduce reporting obligations. It is an essential step towards reinstating sustainability of fisheries. Included in the EU Action Plan for reducing administrative burden (COM(2007) 23).
Maritime Transport package: a) Communication on the future EU Maritime Transport Policy accompanied by legislative proposals: b) Revision of Regulation (EC) No 1406/2002 establishing a European Maritime Safety Agency c) Legislative proposal on a Maritime Space without Barriers	a) Non-legislative proposal/Communication b) Legislative proposal/Regulation Legal basis: c) Legislative proposal/Regulation Legal basis: Art. 71, 75 EC Treaty	a) This Communication will take account of developments since the 1996 maritime transport strategy. It will address all the questions raised in connection with the role and contribution of maritime transport to the European economic system as a whole. All implications resulting from the intensification of the globalisation process, the growth in trade, energy and climate change constrains, security factors, sustainable development, human factor, competitiveness and emerging logistics trends will be examined. (This initiative is part of the Integrated Maritime Policy Action Plan) b) The maritime legislation of the EU has considerably evolved since the creation of EMSA as witnessed by the three modifications already adopted of the founding regulation. The third maritime safety package proposed by the Commission in 2005 will further enhance EMSA's tasks. The following extensions are under consideration: taking over certain activities of the Paris Memorandum of Understanding in the area of Port State Control; new tasks in the areas of security, research and general maritime policy. Cooperation with third countries and governance issues will also be examined. c) To establish an effective Internal Market for short sea shipping, the administrative procedures for short-

		sea shipping need to be simplified. This will result in less congestion, negative environment impacts and energy consumption, as well as improved safety. The effective implementation of Single Market concepts in coastal waters around the EU requires a change in the existing regulatory and administrative framework. (This initiative is part of the Integrated Maritime Policy Action Plan)
Air transport package: a) Communication "Developing the single European Sky" b) Proposal to amend the Single European Sky Regulations c) Extension of the competence of the European Aviation Safety Agency towards airports and ATM / ANS d) Launch of the Development Phase of SESAR (2008-2013)	a) Non-legislative action/ Communication b) Legislative proposal/ Regulation Legal Basis: EC Treaty, Art. 80 c) Legislative proposal/ Regulation Legal Basis: EC Treaty, Art. 80 d) Other	a) This Communication will present the three initiatives linked to the further development of the Single European Sky. b) The legislative proposal will: - Improve performance of Air Traffic Management - Ensure that ATM infrastructure meets the expected traffic growth requirements - Promote new technologies in line with the Lisbon objectives - Make Air Traffic Management contribute to sustainability objectives c) Legislative Proposal to amend Regulation (EC) No 1592/2002 to extend the common aviation safety rules to Air Navigation Services, Air Traffic Management and airports in order to enhance safety and interoperability. d) Commission Report on the progress of the SESAR development phase including : - Presentation of the ATM Master Plan for endorsement by Council - Presentation of ways of transition from Development to Deployment Phase of SESAR - Presentation of modalities for Non-EU Member State involvement
Proposal for a directive on the conditions of entry and residence of seasonal workers	Legislative proposal/ Directive Legal Basis: EC Treaty, Art. 63(3)	The proposal aims at establishing common entry and residence conditions for seasonal workers from third-countries. It is part of a comprehensive package of measures, proposed in the Policy Plan on Legal Migration of 2005 and further developed in the Communication on circular migration and migration partnerships of 2007. Specific objectives are to ensure a secure legal status and a reinforced protection against exploitation to a particularly weak category of third-country workers, such as seasonal workers, and the development of the circular migration policy.
Proposal for a directive on the procedures regulating the entry into, the temporary stay and residence of Intra-Corporate Transferees (ICT) and on the conditions of entry and residence of remunerated trainees	Legislative proposal/ Directive Legal Basis: EC Treaty, Art. 63	As concerns the ICT, this scheme will set out common procedures to regulate the entry into, temporary stay and residence in the EU of ICT, in those fields which are not covered by the GATS negotiations. These procedures will therefore be without prejudice to international commitments entered into by the EC or by the EC and its Member States. As concerns the remunerated trainees, its main objectives concern the development of the circular migration policy, also with the view of supporting the EC development policy: allowing third-country nationals to acquire skills and knowledge through a period of training in Europe can in fact be a way to encourage brain circulation, beneficial for both the sending and receiving country.

Communication on the next multi-annual strategy to establish an area of freedom, security and justice	Non-Legislative action/Communication	The main aim of this initiative is to define over a certain number of years the priorities and objectives for the future development of the EU as an area of freedom, security and justice, and to determine the means and initiatives to best achieve them.
Green Paper on Migration and Education	Non-Legislative action/Green paper	The Green Paper will underline the central role of education in integration policies, raise awareness on the problems faced by migrant pupils and analyse possible solutions and good practices. It will also address what Community programmes and funds can do to support policy development.
Commission Communication on "A renewed commitment to social justice in Europe: deepening the open method of coordination in social protection and social inclusion"	Non-legislative action/Communication	As a result of inequalities of opportunities, not all EU citizens can achieve their full potential. There is scope for improving the existing process supporting Member States' efforts to eradicate poverty, promote social inclusion, and modernise social protection. Policy coordination and mutual learning should be strengthened. "Deepening the OMC" means helping Member States identify more clearly the challenge of social inclusion and the gaps in their social protection systems as well as the policies best suited to tackle them through closer monitoring and benchmarking, and a clearer focus on policies and the mechanisms for implementing them.
Communication on anticipating and managing change	Non-Legislative action/consultation	The Communication will present a political overview of initiatives undertaken since the adoption of the Communication on Restructuring and employment (COM(2005) 120). The communication will launch a European partnership for the adaptation to change highlighting the role and responsibilities of main actors in change management (Commission, Member States, regions, sectors, enterprises, workers and social partners). The Communication will launch the second phase of consultation of European social partners on anticipating company restructuring.
Proposal for revision of Council Directive 94/45/CE of 22 September 1994 (European Works Councils)	Legislative proposal/Directive Legal basis: EC Treaty, Art. 137(2)(b)	EU legislation needs to be modified to make it more coherent and efficient with the aim of reinforcing the role of European Works Councils, in particular in anticipating and accompanying restructuring.
Proposal for a Directive implementing the principle of equal treatment outside employment	Legislative Proposal/Directive Legal basis: Art. 13 EC Treaty	Article 13 provides the legal base for the European Union to take appropriate actions to combat discrimination based on sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation but the principle of non-discrimination only becomes operational when contained in a Directive or other instrument made under Article 13 EC. Three Directives have already been adopted under this legal base but they are not applicable against discrimination outside of the employment sphere only for racial or ethnic origin and sex. Although some Member States may go beyond the current Directives and provide for the same level of protection for all the grounds of discrimination, it is necessary to ensure certain coherence throughout Europe in this field. Only a European Directive can provide such a coherent framework. Lack of uniform protection can affect people's choices on whether to work or study in another Member State, or whether to travel there and access services. The consultation of European Business Test Panel shows that many businesses believes it matters if there are different levels of protection between the EU Member States against discrimination in access to goods, services and housing on grounds of age, disability, religion and sexual orientation (63%) and 26% believe that a difference in the level of protection would

