

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT



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BODIES WITHIN NATIONAL PARLIAMENTS SPECIALISING IN EUROPEAN COMMUNITY AFFAIRS

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NOTE TO THE READER

The present document is the third revision of the document drawn up in February 1988. Since this date, the 20 Chambers of the Parliaments of the Twelve Member States of the European Community all have a body specializing in European Affairs¹. These bodies now meet twice a year within the framework of COSAC (Conference of Bodies specializing in Community Affairs), with a delegation from the European Parliament's Institutional Affairs Committee. The old title 'Contacts with comparable bodies in other Member States of the Communities' is therefore no longer valid.

On the other hand, the present edition has a new heading entitled 'Reports/other publications' in view of the growing interest of this type of documentation shown by the relevant services of the various chambers contacted.

As in the past, we have reproduced in their entirety the replies provided directly by national parliaments out of full respect for their authority and freedom to provide the information that they considered to be most useful.

This document is available in English, French and German.

March 1992

¹ Certain parliaments of countries which are candidates for membership of the EC are already making plans to set up special committees. For example, the Swiss Federal Assembly set up such a body in December 1991 with representation from all the political groups.

SPECIALISED BODIES IN THE PARLIAMENTS OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

<u>BELGIË/BELGIOUE</u>	Adviescomité voor Europese aangelegenheden/ Comité d'Avis chargé de Questions européennes (Kamer van Volksvertegenwoordigers/Chambre des Représentants)
	Adviescomité voor Europese aangelegenheden/ Comité d'Avis de Questions européennes (Senaat/Sénat)
<u>DANMARK</u>	Markedsudvalget (Folketing)
<u>DEUTSCHLAND</u>	e.g. Ausschuss (Bundestag)
	Ausschuß für Fragen der Europäischen Gemeinschaften (Bundesrat) Kammer für Vorlagen der Europäischen Gemeinschaften (Bundesrat)
<u>ELLAS</u>	Epitropi Evropaikon Kinotikon Ypothesseon (Vouli ton Ellinon)
<u>ESPAÑA</u>	Comisión Mixta para las Comunidades Europeas (Congreso de los Diputados/Senado)
<u>FRANCE</u>	Délégation de l'Assemblée Nationale (et du Sénat) pour les Communautés européennes (Assemblée Nationale/Sénat)
<u>IRELAND</u>	Joint Committee on the Secondary Legislation of the European Communities (Dáil Éireann/Séanad Éireann)
<u>ITALIA</u>	Commissione speciale per le politiche comunitarie (Camera dei Deputati)
	Giunta per gli Affari delle Comunità europee (Senato della Repubblica)
<u>LUXEMBOURG</u>	Commission des Affaires étrangères et communautaires (Chambre des Députés)
<u>NEDERLAND</u>	Vaste Commissie voor EG-Zaken (Tweede Kamer der Staten- Generaal)
	Vaste Commissie voor Europese Samenwerkingsorganisaties (Eerste Kamer der Staten-Generaal)
<u>PORTUGAL</u>	Comissão de Assuntos Europeus (Assembleia da República)
<u>UNITED KINGDOM</u>	Select Committee on European Legislation (House of Commons)
	Select Committee on the European Communities (House of Lords)

