

a European Agency for the Evaluation of Medicinal Products⁽²⁾ plays an important role in promoting access to these products throughout the Community. This Regulation is currently under review with a view towards strengthening the provisions of this regulation in this regard.

⁽¹⁾ OJ L 18, 22.1.2000.

⁽²⁾ OJ L 214, 24.8.1993.

(2001/C 318 E/144)

WRITTEN QUESTION E-0860/01

by Christopher Huhne (ELDR) to the Commission

(22 March 2001)

Subject: Commission advisory committees

Will the Commission provide a list of all its advisory committees and indicate:

1. their terms of reference;
2. the frequency of their meetings;
3. the names of their current members;
4. the availability of their papers and minutes;
5. whether meetings are open to the public?

Answer given by Mr Prodi on behalf of the Commission

(24 April 2001)

The list of advisory committees is published annually as an annex to the budget. The terms of reference are indicated in the same list. The frequency of meetings depends on the Commission's need to consult them. The list of participants, including organisations, is published in an annex to the Commission Decision setting up the committee. The papers and minutes of the Committees are made available to Parliament in accordance with the provisions of the framework agreement. The meetings are not usually public. The Honourable Member is also requested to refer to the answer given to his Written Question E-0861/01⁽¹⁾.

⁽¹⁾ See p. 136.

(2001/C 318 E/145)

WRITTEN QUESTION E-0861/01

by Christopher Huhne (ELDR) to the Commission

(22 March 2001)

Subject: Implementing committees

Will the Commission provide a list of all EU implementing committees set up under Article 202, together with their terms of reference (and the legislation from which they derive), the frequency of their meetings, the names of the current members, the availability of its papers and minutes, and indicate whether meetings are open to the public?

Answer given by Mr Prodi on behalf of the Commission

(24 April 2001)

The Honourable Member will find most of the information he requests in the List of committees which assist the Commission in the exercise of its implementing powers⁽¹⁾. The frequency of meetings varies

depending on the committee and whether or not any implementing measures need to be taken; it would be impossible to provide any reliable information on this point. Nonetheless, partial information for 2000 will be available in the annual report which the Commission will submit in June 2001, in accordance with Council Decision 468/1999 of 28 June 1999 laying down the procedures for the exercise of implementing powers conferred on the Commission⁽¹⁾. Delegates to meetings are appointed by Member States, sometimes for a fixed period and sometimes depending on the subjects to be discussed. Consequently, it is impossible to provide a meaningful and complete list of those attending. The availability of committee documents is governed by Article 7 of the above Decision, the agreement between Parliament and the Commission reached in implementation of the latter, and, where these are not applicable, by the framework agreement between the two institutions. The meetings are not public.

⁽¹⁾ OJ C 225, 8.8.2000.

⁽²⁾ OJ L 184, 17.7.1999.

(2001/C 318 E/146)

WRITTEN QUESTION E-0864/01

by Jules Maaten (ELDR) to the Commission

(22 March 2001)

Subject: Introduction of the euro

In the Netherlands consumers will be able to change their guilders free of charge at a bank for a transitional period of three months after introduction of the euro. Businesses will have to pay, however. In the initial changeover period businesses will act as banks. Does the Commission feel there is any justification for implicitly passing on costs to businesses in this way?

Will costs be passed on to businesses in every Member State?

Can the Commission give a breakdown per Member State?

In the initial period of changeover to the euro businesses will need to have double the amount of money. In the Netherlands guaranteeing the additional money required is a problem.

Can the Commission indicate whether this is a problem in every Member State, and how does it intend to remedy it?

On 5 March Wim Duisenberg, President of the European Central Bank, told Parliament's Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs that he had no complaints about the cooperation of the private banks in the introduction of the euro on 1 January 2002. Does the Commission share this satisfaction with the banks' cooperation, in particular with regard to their responsiveness to small and medium-sized businesses (for example, with regard to extended opening hours on 1 January and the costs to businesses changing the old currency)?

If a customer wants to change banks, for example because he expects another bank to provide a better service, one major obstacle is that he is given an entirely new account number. In the Commission's opinion, are there any statutory provisions preventing consumers or businesses taking their account numbers with them when they change banks?

Answer given by Mr Solbes Mira on behalf of the Commission

(17 May 2001)

In its Recommendation of 11 October 2000⁽¹⁾, the Commission recommended that banks exchange notes and coins free of charge and without any limitation for their customers (subject only to a period of notice for large amounts), whether natural or legal persons.

The Commission does not yet have overall data on any handling costs that banks might charge for the physical exchange of large amounts in notes by legal persons. Some Member States, such as Ireland, have negotiated forms of compensation for the costs borne by banks in return for their not charging handling fees to businesses.