		affect their ability to do business in another Member State. The basis for a new initiative is that the level of protection against discrimination based on religion & belief, age, disability and sexual orientation is lower than that afforded in the case of discrimination based on race.
Proposal for a Directive amending Directive 92/85/EEC of 19 October 1992 on the introduction of measures to encourage improvements in the safety and health at work of pregnant workers and workers who have recently given birth or are breast-feeding	Legislative proposal/ Directive Legal basis: EC Treaty, Art. 137	Directive 92/85/EEC provides for measures aimed at the improvement of the health and safety at work of pregnant women and women who have recently given birth or are breastfeeding; including a minimum of 14 continuous weeks' maternity leave. The objective is to enhance the reconciliation of professional, private and family life by improving existing maternity protection provisions.
Green paper on Health Professionals in Europe	Non-Legislative action/ Communication	The aim of the proposal is to launch a high level reflection process on issues related to the mobility of health professionals. Any future Commission proposals would only follow at a later stage and will be based on the outcome of the reflection process.
Commission Communication on a European Action in the field of Rare Diseases	Non-Legislative action/ Communication	The Commission Communication on a European action in the field of rare diseases (including genetic diseases) intends to improve the chance for patients to get appropriate care and information on rare diseases and to reverse the current situation of uncertainty and invisibility for people suffering from a rare disease. Health professionals and public health authorities have insufficient knowledge of the majority of rare diseases. This lack of knowledge underlies diagnostic error - a great source of suffering for patients and their families - and delayed care provision, which can sometimes be prejudicial. This will in turn contribute to the overarching goals - an improvement in health outcomes, and therefore a growth in Healthy Life Years, a key Lisbon Strategy indicator.
Directive on quality and safety of organ donation and transplantation accompanied by an Action plan for closer cooperation between MS on organ donation and transplants	Legislative proposal/ Directive Legal basis: EC Treaty, Art. 152 Non-Legislative action/ Communication	The Directive will include the principles needed to establish a basic quality and safety framework for the therapeutic use of human organs, such as: establishment of national authority responsible for implementing the requirements of the directive, common set of quality and safety standards for preservation and transportation of organs and ensure traceability and reporting of serious adverse events. The action plan will establish a close cooperation between Member States to help maximise organ donation and equalise access to transplantation. The plan will also identify common objectives for which it is agreed that a Community response is necessary, describe the actions, agreed quantitative and qualitative indicators and benchmarks and establish regular reporting.
Communication on Critical Communication and Information Infrastructure Protection (CIIP)	Non-legislative action/ Communication	The objective is to develop, within the broader and evolving European Programme for Critical Infrastructure Protection (EPCIP) framework, the EU policy on critical information infrastructure protection. The aim would be to ensure that there are adequate and consistent levels of protective security and resilience of critical information infrastructure in order to guarantee continuity of services.

Communication on telemedicine and innovative technologies for chronic disease management	Non-legislative action/ Communication	This communication will aim at: - Assessing with major stakeholders the situation of telemedicine in the Member States, from technological, legal and regulatory points of view; identify obstacles and opportunities - Proposing a set of actions to facilitate innovative technologies deployment as well as the development of a legal context for telemedicine tools Europe-wide. Pilots will be developed, notably in the context of the Competitiveness and Innovation Programme (CIP) - Proposing appropriate technology assessment and accreditation mechanisms to tackle market fragmentation and transparency, safety of patients.
A programme to protect children using the Internet and the new media (2009-2013)	Legislative proposal/ Decision Legal Basis: EC Treaty, Art. 153	This new programme builds upon the results obtained with the Safer Internet <i>plus</i> programme. It will aim to promote safer use of the Internet and new online technologies, particularly for children, and to fight against illegal content and content unwanted by the end-user, as part of a coherent approach by the European Union.
Communication reviewing the functioning of the Roaming Regulation	Non-legislative action/ Communication	The Commission shall review the functioning of the Roaming Regulation and report to the European Parliament and the Council no later than 30 December 2008. The Commission shall evaluate in particular whether the objectives of this Regulation have been achieved. In its report the Commission shall review developments in wholesale and retail charges for the provision to roaming customers of voice and data communication services, including SMS and MMS, and shall, if appropriate, include recommendations regarding the need to regulate these services. In its report, the Commission shall assess whether, in the light of developments in the market and with regard to both competition and consumer protection, there is need to extend the duration of this Regulation beyond the period set out in Article 13 or to amend it, taking into account the developments in charges for mobile voice and data communication services at national level and the effects of this Regulation on the competitive situation of smaller, independent or newly started operators.
Legislative Proposal on strengthening Eurojust	Legislative proposal/ Decision Legal Basis: EU Treaty, Art. 31(2), 34(2)(c)	Eurojust plays an important role in the coordination and cooperation between national authorities of the Member States in the fight against transnational organised crime. At present, the powers of the national members of Eurojust are limited and focus on the coordination of investigations and prosecutions. In order to improve the fight against transnational organised crime, the powers of Eurojust should be increased and relationships between Eurojust and the European Judicial Network should be restructured. If this is done, Eurojust will be able to contribute more substantially to the fight against transnational organised crime.
Communication on E-Justice	Non-legislative action/ Communication	The Communication aims at defining a global Commission strategy on the issue of e-Justice, which relates to a large scale to existing and envisaged Community instruments such as criminal records and an EU electronic payment order. An important aspect is also to take stand on the plans concerning the Portal