SET UP DATE OF THE DIFFERENT "SPECIALISED BODIES" : CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER

1. 20.12.1957 D AUSSCHUSS FÜR FRAGEN DER EUROPÄISCHEN GEMEINSCHAFTEN
(Bundesrat)
2. 17.07.1968 I GIUNTA PER GLI AFFARI DELLE COMUNITA' EUROPEE
(Senato della Repubblica)
3. 06.1970 NL VASTE COMMISSIE VOOR EUROPESE SAMENWERKINGSORGANISATIES
(Eerste Kamer)
4. 11.10.1972 DK MARKEDSUDVALGET
(Folketing)
5. 03.08.1973 IRL JOINT COMMITTEE ON THE SECONDARY LEGISLATION OF
THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES
(Oireachtas)
6. 10.04.1974 UK SELECT COMMITTEE ON THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES
(House of Lords)
7. 05.1974 UK SELECT COMMITTEE ON EUROPEAN LEGISLATION
(House of Commons)
8. 06.07.1979 F DELEGATION DE L'ASSEMBLEE NATIONALE (ET DU SENAT)
9. 06.07.1979 F POUR LES COMMUNAUTES EUROPEENNES
10. 25.04.1985 B ADVIESCOMITE VOOR EUROPESE AANGELEGENHEDEN/
COMITE D'AVIS CHARGE DE QUESTIONS EUROPEENNES
(Kamer van Volksvertegenwoordigers/Chambre des
Représentants)
11. 27.12.1985 E COMISIÓN MIXTA PARA LAS COMUNIDADES EUROPEAS
(Cortes Generales)
12. 09.10.1986 NL VASTE COMMISSIE VOOR EG-ZAKEN
(Tweede Kamer)
13. 29.10.1987 P COMISSÃO DE ASSUNTOS EUROPEUS
(Assembleia da República)
14. 10.06.1988 D KAMMER FÜR VORLAGEN DER EUROPÄISCHEN GEMEINSCHAFTEN
(Bundesrat)
15. 06.12.1989 L COMMISSION DES AFFAIRES ETRANGERES ET COMMUNAUTAIRES
(Chambre des Députés)
16. 29.03.1990 B COMITE D'AVIS DE QUESTIONS EUROPEENNES/ADVIESCOMITE
VOOR EUROPESE AANGELEGENHEDEN (Sénat/Senaat)
17. 13.06.1990 GR EPITROPI EVROPAIKON KINOTIKON YPOTHESSEON
(Vouli ton Ellinon)
18. 10.10.1990 I COMMISSIONE SPECIALE PER LE POLITICHE COMUNITARIE
(Camera dei Deputati)
19. 04.09.1991 D EC - AUSSCHUSS (Bundestag)

BELGIUM

KAMER VAN VOLKSVERTEGENWOORDIGERS
CHAMBRE DES REPRESENTANTS

1. Name

Adviescomité voor Europese aangelegenheden/Comité d'Avis chargé de Questions européennes.
(Advisory Committee on European Questions).

2. Set up on

25 April 1985.
(An article 100 was inserted in the Rules of Procedure of the House of Representatives).

3. Composition

10 Members of the House;
10 Members of the European Parliament.

1 Member of the House per political group not represented on the Committee and 1 Belgian Member of the European Parliament per political group not represented on the Committee may attend its meetings but are not entitled to speak and vote.

A Member unable to attend a meeting may ask a Member from the same political group to deputize for him.

4. Appointment of Members

The Members : appointed by the House, at the beginning of the life of each parliament, on proposals from the political groups, in proportion to the relative strength of those groups in the House.

The Members of the European Parliament : appointed by the 24 Belgian Members of the European Parliament following each re-election of that Parliament, on the basis of proportional representation.

5. Chairmanship

The Committee is chaired by the President of the House or a Vice-President of the House appointed by him. The Committee appoints two Vice-Chairmen from its own number, one of whom is a Member of the House and the other a Member of the European Parliament.

6. Participation of Belgian Members of the European Parliament

See paragraphs 3 and 4.

7. Competences

The Committee's function is to deliver opinions, on its own initiative, at the request of a Member of the House or a Member of the European Parliament for a Belgian constituency, on the following European matters :

- institutional questions and other important political matters ;
- questions relating to cooperation between the House of Representatives and the European Parliament ;
- questions relating to the status of Belgian Members of the European Parliament and to exchanges of information between the two assemblies.

Within the limits of these powers, the Committee organises its own work and deliberates in accordance with the provisions applying to standing committees of the House.

8. Relations with other bodies of the national Parliament

Motions for resolutions adopted by the Advisory Committee are tabled directly before the House.

Since the 90-91 session, the Chamber's committees examine, in principle on a monthly basis, European matters falling within their competence on the agenda of the EC Council of Ministers and the decisions taken by that body as well as the resolutions officially forwarded by the European Parliament to the Chamber (point 2 of the recommendation). In order to promote this initiative, the Advisory Committee on European questions has drawn up, in cooperation with the Foreign Affairs Minister, an information system to ensure that the House is kept informed of the agenda of the EC Council of Ministers (- in keeping with the recommendation on strengthening parliamentary control over European integration)

(Doc. Ch 20-1251/1-89/90, rapporteurs: Mr De Raet and Mrs Kestelijn-Sierens).

9. Relations with the national Government

The Committee may decide to summon Members of the Government to appear before it.

In this context, the Advisory Committee heard, during the 90-91 session, various Ministers and Secretaries-of-State on the progress of negotiations within the Intergovernmental Conferences on Economic and Monetary Union and on European Political Union, on the implications of the Gulf crisis and on the transposition of European directives into Belgian internal law.

10. Relations with the European Parliament

On a proposal from the Advisory Committee, the House organized, in May 1987, a Parliamentary Conference on the European Union, which was attended by representatives of most of the Community Member States' parliaments, as well the European Parliament's Committee on Institutional Affairs.

As part of the monitoring procedure of the Intergovernmental Conferences on Political Union and economic and Monetary Union, numerous meetings were held at different levels (parliamentary and administrative) to decide on the advisability of assessing the results of the conferences with respect to the Declaration of Rome (Conference of EC Parliaments, November 1990). Thus, on the eve of the Maastricht Summit (December 1991), the leaders of the EC Parliaments and the EP together embarked upon such an assessment.

11. Relations with other Community Institutions

In June 1989, Mr K. VAN MIERT, Member of the Commission of the European Communities, appeared before the committee to outline the Commission's work programme, more particularly in the transport sector.

Senior Commission officials, including the Secretary-General, were invited by the Advisory Committee in April and July 1991. They put forward the Commission's point of view on the negotiations surrounding the Intergovernmental Conferences.

12. Other comments

(a) Involvement of Belgian Members of the European Parliament in the work of the standing committees of the House (Rule 25 of the Rules of Procedure of the House)

Any Member of the European Parliament representing a Belgian constituency may take part in the work of the standing committees in a consultative capacity. His right to speak is confined to the discussion of draft laws and bills and to meetings held by the committees for the purpose of giving briefings.

(b) Written Questions tabled by Belgian Members of the European Parliament

The Advisory Committee established the procedure regarding written questions tabled by Belgian Members of the European Parliament in accordance with point 4 of the recommendation concerning the strengthening of parliamentary control over European integration adopted by the House on 12 July 1990 (Doc. Ch. 20-1251/1-89/90).

The government's replies are published in the Bulletin of Questions and Replies.

(c) Work done by the Advisory Committee up to 15.11.1991

See the Annex.

13. Frequency of meetings

In principle the Committee meets once a month during parliamentary part-sessions. The meetings of the Committee are held in the House of Representatives, which provides the secretarial back-up required.

During the 1990-1991 session, the frequency of meetings rose sharply. The Advisory Committee met for a total of 38 hours covering 15 meetings, one of which was a public meeting.

14. Reports/other publications

The committee draws up reports and proposes resolutions or recommendations dealing with various Community subjects. These are adopted by the House in plenary sitting. The texts appear in a brochure drawn up by the Chamber's public and international relations service (Tel. 02/519.81.72).

15. Secretariat

Mr Hugo D'HOLLANDER
Chambre des Représentants
Chambre des Relations publiques et internationales
B-1008 BRUSSELS

Tel. : (2) 519.80.78
Telefax : (2) 519.83.02

WORK DONE BY THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON EUROPEAN QUESTIONS UP TO 15.11.1991

The Advisory Committee met for the first time on 25th February 1986. At its first meeting it was decided to meet monthly and to consider matters of current interest on the basis of reports drafted by one of its Members whether a national deputy or an MEP.

* The Single European Act amending the Treaty of Rome

Mr. CROUX's report was published on 22 April 1986 and the accompanying draft resolution was adopted by the Chamber on 10 July 1986 at the same time as the draft law agreeing the Single European Act. The Senate agreed a similar text on 24 July 1986.

* Application of the Single European Act and European Union

Mr. CROUX has updated his report of 22 April 1986 and presented a draft resolution on 12 June 1989 which was adopted by the Chamber on 22 June 1989.

* Use made by Belgium of structural funds and the Communities borrowing facilities

Mr. VAN MIERT published a report on 29 July 1986. [Doc. Ch. 500-II(Eur) (1985-1986)].

* Application by Belgium of Community law

Mr. DE GUCHT published his report on 21 January 1987. [Doc. Ch. 20-739-86/87]

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The resolutions by Mr. VAN MIERT and Mr. DE GUCHT were adopted by the Chamber on 12th March 1987.