		Interconnection at EU level.
Legislative instrument in the field of successions and wills	Legislative proposal/ Regulation Legal Basis: Art. 67 EC Treaty	The objective is to facilitate European citizens' lives establishing a coherent legal framework concerning law conflict settlements in the area of successions, questions of judicial competence, mutual recognition and execution of decisions, documents and extrajudicial acts necessary for the non contentious settlement of successions (wills, deeds, administrative acts). A European heredity certificate and a mechanism allowing to know precisely if an EU resident has left a testament or last will are also foreseen.
Communication on violent radicalisation	Non-legislative action/ Communication	The policy objectives are to develop initiatives in the field of the fight against violent radicalisation based on studies, a questionnaire and a large conference. The studies are based on field research and the collection of new empirical data and adopt comparative and inter-disciplinary approaches.
Proposal for a Framework Directive on Consumer Contractual Rights (*)	Legislative proposal/ Directive Legal basis: EC Treaty Art. 95	The overall aim of the revision of the acquis, is to simplify and improve the coherence of the consumer regulatory framework and thus enhance legal certainty both for consumers and business. The legal instrument will be a combination of codification and repeal of parts of existing directives and enactment of new rules. The most likely regulatory action, depending on the final outcome of the review, will be a mixed approach to the revision of the acquis. This will consist of a horizontal instrument, underpinned whenever required by vertical solutions.
Communication on Multilingualism: Addressing the challenge of European Society	Non-Legislative action/ Communication	The Communication will provide orientations for a better synergy between European and Member States policies to promote multilingualism, notably through the Open Method of Coordination and by making better use of existing European programmes and initiatives. The new strategy should in particular contribute to improving citizens' employability, the competitiveness of European enterprises, intercultural dialogue and social inclusion as well as to creating a European space for dialogue with citizens. This new approach should, therefore, embrace all policy areas of the EU, involve all stakeholders concerned and be conceived and implemented in close co-operation with all Member States.
Communication EU Development Aid : Doing more, better and faster - Delivering on our commitments	Non-Legislative action/ Communication	This Communication will outline the EU contribution to the Third High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness (Accra, September 2008) and to the Follow-Up Conference on Financing for Development to Review the Implementation of the Monterrey Consensus (Doha, December 2008). It will also address Policy Coherence for Development drawing the lessons form the debate of the EU report issued in September 2007 and the state of play regarding the EU contribution on Aid for Trade.
Communication 'The EU, Africa and China: Towards trilateral dialogue and cooperation on Africa's peace, stability and sustainable development'	Non-Legislative action/ Communication	The Communication aims at spelling out an innovative agenda for a trilateral dialogue and cooperation as a response to major new developments in the EU's relations with both partners and South-South cooperation. The impacts on security, stability, sustainable development in Africa and on global governance, notably of China's emergence as a leading partner for Africa in the last few years require a policy response by the EU and an effort to improve coherence of our agendas regarding both Africa and China. It will propose a constructive dialogue, cooperation and ways to manage competition in such a way as to make it beneficial to peace, prosperity and sustainable development in Africa.

Communication 'Economic Development and regional integration in the ACPs'	Non-Legislative action/ Communication	The Communication will look at how best to foster economic development and regional integration in the ACPs (including trade) with a strong focus on private sector development. The objective will be to develop a strategy to ensure complementarity of actions and instruments existing at EU and Member States level.
Forest package: a) Communication on measures to reduce deforestation b) Communication on the prevention of the placing on the market in the EU of illegally harvested timber and timber products (with possible accompanying legislative proposal)	a) Non-Legislative action/ Communication b) Non-Legislative action/ Communication	a) The Communication will propose policy options for a future scheme with the objective of halting deforestation. b) This Communication will explore the policy options to avoid the import/placing in the EU market of illegally harvested timber and products made from such timber. It might be accompanied by a legislative proposal depending on the results of the on-going impact assessment. Following on from the current and future bilateral negotiations with major timber producing countries to conclude bilateral FLEGT agreements (Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade), this initiative aims to protect vulnerable forests from illicit lumbering and to eliminate the sale in the EU of products originating from it.

(61 initiatives regrouped in 49 packages)

(*) Initiatives also contributing to the simplification programme see Annex 2.

ANNEX 2 – List of simplification initiatives

Title	Type of simplification action	Scope and objectives
Legislative proposals arising from the Communication on the 'Health Check' in the Common Agricultural Policy	Revision	Following the 2007 Communication on the "Health Check" in the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), the legislative proposals will provide options aiming at making the Single Payment Scheme more effective, adapting the market support instruments and addressing the new challenges facing the sector. The "Health Check" is not a fundamental reform, rather it essentially aims to ensure that the CAP functions effectively and to simplify it where possible. This initiative arises from the review clauses regarding the Single Payment Scheme and certain agricultural markets that were included 2003/04 CAP reforms.
Commission Regulation on information and promotion actions for agricultural products on the internal market and in third countries	Revision	This initiative has as objective to establish the conditions regarding co-financing of information and promotion programmes for agricultural products in the internal market and in third countries. It will take the form of a consolidation of two existing Commission Regulations ((EC) No 1071/2005 and (EC) No 1346/2005).
Private Storage: Commission Regulation laying down common rules for private storage of agricultural products under Common Agricultural Policy	Revision	The aim of the proposal is to replace multiple sectoral rules by horizontal ones and to simplify management mechanisms relating to the private storage of agricultural products. Existing sectoral provisions, which may vary from one sector to another, will be examined with a view to eliminating unnecessary provisions and to harmonising the system of private storage.
Council Regulation amending Regulation (EC) No ... establishing a common organisation of markets (CMO) and on specific provisions for certain agricultural products (single CMO regulation)	Revision, recast and repeal	The single common market organisation (CMO) regulation, scheduled for adoption by Council in October 2007, merges existing CMOs into a single text. It does not modify policy but streamlines and harmonises legislation. Various substantive amendments were made in the meantime to the existing CMOs. This is notably the case in the milk, the sugar and the fruit and vegetables sectors. It is important to incorporate these amendments into the single CMO in order to achieve the aim of having one single simplified legal text which will facilitate the access to the existing legislation and thus create a much higher degree of transparency and legal clarity. The initiative thus concerns the subsequent Commission proposal.