* Translation of European legislative acts into national legislation

- On 13th June 1990, Mr. VAN DER MAELEN tabled a bill drafted in the Advisory Committee relating to the translation and application of European Community law in national legislation. [Doc. Ch. 1230-89/90].
On 21 March 1991, the committee delivered an opinion to the Committee on the Revision of the Constitution, Institutional Reforms and the Settling of Disputes (rapporteur: Mr De Raet). The bill was adopted by the House on 8 May 1991.
- On 29th June 1990, the same Member tabled a draft amendment to the Rules of Procedure of the Chamber of Representatives relating to the procedure regarding draft legislation translating European Community legislative acts. [Doc. Ch. 1249-89/90]

The committee delivered a favourable opinion to the Committee on the Rules of Procedure (rapporteur: Mrs Kestelijn-Sierens).

* **Mr. COLOMBO's report (Council of Europe) on European cooperation**

Mr. LENAERTS' report was adopted by the Chamber on 1st July 1987. [Doc. Ch. 20-942-86/87].

* **The statute of the European Parliamentarian**

Mr. GLINNE's report and draft resolution were published on 13th June 1989 and the resolution was adopted by the Chamber on 22nd June 1989.

* **Accomplishment of the Internal Market**

Mr. HERMAN has published five reports concerning the accomplishment of the Internal Market :

- . the White Paper by the Commission (3 April 1987) [Doc. Ch. 20-850/1-86/87]
- . the lessons of the past (10 October 1987) [Doc. Ch. 20-850/2-86/87]
- . the White Paper and the Belgian banking sector (published 6 November 1987 and presented to the press on 15th March 1988). [Doc. Ch. 20-850/3-86/87]
- . a resolution was adopted by the Chamber on 22nd June 1989. [Doc. Ch. 20-845/4-88/89]
- . the accomplishment of the Internal Market and the Belgian Insurance Sector.
This report, together with a draft resolution were published on 13th June 1989. The draft resolution was adopted by the Chamber on 22nd June 1989. [Doc. Ch. 20-845/3-88/89].
- . the accomplishment of the Internal Market and the Belgian Telecommunication Sector.
The report and draft resolution were published on 13th June 1989 and adopted by the Chamber on 26th October 1989. [Doc. Ch. 20-845/2-88/89].

* **European Union and a Constituent European Parliament**

A report and draft resolution (rapporteur : Mr. VAN WAMBEKE) and a supplementary report were published on 10th March and 13th April 1989 respectively. [Doc. Ch. 20-728-88/89].
A draft resolution was adopted by the Chamber on 27th April 1989.

* **Reinforcement of Parliamentary Control on European Integration**

A report and a draft recommendation (rapporteur : Mr. S. DE RAET and Ms. M.-P. KESTELIJN-SIERENS) were published on 4th July 1990 and adopted by the Chamber on 12th July 1990 (following the first Conference of Parliamentary Committees specialising in European Affairs, Paris 16-17th November 1989). [Doc. Ch. 20-1251/1-89/90].

* Interparliamentary Conference of Committees specialising in European Affairs - Cork, Ireland, 10-11 May 1990

A report by Mr MAHIEU was published on 4th July 1990. [Doc. Ch. 20-1252-89/90].

* Interparliamentary Conference of Committees specialising in European Affairs - Rome, 1 and 2 October 1990

The report of this conference was published in Annex III of the report concerning the Belgian memorandum drawn up with a view to the Conference of EC Parliaments (see below) (rapporteurs: Mr Van Wambeke and Mr Van der Maelen).

* Conference of Parliaments of the European Community, Rome, from 27 to 30 November 1990

- A report concerning the Belgian memorandum [Doc. 1350/1-90/91 (House) and 1112/1(1989-1990) (Senate)], drawn up with a view to the Conference and a debate on the future of Europe (plenary sitting of the House, 22 November 1990) also in preparation for this Conference, resulted in a resolution adopted in plenary sitting on 22 November 1990 [Doc. -1362/1 to 3-90/91].
- The report following up the Conference was tabled by Mr Van der Maelen for the House and Mr Dehousse for the Senate and was published on 15 January 1991. It contains the final Declaration adopted by the Conference [Doc. 1427/1-90/91 (House); 1199-1(1990-1991) (Senate)].

* Interparliamentary Conference of Committees specialising in European Affairs - Luxembourg, 6 and 7 May 1991

A report was published on 15 July 1991 (rapporteurs: Mrs Maes and Mr Van der Maelen) [Doc. Ch. -1714/1-90/91].