Milk Package (two separate initiatives): 1) Commission Regulation laying down certain implementing rules with regard to intervention for butter 2) Commission Regulation laying down certain implementing rules with regard to intervention for skimmed milk powder	Revision	The purpose of the initiative is to simplify the procedures relating to intervention buying of butter, to abolish national butter quality grades, and to abolition private storage aid for cream and skimmed milk powder. Technical clarifications and simplification (e.g. concerning the security provisions) will improve the readability of the text.
Streamline Controls: Amendment of Commission Regulation (EC) No 796/2004 regarding the detailed rules of cross compliance and the integrated administration and control system	Revision	This proposal stems directly from the Commission report to the Council on the application of the system of cross-compliance (COM(2007) 147). Its amendments will lead to simpler and more effective rules concerning the controls on direct payments to farmers with regard to the selection of the control sample, the timing of these controls, and the specific rules concerning on the spot checks.
Starch Production Refunds: Commission Regulation amending Regulation (EEC) No 1722/93 laying down detailed rules for the application of Council Regulation (EEC) No 1766/92 concerning production refunds in the cereals sector	Revision	Objective of this initiative is the simplification of control procedures by increasing the threshold for special control requirements. It will simplify the business environment in which EU starch producers operate by eliminating the unnecessary / disproportionate administrative measures related to the control on modified starches This proposal has been elaborated following the consultation of NGOs/stakeholders.
Controls of export refunds: Commission Regulation amending Regulations (EC) No 2090/2002, (EC) No 3122/94 and (EC) No 800/1999 as regards physical and substitution controls in the framework of export refunds on agricultural products	Revision	Modification of Regulation (EC) No 2090/2002 laying down detailed rules for applying Council Regulation (EC) No 386/90 as regards physical checks carried out when agricultural products qualifying for refunds are exported.
Fresh fruit and vegetables: proposal for a Commission Regulation laying down the marketing standards for fresh fruit and vegetables and establishing requirements on checks on conformity to these marketing standards	Revision	The objective of the proposal is to merge 34 regulations on marketing standards for fresh fruit and vegetables into one regulation, reduce the list of products covered by marketing standards and rationalise checking operations.
Common market organisation of wine: amendment of the Council Regulation establishing the single Common Market Organisation (not yet published) to include the provisions with regard the common market organisation of wine.	Revision	The amendment will include the specific rules concerning the common organisation of the wine market into the general rules concerning the organisation of the common market in agricultural produce. This will clarify and simplify the EU legislation.

Commission Regulation on the application of Articles 87 and 88 of the Treaty to regional aid, SME, R&D, environmental aid, employment, training. (General Block Exemption Regulation - final adoption)	Revision	The final objective pursued by the Commission is to group all existing Block Exemption Regulations into one single Regulation for the first time ever. This will bring a qualitative impact in terms of clarity, predictability and transparency of EU rules for business and national and regional authorities. The new GBER will cover areas already covered by block exemptions (training, employment, SME) and new areas (innovation, environment, risk capital, regional aid). Texts on research and capital risk were adopted in 2006, but those applicable to the environment will be adopted in 2007. Finalisation of the draft new GBER is scheduled for 2007 and formal adoption by the Commission in 2008.
Proposal of Directive amending Council Directive 2001/23/EC on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to the safeguarding of employees' rights in the event of transfers of undertakings, businesses or parts of undertakings or businesses	Revision	Directive 2001/23/EC does not contain any provisions on conflict of laws. As a result, there is a lack of clarity as to how to apply the provisions of the Directive to cross-border transfers. The aim of the proposal - to be made by the Commission following the two phases of consultation of social partners - is therefore to clarify the application of the Directive to cross-border operations. The proposal would increase legal certainty for economic and judicial agents and result in costs savings for undertakings and better protection for workers.
Community initiative on work-related musculoskeletal disorders	Recast	The objective of this initiative is to integrate into a single legislative instrument the provisions on the protection of the health and safety of workers from the risks of musculo-skeletal disorders at work. These provisions are currently fragmented over different directives, namely Council Directive 90/269/EEC on the minimum health and safety requirements for the manual handling of loads and Council Directive 90/270/EEC on the minimum health and safety requirements for work with display screen equipment. A single legislative instrument would be more comprehensive, clearer and easier to apply. It will benefit employers in terms of legal clarity and workers in terms of providing better protection against the risks of musculo-skeletal disorders.
Revision of the Pharmaceutical "Variations" Regulations: change to the legal basis, in Directives 2001/83/EC on the Community code relating to medicinal products for human use and 2001/82/EC for veterinary use	Revision	The objective is to simplify the rules concerning post-licensing changes to medicines (so-called 'Variations' Regulations). Administrative management of these rules currently mobilise more than 60% of the human resources and financial costs of companies' regulatory departments. In some cases, this burden may hinder innovation by preventing the introduction of changes that are beneficial to patients and society. The objective of this initiative is to reduce the administrative burden for industry by streamlining the circumstances obliging industry to fill applications for variations of human and veterinary medical products. The current legal basis for implementing rules on changes to the marketing authorisation doesn't allow the Commission to set rules for purely national marketing authorisation. This legal basis should be widened to close the gap for harmonisation. This initiative aims at changing the legal basis for Directives: 2001/83/EC on the Community code relating to medicinal products for human use and Directive 2001/82/EC on the Community code relating to medicinal products for veterinary use.

Revision of the pharmaceutical "Variations" Regulations: simplification and modernisation of Regulation (EC) No 1084/2003 and (EC) No 1085/2003	Revision	The objective is to reduce the administrative burden for industry by simplifying the rules for variations of human and veterinary medicinal products. The Variations regulation are implementing rules adopted by the Commission on changes to the marketing authorisation of pharmaceuticals.
Regulation on Advanced Safety Features and Tyres	Revision	The proposal will simplify EC legislation in the domain of vehicle safety by replacing existing legislation in the area into one main Regulation. It will include electronic stability control and low rolling resistance tyres. The proposal will repeal some 50 separate Directives and will replace them, where appropriate, with references to UNECE Regulations. The beneficiaries of the simplification aspect of this proposal will primarily be vehicle manufacturers and national approval authorities. Replacing Directives with a Regulation will also ease the administrative burden on the Member States since they would not have to transpose legal acts in the domain of vehicle safety in the future. Furthermore, references to UNECE Regulations will avoid the existing duplication between EU and UNECE law and will thus lead to "better regulation".
Textiles: simplification and replacement by a single regulation	Revision	The replacement of 3 Directives by 1 Regulation will simplify procedures for Member States, companies and the Commission leading to shorter periods for adoption of new fibre names. The standard methods of quantitative analysis of binary and ternary textile fibre mixtures currently included in two of the directives are to be transferred to the standardisation process. This means that consumers and companies could benefit faster from the use of new innovative products. Innovation and technological developments will be thus encouraged. In addition, the legal nature of the legislation (Regulation) will facilitate the application of technical adaptations by the Member States.
Pressure Vessels and Transportable Pressure Equipment	Repeal	The objective is to repeal 4 Directives on Pressure Vessels (76/767/EEC, 84/525/EEC, 84/526/EEC, 84/527/EEC) and integration of the still relevant provisions into the revision of Directive 99/36/EC (Transportable Pressure Equipment).
Metrology: extension of the scope of Directive 2004/22/EC on measuring instruments and repeal of 8 "old approach" methodology Directives	Repeal	The objective is to provide for a coherent legal framework for legal metrology. The extension of the scope of the Directive is the legal prerequisite for the repeal of the following "old approach" Directives.
Eco-management and audit scheme: revision of the Regulation (EC) No 761/2001 of 19 March 2001 allowing voluntary participation by organisations in a Community eco-management and audit scheme (EMAS)	Revision	The revision aims at improving environmental performance of the organisations participating and increasing participation from both industrial and public sector. Legal compliance and environmental performance improvement of the participating organisations will be facilitated by providing access to advice on environmental legal obligations and guidance on the best environmental management practice. Administrative burden will be reduced for large corporations by allowing corporate registration and for small organisations by cluster registration. All participating organisations will benefit from reduced procedural requirements, simplified rules for the use of logo and harmonised rules for accreditation, verification and registration. In addition SMEs and small local authorities

		will benefit from reduced verification and reporting obligations and lower registration fees. Synergies with other environmental management systems will be facilitated. Incentives and regulatory relief for participating organisations by the member states will be encouraged.
Eco-label award scheme: revision of Regulation (EC) No 1980/2000 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 July 2000 on a revised Community eco-label award scheme	Revision	The revision aims at enhancing effectiveness and market impact by increasing the range of eligible product groups and the number of eco-labelled goods and services actually available to the consumer. For this purpose, the procedure of developing and adopting eco-label criteria will be thoroughly changed and simplified. Economic stakeholders will be involved to a greater extent into the process, thereby increasing ownership and self-regulatory aspects of the scheme, whereas the administrative burden put on Member States will be reduced. Once the criteria are adopted, it will be easy for economic operators to apply for the award of the eco-label to their products. Synergies with existing eco-labels at national level will be facilitated and limits will be put on the costs and fees Member States' authorities may charge on the applicant. Furthermore, the criteria should be defined in such a way that they can be easily used for the purpose of green public procurement.
Biocides: revision of the legislation on the placing of biocidal products on the market	Recast	This proposal follows the 2007 Report on the implementation of the Biocides Directive (98/8/EC). The objective is to provide a revised legal framework for regulating the placing on the market of biocidal products. The revision aims to address concerns regarding complexity and the cost, as well as the availability of certain biocidal products, and bring about a significant simplification of the current legislative framework and procedures. The revision of the biocides legislative framework will bring it in line with the EU Chemicals policy (REACH Regulation).
WEEE: revision of Directive 2002/96/EC on Waste Electric and Electronic Equipments	Revision	The revision of the Directive 2002/96/EC will examine possibilities to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the directive in achieving its environmental goals and eliminate any unnecessary costs to business, consumers, NGOs and public authorities arising from implementation of the directive. The revision will concern the targets, scope, treatment requirement and the operation of the producer responsibility provisions.
RoHS: revision of Directive 2002/95/EC on the limitation of the use of certain hazardous substances in the electric and electronic equipments	Revision	The revision aims at clarifying concepts and facilitate the implementation and enforcement while increasing the environmental benefits. It will enhance legal certainty for all stakeholders and will facilitate implementation by manufacturers by streamlining the mechanism for granting exemptions and enforcement by national authorities through market surveillance and administrative cooperation clauses. It will furthermore provide a more transparent level playing field for manufacturers and simplify procedures through introduction of harmonised compliance checking. Most of these measures will also enhance the internal market effect of the Directive and reduce administrative costs for administrations and manufacturers.

Ozone layer: revision of Regulation (EC) No 2037/2000 on substances that deplete the ozone layer	Recast	As the production and consumption of the substances covered have been reduced or phased out, many provisions of the Regulation, after seven years in force, need to be repealed or updated. Other provisions may benefit from simplification such as clarification of definitions and procedures and interaction with other pieces of legislation. This will reduce the cases of ambiguous interpretation and the risk of infringements and consequent administrative burdens. In particular, most of the administrative cost reduction will result from ending exemption provisions on some uses of ozone depleting substances. The beneficiaries will be the Member States and the Commission. Overall, the cost savings from ending the exemptions is expected to exceed any additional cost associated with new control measures to combat illegal trade of ozone depleting substances.
SEIS: legislative proposal to follow up the Communication on a Shared Environmental Information System (SEIS)	Revision	Following the 2007 Communication the Commission will adopt legislative proposals underpinning the development of SEIS that could address reporting streamlining and/or coherence of approaches to monitoring and information. This initiative aims to improve the availability, quality and comparability of data, avoid redundancies in reporting requirements to Member States and therefore, the administrative burden, remove obstacles related to information accessibility and enhance the coherence of monitoring systems and indicators.
Revision of Regulation (EC) No 638/2004 of the EP and of the Council on Community statistics relating to the trading of goods between Member States	Revision	Simplification of Intrastat with a view to alleviate the statistical reporting of economic operators, in particular SMEs, taking into account the outcome of the ongoing pilot project of administrative costs and a future feasibility study to analyse workability of a collection system limited to one flow.
Modernisation and recast of the CFP control system under Regulation (EC) No 2847/93	Recast	The main objectives are the review, harmonisation and simplification of existing rules - Regulation (EC) No 2847/93 - in the fisheries control area. The modernisation of the procedures will facilitate a better enforcement by alleviating the burden and constraints for the sector and public administrations and increasing the use of IT tools to reduce reporting obligations (e.g. reducing administrative burdens). It would be also of interest for NGOs which campaign for stringent and effective rules.
Proposal for a Commission Regulation laying down implementing rules for the collection and management of data needed to conduct the CFP	Revision	The proposal is intended to establish implementing rules according to the new framework Council Regulation on data collection, currently under discussion at the Council. The main innovations will include the support for new approaches such as fleet and area based management and the move towards the ecosystem approach as well as the promotion of a more regional approach to data collection. Moreover, new provisions for the access to data are to be included.
Revision of the company law, accounting and auditing acquis	Recast	Measures to simplify the company law environment for companies in the context of the "Better Regulation" framework.