* Intergovernmental Conferences on European Political Union and Economic and Monetary Union

With a view to the European Council meeting in Luxembourg (28 and 29 June 1991), a report on the two Intergovernmental Conferences was published on 21 June 1991. The rapporteurs were Mrs Kestelijn-Sierens, Mr Simons, Mr Van der Maelen and Mr De Gucht (EP). A motion for a resolution was adopted by the House on 27 June 1991 [Doc. Ch. -1668-90/91].

BELGIUM

SENAAT

SENAT

1. Name

Adviescomité voor Europese aangelegenheden/Comité d'Avis de Questions européennes.

(Advisory Committee on European Questions).

2. Set up on

29 March 1990.

An article 62 bis was inserted in the Rules of Procedure of the Senate.

3. Composition

22 Members of the Senate.

In view of joint meetings with the Advisory Committee of the Chamber a contact group of 10 to 11 Members may be appointed by the Committee.

4. Appointment of Members

At the beginning of each legislature, in proportion to the strength of political groups.

5. Chairmanship

The Committee appoints a President, a first Vice-President and a second Vice-President from amongst its Members.

6. Participation of Belgian Members of the European Parliament

Members of the European Parliament, elected in Belgium, are invited to participate in the works of the Committee but are not entitled to vote.

7. Competences

The Committee's terms of reference are to deliver opinions on European questions either upon request from the President or from a standing committee of the Senate.

At least once a year, the Committee reports to the Assembly on the state of progress of the translation of European legislation into national legislation.

8. Relations with other bodies of the national Parliament

Motions for resolutions and opinions issued by the Advisory Committee are submitted, either directly to the plenary assembly or to the standing committees asking for an opinion. Common meetings with the Advisory Committee of the Chamber of Representatives may take place.

9. Relations with the national Government

As part of its work, the Committee regularly summons Members of the Government and expects to be kept informed of any draft directive on which the government may be consulted.

10. Relations with the European Parliament

11. Relations with other Community Institutions

It is the wish of the Committee to maintain appropriate relations with the European Parliament and its specialised bodies, and with other Community Institutions such as the Council, the Commission and the Economic and Social Committee.

12. Other comments

None.

13. Frequency of meetings

As required, with an average of one meeting every three weeks.

14. Reports/other publications

The publications and documents produced by the committee may be limited for the sole internal use of the committee (for example, the report on 'COSAC' meetings) or forwarded to the plenary. In the latter case, this involves public documents which are systematically communicated to other bodies specialising in Community affairs.

During the 1990-91 session, two documents were published in this way:

- Doc. No. 1199-1 (1990-1991) (Senate)
Report on the Conference of the Parliaments of the European Community
(Rome, 27-30 November 1990)
- Doc. No. 1420-1 (1990-1991)
Report concerning the activities of the Advisory Committee by
Mr Dehousse.

15. Secretariat

Mr Herman DE FRAYE
Sénat
Service des Relations externes
Place de la Nation 1
B-1000 BRUXELLES
Tel. : (2) 515 82 61
Telefax : (2) 513 28 35

DENMARK

FOLKETING

1. Name

Markedsudvalget.
(EEC-Committee).

2. Set up on

October 11, 1972 (Law No. 447).

3. Composition

17 Members and 11 alternate Members.

4. Appointment of Members

At the beginning of each parliamentary term Members are appointed by the political groups in proportion to their strength in the Folketing.

5. Chairmanship

The Committee elects the Chairman at the beginning of each parliamentary term.

6. Participation of Danish Members of the European Parliament

The Danish Members of the European Parliament cannot attend the Committee meetings, unless they also are Members of the Folketing and as such elected as Members of the EEC-Committee.

7. Competences

In order to enable the Folketing to exert the greatest possible influence on Community policy, the Government shall inform the EEC-Committee of Council proposals which upon their adoption will become directly applicable in Denmark or which require parliamentary action for their implementation.

Furthermore the Government must consult the EEC-Committee on all Community policy questions of major importance in order that consideration be given both to the influence of the Folketing and to the Government's freedom of action in negotiations. If the majority of the Committee is not opposed to the Government's stance the Government negotiates on this basis.

If during negotiations in the Council a compromise is put forward which obliges the Government to differ markedly from its original stance the Committee must be reconvened before the Government can give its final acceptance.

The Government regularly submits a list of Community proposals on legislative acts. A copy of each proposal is forwarded to the Committee including information sheets giving a summary.

Over the years a practice has developed whereby the Government prior to each Council meeting presents all the items on the Council's agenda for discussion in the Committee.