Consolidation of accounting standards and interpretations endorsed for use in the EU	Recast	Consolidated version of published Regulations on International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) will enable constituents to refer to only one Regulation as it will contain all endorsed IFRS. In this context any translation errors contained in the current Regulations will be corrected.
Recasting - Codification Motor insurance Directive	Codification	Codification of the current 6 Directives into one single Motor Insurance Directive in order to have a motor insurance acquis more comprehensible, easier to apply and more effective in achieving its goals.
Proposal for a Framework Directive on Consumer Contractual Rights	Revision	The overall aim of the revision of the acquis, is to simplify and improve the coherence of the consumer regulatory framework and thus enhance legal certainty both for consumers and business. The legal instrument will be a combination of codification and repeal of parts of existing directives and enactment of new rules. The most likely regulatory action, depending on the final outcome of the review, will be a mixed approach to the revision of the acquis. This will consist of a horizontal instrument, underpinned whenever required by vertical solutions.
Simplify procedures of listing and publishing information in the veterinary and zootechnical fields	Revision	The general objective is to harmonise and simplify, essentially by means of electronic tools, the current procedures for listing, updating and publishing information in the veterinary and zootechnical fields such as lists of approved animal health establishments and breeding organisations in Member States and Third Countries and lists of certain national reference laboratories. 22 Council acts are concerned.
Harmonisation of Maximum Residues Levels (MRL) for pesticides	Revision	The main objective of this proposal will concern the transfer and up-date by comitology of the list of MRLs (Annex II) and temporary MRLs (Annex III) based on European Food Safety Agency (EFSA) assessment and mathematical models/expert calculations. The proposal will be a final step towards harmonisation of divergent national MRLs. Completion of the replacement of 4 Directives by one Regulation.
Review of the provisions related to the total feed ban	Revision	A ban on the feeding of mammalian meat and bone meal (MBM) to cattle, sheep and goats was introduced as of July 1994. This partial ban was extended to a total EU wide suspension on the use of processed animal protein in feed for any animals farmed for the production of food on 1 January 2001 with some exceptions like the use of fish meal for non-ruminants. Any presence of prohibited constituents of animal origin in feed is considered as a breach of the feed ban i.e. the zero-tolerance. Following the adoption of the TSE Road map the Commission issued a Commission staff working paper i.e. Work Programme on TSE [SEC(2006) 1527] on future legislative actions in the field of transmissible spongiform encephalopathy. One of the topics concerns a revision of the feed ban provisions. The starting point when revising the current feed ban provisions should be risk-based but at the same time taking into account the control tools in place to evaluate and ensure the proper

		implementation of this feed ban.
Revision of food safety in EU Switzerland trade in agricultural products - Decision n° 1/2008 of the Joint Veterinary Committee set up by the Agreement between the European Community and the Swiss Confederation on trade in agricultural products amending appendix to Annex 11 to the Agreement - Decision to amend Commission Decision 2001/881/EC on import controls to abolish border inspections posts between EC and Switzerland	Revision	The revision of the safety provisions will consist of: - Completion of the equivalence determination between the Swiss legislation related to food safety and veterinary policies including border veterinary controls and import conditions, updating of the content of the Agreement with regard to legislations adopted since the last Agreement modification. - As Switzerland has accepted to apply the EC acquis in relation to animal health, food safety and hygiene controls, a uniform high level of protection will therefore exist in the EC and Switzerland. This permits the abolition of border controls on trade in animals and animal products between the two.
Recast of basic safety standards legislation for the protection against the dangers arising from exposure to ionising radiation	Recast	Recast into a single Council Directive of relevant Euratom acts on radiation protection including a substantial revision of the Basic Safety Standards (BSS) directive. The objective is to bring the BSS directive in line with the forthcoming recommendations of the International Commission on Radiological protection (ICRP), when available. At the same time the legislation in the field of radiation protection has to be simplified.
Legislative proposal revising Council Directive 2006/67/EC with the aim of strengthening the European emergency oil stocks system	Revision	The current system of emergency oil stocks shows limitations and shortcomings on several accounts. The provisions of the existing legislation will be revised in order to create a system for coping with oil supply disruptions. The new proposal will replace existing Directives and contribute to simplification of EU legislation.
Recasting of Directive 2002/91/EC of 16 December 2002 on the Energy Performance of Buildings	Recast or Revision	The Energy Performance of Buildings Directive makes certificates for the energy performance of buildings mandatory when buildings are constructed, sold or rented out and requires minimum energy performance requirements for new buildings and existing building which undergo major renovation. Furthermore, the Directive requires regular inspections of boilers and air-conditioning systems in order to guarantee their energy efficient operation. An amended Directive could enlarge the scope to more buildings, strengthen and specify some of these requirements and add, for instance, financing aspects. The changes under consideration aim at overcoming multiple barriers that hinder the utilization of the vast potential for energy demand reductions in the buildings sector. The recasting of the Directive is part of package on the Strategic Energy Review and included in the Energy Efficiency Action Plan. The amendments will cover some articles of the Directive and add

		new ones. The "simplification" will consist of using the "recasting" technique to facilitate reading and comprehension for the implementing authorities and for the many stakeholders affected.
Recast of Council Directive 92/75/EEC of 22 September 1992 on the indication by labelling and standard product information of the consumption of energy and other resources by household appliances	Recast	Amend the existing framework Directive to enlarge its scope (beyond domestic appliances) and update for modern communication tools (e.g. internet) to enhance public/consumer awareness on efficient products. The simplification will be obtained by using the recasting technique for consolidating the original Directive with its amendment in one single document.
Proposal to recast the legislation concerning the "first railway package" following the report in 2006 of its implementation, in particular for the requirements concerning the relations between infrastructure managers and railway undertakings	Recast	The first and successive railway packages are legal instruments to achieve the Community's objective to create a European Railway Area through market opening, as well as technical and regulatory market integration. As rail markets transform, an ongoing review of the suitability of the EU legal framework appears appropriate with possible simplification and streamlining. The Commission intends to present a communication accompanied by a proposal for modification/recast of the existing acts, especially Directives 91/440/EEC and 2001/14/EC. The political goal is to enhance the competitiveness of rail transport in Europe and to hence contribute to achieving the objectives of the Lisbon strategy. The recast aims at a simplification of the text of the three Directives of the 1st railway package by merging them into one legal act, a 'railway access code'. By eliminating existing cross-references between the Directives the reading and implementation will be come easier for the implementing authorities and the many stakeholders affected.
Revision of the Council Directive 94/56/EC establishing the fundamental principles governing the investigation of civil aviation accidents and incidents and of Directive 2003/42/EC on occurrence reporting in civil aviation	Revision or Recast	The older directive needs to be modernised following the establishment of EASA and following the advice of the Group of Experts established by EC Decision 2003/425/EC. In addition the newer directive needs to be built on to create a minimum set of centralised functions, including a database to allow appropriate entities to carry out trend analysis or other studies, and keep track of safety recommendations, while providing information to the general public. Both directives will be replaced by a single piece of legislation. The objective of the simplification is to take advantage of the necessary revision of the Directive 94/56 to adapt it to recent developments by merging it with Directive 2003/42/EC to create a single legislative act as both directives deal with the use of feedback information to improve accident prevention.
Modernise the Marine Equipment Directive 96/98/EC	Recast or Revision	The objective is to modernise and reform the existing system established by Council Directive 96/98/EC on marine equipment. Its main objectives are : 1) to produce a consolidated version of the text following the successive amendments of the Directive 2) to improve the functioning of the Directive's system by addressing the existing shortcomings ; 3) to adapt it to the reform of the New