The Government submits written reports to the Committee of all Council meetings.

The Committee may submit written questions to the Government on all Community issues.

8. Relations with other bodies of the national Parliament

The EEC-Committee may submit proposals to one of the other standing committees demanding the opinion of this Committee on the proposal. This is only done on a regular basis prior to Council meetings on environment.

9. Relations with the national Government

See under "Competences".

10. Relations with the European Parliament

The EEC-Committee coordinates all meetings between the Folketing and European Parliament committees. Members of the EEC-Committee often take part in such meetings along with Members of other Folketing committees. Smaller delegations (normally 2 or 3 Members) participate in conferences held by the committees of the European Parliament.

11. Relations with other Community Institutions

Through its secretariat, the Committee is in close contact with the Commission and the European Parliament and receives information from the Economic and Social Committee and the Court of Justice.

12. Other comments

Every second year the Committee visits Community Institutions for 3-4 day meetings with Commissioners, Members of Parliament and high ranking officials in order to discuss current Community affairs.

13. Frequency of meetings

Normally meets once a week (on Friday morning) except in August.

14. Reports/other publications

Apart from the minutes of the meetings, which remain confidential, there is no regular publication. From time to time, reports are drawn up, as and when necessary. Since the committee was established, some twenty or so reports have been published.

15. Secretariat

Mr Jens RUBENHAGEN
Head of the EEC-Secretariat
Folketinget
DK-1240 KOBENHAVN K

Tel. : (33) 37 36 01
Telefax : (33) 91 03 77

GERMANY

BUNDESTAG

1. Name

EG-Ausschuss.
(Committee on European Affairs).

2. Set up on

Set up on 4 September 1991.

3. Composition

44 full Members (33 members of the Bundestag, 11 German members or observers of the European Parliament).
44 substitute Members.

Members or substitutes are also members of other committees. This ensures the necessary degree of specialist knowledge for considering Community proposals within the committee which constitutes a point of overlap.

4. Appointment of Members

Members are appointed by their political groups in accordance with their relative numerical strength.

German members/observers of the European Parliament are appointed by the President of the Bundestag on a proposal of the political groups of the parties from which they were elected to the European Parliament. Appointments are renewable after each European Parliament election and are valid until the end of the Bundestag's period of office.

5. Chairmanship

The chair is taken by a political group in accordance with the system applied to committees. The Chairman is appointed by the committee.

6. Participation of German Members of the European Parliament

On 5 November 1987 (Doc. 11/927), the Bundestag, following the recommendation of the Committee on the Verification of Credentials and Immunities and the Rules of Procedure, adopted a provisional special arrangement for the former sub-committee for European Community Affairs

and the Committee on Foreign Affairs without amending the Rules of Procedure of the Bundestag (GOBT) pursuant to Section 126 GOBT. This arrangement is still in force and grants persons who are not members of the Bundestag the right to attend the committee's meetings.

They are entitled to suggest subjects for discussion in committee and to convey information and make statements during the discussions, but do not have the right to vote or to put forward motions.

7. Competences

The committee is assumed to have competence over European affairs when no other specialist committee is clearly competent in a matter such as:

- amendments to treaties,
- institutional affairs of the Community,
- cooperation with the European Parliament and with the parliaments of the Member States,
- consideration of Community proposals.

This embraces the right to be informed by the federal government of all proposals with a European dimension. In particular, in the run-up to European Councils, closer scrutiny of government action is exercised.

8. Relations with other bodies of the national Parliament

The findings of the committee may be communicated to other committees or the plenary.

9. Relations with the national Government

The Minister of Foreign Affairs is the committee's preferred interlocutor.

10. Relations with the European Parliament

In addition to participation by German MEPs, there are good working contacts at administrative level.

11. Relations with other Community Institutions

There are good working contacts with the Commission in Brussels and particularly with the commissioners and their services.

12. Other comments

In addition to the Committee on European Affairs, there are sub-committees on European Affairs of the Committee on Budgets and the Legal and Economic Affairs Committees. Their activities terminate with the end of each

legislature. These sub-committees are re-appointed at the beginning of each legislature.

The exceptional arrangements for the participation of MEPs, as recommended by the Committee on the Verification of Credentials, Immunities and the Rules of Procedure, apply only to the Committee on European Affairs.

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The EG-Ausschuss replaces the sub-committee of the Committee on Foreign Affairs for European matters (June 1987-September 1991) and the Europa-Kommission (1984-1987).