		Approach. It is intended to abrogate the existing Directive and replace it with an entirely new one, while recourse to recast is not excluded. At present, the Directive needs periodic amendments in order to keep pace with the safety requirements and technical standards produced by the International Maritime Organisation as well as the international and European standardisation bodies. This produces an inevitable mismatch between the European and international regulatory frameworks, sometimes spanning several years, whose correction will greatly facilitate the work of the sectors concerned and thus favour the competitiveness of the European marine equipment industry. Furthermore, the adaptation of the directive to the new regulatory framework for the free movement of goods (revision of the new approach) is expected to improve the readability of this instrument and reduce the administrative burden on the industry. Timing of adoption is conditional on significant progress being achieved by December 2007 in the legislative process as regards the revision of the New Approach.
Transport of radioactive material	Recast	The objective is to update and simplify the Community regulatory framework for transporting radioactive material. There are currently more than 20 Directives, Regulations and Recommendations governing the transport of radioactive material within the EU. Harmonisation will lead to simplification of rules and procedures.

(45 initiatives)

ANNEX 3 – List of withdrawals of pending proposals

Title	COM/SEC/inter-institutional number	Justification
Proposal for a Council Regulation amending Council Regulation (EEC) No 827/68 on the common organization of the market in certain products listed in Annex ii to the Treaty	COM(91) 328	This proposal has been overtaken by subsequent reform and has become obsolete.
Proposal for a European Parliament and Council Regulation amending Council Regulation 820/97, establishing a system for the identification and registration of bovine animals and regarding the labelling of beef and beef products	COM(1999) 487/2 - 1999/0205/COD	Following adoption of Regulation (EC) No 1760/2000 on identification of bovine animals and labelling of beef products, and repeal of Regulation (EC) No 820/97, this proposal has become obsolete.
Proposal for a Council Regulation on the use of inward processing arrangements in the management of certain agricultural markets	COM(2000) 868 - 2000/0349/CNS	This proposal has been overtaken by subsequent reform and in particular by the proposal on a single CMO currently discussed by the Council, and has become obsolete.
Proposal for a Council Decision on the position to be taken by the Community within the Association Council established by the Europe Agreement between the European Communities and their Member States, of the one part, and the Republic of Bulgaria, on the other part, with regard to the adoption of provisions for the co-ordination of social security schemes	COM(1999) 677	After the accession of Bulgaria and Romania, this and the next two proposals (677, 683, and 495) have become obsolete.
Proposal for a Council Decision on the position to be taken by the Community within the Association Council established by the Europe Agreement between the European Communities and their Member States, of the one part, and the Republic of Romania, on the other part, with regard to the adoption of provisions for the co-ordination of social security schemes	COM(1999) 683	As above.

Proposal for a Council and Commission Decision EC/ECSC on the conclusion of an additional Protocol to the Europe Agreement establishing an association between the European Communities and their Member States, of the one part, and the Republic of Romania, of the other part, with regard to an extension of the period foreseen in the provisions of Article 9(4) of Protocol 2 of the Europe Agreement with Romania	SEC(2002) 495/4 - 2002/0215/CNS	As above.
Proposal for a Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on the Protection of the Environment through Criminal Law	COM(2001) 139 - 2001/0076/COD	As a new proposal has replaced it on the same subject - COM(2007) 51, 2007/0022/COD, 9.2.2007 - this proposal has become obsolete.
Proposal for a Council Decision amending Directive 2002/95/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council for the purposes of establishing the maximum concentration values for certain hazardous substances in electrical and electronic equipment	COM(2004) 606	This was a proposal in comitology on which the Council was not able to deliver an opinion. The Commission did thus go on to adopt Commission Decision 618/2005/EC and this proposal has become obsolete.
Proposal for a Council Decision amending for the purposes of adapting to the technical progress the Annex to Directive 2002/95/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council on the restriction of the use of certain hazardous substances in electrical and electronic equipment	COM(2005) 241	This was a proposal in comitology on which the Council did not act within three months and subsequently the relevant measures were adopted by the Commission. The proposal has become obsolete.
Proposal for a Council Regulation amending Regulation (EC) No 3317/94 as regards the transmission of applications for fishing licences to third countries	COM(2005) 238 - 2005/0110/CNS	New proposal adopted by Commission - COM(2007) 330, 2007/0114/CNS, 18.6.2007 - on authorisations for fishing activities, which has rendered this proposal obsolete.
Proposal for a Council Regulation concerning the conclusion of the Agreement between the European Community and the United Republic of Tanzania on fishing in Tanzania's fishing zone	COM(2005) 693 - 2005/0276/CNS	Following non ratification by Tanzania of the draft agreement that had been initialled, this proposal serves no purpose and has become obsolete.
Proposal on a Council Common Position on notifying the Council of Europe, pursuant to Article 28(3) of the European Convention on Extradition of 13 December 1957, of the application by the Member States, as between themselves, of the European arrest warrant	COM(2003) 253	This proposal serves no purpose as Member States have made their own declarations to the Council of Europe. It has therefore become obsolete.

Proposal for a Council Regulation preventing the supply of certain goods and services to Libya and restricting the use of funds or other financial resources owned or controlled by Libya	COM(1994) 91	As a proposal on this matter has been adopted and planned measures have been implemented, this proposal has become obsolete.
Proposal for a Council Regulation amending Regulation (EC) No 2894/94 concerning arrangements for implementing the Agreement on the European Economic Area	COM(1999) 561 - 1999/0223/AVC	The objective of this proposal, that the Council authorise the Commission to decide on extending programs to the EEA countries, as requested from the EFTA side who were seeking earlier participation in these programs, could not be attained, because Member States in the Council want to maintain the existing rule, that they decide on each programme extension to the EEA, as this always has budgetary implications. In these circumstances, as the Commission has decided to change its approach and accept the existing rule, this proposal has become obsolete.
Proposal for a Council Decision on a Community position within the EU-Mercosur Co-operation Council on the rules of procedure of the Co-operation Council	COM(1999) 600	Adoption of these rules of procedure was not foreseen, since the Commission proposals were considered incomplete, and the matter was taken off the agenda of the first EU-Mercosur Joint Council which concluded at its meeting of 24 November 1999 that they would be adopted later. However, no decision was taken on this issue ever since. This proposal has therefore become obsolete.
Proposal for a Council Regulation amending, for the third time, Council Regulation (EC) No 2465/1996 concerning the interruption of economic and financial relations between the European Community and Iraq	COM(2003) 214	Changed circumstances and approach by the Commission. The proposal has become obsolete.
Proposal for a Council Decision amending decision 2002/834/EC on the specific programme for research, technological development and demonstration: Integrating and strengthening the European research area (2002-2006)	COM(2003) 390 - 2003/0151/CNS	This proposal is relevant to the 6th Framework Programme which was terminated in 2006. It has therefore become obsolete.
Proposal for a Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on the approximation of the laws of the Member States on extraction solvents used in the production of foodstuffs and food ingredients (Codified version)	COM(2003) 467 - 2003/0181/COD	This proposal will be replaced by recast proposals incorporating alignment to the new Comitology rules. It has become obsolete.
Amended Proposal for a Council Regulation establishing a Cohesion Fund (Codified version)	COM(2003) 352 - 2003/0129/AVC	This proposal has become obsolete because the act being codified has been repealed.

Proposal for a Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on foodstuffs intended for particular nutritional uses (Codified version)	COM(2004) 290 - 2004/0090/COD	This proposal will be replaced by recast proposals incorporating alignment to the new Comitology rules. It has become obsolete.
Proposal for a Council Regulation on the conversion rates between the euro and the currencies of the Member States adopting the euro (Codified version)	COM(2004) 32 - 2004/0009/CNS	This proposal has become obsolete, because an insuperable problem with the legal base makes it that there is no way of adopting the codification.
Proposal for a Council Regulation on financial and technical measures to accompany (MEDA) the reform of economic and social structures in the framework of the Euro-Mediterranean partnership (Codified version)	COM(2004) 77 - 2004/0024/CNS	This proposal has become obsolete because the act being codified has been repealed.
Proposal for a Council Directive introducing minimum Community measures for the control of certain diseases affecting bivalve molluscs (Codified version)	COM(2004) 326 - 2004/0100/CNS	This proposal has become obsolete because the act being codified has been repealed.
Proposal for a Council Decision on Coordination and Information Procedures in Matters of Officially Supported Export Credits, Credit Insurance, Credit Guarantees and Financial Credits	COM(1992) 502	The context for export credits has totally changed since the proposal was introduced and the content does not reflect up-to-date financial practices. This proposal has therefore become obsolete.
Proposal for a Council Decision approving the Protocol (2001) amending the Annex to the Agreement on Trade in Civil Aircraft	COM(2002) 112 - 2002/0055/ACC	This proposal has become obsolete in the light of a new aircraft agreement
Proposal for a Council Regulation establishing additional customs duties on imports of certain products originating in the United States of America	COM(2002) 285 - 2002/0121/ACC	This proposal has been replaced by a modified one on the same subject adopted by the Commission as COM(2002) 316, 2002/0095/ACC, 19.4.2002. It has therefore become obsolete.
Proposal for a Council Decision on the conclusion of an Agreement in the form of an exchange of letters between the European Community and the <i>Republic of Croatia</i> concerning the transitional points system applicable to heavy goods vehicles travelling through Austria	COM(2003) 833/2 - 2003/0319/CNS	The Ecopoints scheme effectively expired at the end of 2006, therefore adoption of this proposal for a Council Decision - and the conclusion of the agreement with the <i>Republic of Croatia</i> is neither necessary nor desirable.
Proposal for a Council Decision on the conclusion of an Agreement in the form of an exchange of letters between the European Community and the <i>Republic of Slovenia</i> concerning the transitional points system applicable to heavy goods vehicles travelling through Austria from 1 January 2004 to 30 April 2004	COM(2003) 835/2 - 2003/0320/CNS	The Ecopoints scheme effectively expired at the end of 2006, therefore adoption of this proposal for a Council Decision - and the conclusion of the agreement with the <i>Republic of Slovenia</i> is neither necessary nor desirable.

Proposal for a Council Decision on the conclusion of an administrative arrangement in the form of an exchange of letters between the European Community and the <i>Swiss Confederation</i> concerning the transitional points system applicable to heavy goods vehicles travelling through Austria	COM(2003) 836/2 - 2003/0322/CNS	The Ecopoints scheme effectively expired at the end of 2006, therefore adoption of this proposal for a Council Decision - and the conclusion of the agreement with the <i>Swiss Confederation</i> is neither necessary nor desirable.
Proposal for a Council Decision on the conclusion of an Agreement in the form of an exchange of letters between the European Community and the <i>former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia</i> concerning the transitional points system applicable to heavy goods vehicles travelling through Austria	COM(2003) 837/2 - 2003/0323/CNS	The Ecopoints scheme effectively expired at the end of 2006, therefore adoption of this proposal for a Council Decision - and the conclusion of the agreement with the <i>former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia</i> is neither necessary nor desirable.

(30 withdrawals)

ANNEX 4

COMMUNICATION PRIORITIES FOR 2008

The Commission agreed to consider the following as inter-institutional communication priorities:

Inter-institutional communication priorities envisaged for 2008

- Reform Treaty
- Energy and Climate Change
- European Year of Intercultural Dialogue

Communication priorities envisaged for 2008

- Reform Treaty
- The Lisbon Strategy for growth and jobs and better regulation
- Energy and Climate Change
- Migration
- EU's role in the World
- The Budget Review
- The Social Reality Stocktaking