13. Frequency of meetings

Once a week when the Bundestag is meeting.

14. Reports/other publications

Apart from the minutes of meetings, which remain confidential, there is no other regular publication.

15. Secretariat

Mr Eberhard SCHOOF
Deutscher Bundestag
Adenauerallee 209
D-5300 BONN 1

Tel. : (0228) 16 26 50/ 48 96
Telefax : (0228) 86 150

GERMANY

BUNDESRAT

1. Name

Ausschuß für Fragen der Europäischen Gemeinschaften.
(Committee for European Community Affairs).

2. Set up on

Bundesrat decision of 20 December 1957.

3. Composition

Until October 1990, the Committee had 17 ordinary Members. Each of the eleven Länder of the Federal Republic (from before 3rd October 1990) had a vote in the Committee and delegated one Member of the Federal Council to it; four Länder delegated a second Member of the Federal Council and one Land two further Members. The Land Governments also appointed representatives (civil servants), who could deputize for the Members of the Federal Council in individual cases.

Since mid-November 1990, 5 Members coming from the 5 new Länder (the old GDR) have been added.

4. Appointment of Members

Committee Members are appointed and recalled by decision of each State Government.

5. Chairmanship

The Committee Chairman is elected for a one-year period (1 November - 31 October) by the Bundesrat after consulting the Committee. There is an agreement between the Länder to re-elect the same Chairman.

6. Participation of German Members of the European Parliament

No provision has been made for participation by German Members. Under the Rules of Procedure of the Bundesrat, however, it is possible for MEPs to take part in Committee meetings in individual cases.

7. Competences

The Committee is responsible for considering all European Community documents (Commission proposals for regulations, directives, decisions of

the Council; communications and reports from the Commission, etc.) which have to be referred to the Federal Council by the Federal Government under the rules on ratification with regard to the Treaties of Rome and the Single European Act. The Committee considers the documents and the recommendations for decisions by the relevant committees from an integration policy point of view. It coordinates the recommendations of the committees involved and itself submits recommendations to the Federal Council for an opinion on the documents for the Federal Government. Where the Federal Government departs from an opinion of the Federal Council on an exclusively legislative matter relating to the Länder in negotiations in European Community bodies, it must inform the Federal Council of the principal reasons for this. The Federal Government is bound by the same duty to provide information in other cases where it does not follow the Federal Council's opinion, if the Federal Council so requests.

The Committee also receives progress reports on integration from the Federal Government and discusses the activities of the Community bodies and the policy of the Federal Government.

8. Relations with other bodies of the national Parliament

The Committee's cooperation with other bodies of the Federal Council is governed by the Rules of Procedure. Apart from the links provided for in the Rules of Procedure, the European Communities Committee has no special relations with other bodies of the Federal Council. However, joint meetings with other committees are occasionally held.

9. Relations with the national Government

See paragraph 7 above under "Competences". In accordance with Article 53 of the Basic Law, Members of the Federal Government have the right, and if they are invited, the duty to take part in the work of the Committee.

10. Relations with the European Parliament

The Committee has had links with the European Parliament for a number of years. The first joint meeting with MEPs took place in 1978 in Strasbourg. After the first direct European elections, it was decided to maintain political contact between the Bundesrat and the EP primarily and increasingly through the Committee on EC Affairs. In the following years irregular contacts and joint committee meetings have taken place, roughly once a year.

11. Relations with other Community Institutions

There are no institutionalised relations between the Committee and the EC Commission. Since 1967 there have been occasional - and more recently annual - contacts and meetings with Commission officials.

12. Other comments

None.

13. Frequency of meetings

The Committee meets regularly once every three weeks to prepare for the decisions of the Federal Council in plenary sitting.

In certain cases - for example, to hear the reports of the Federal Government on a meeting of the European Council - or in urgent cases, namely to prepare meetings of the Chamber for the scrutiny of documents of the European Community - extraordinary meetings are held.

14. Reports/other publications

Apart from the minutes of meetings, which remain confidential, there is no other regular publication.

15. Secretariat

Mr Günter JASPERT
Ministerialdirigent
Bundesrat
Görresstraße 15
D-5300 BONN 1

Tel. : (0228) 16 41 38
Telefax : (0228) 16 91 01

GERMANY

BUNDESRAT

1. Name

Kammer für Vorlagen der Europäischen Gemeinschaften.
(Chamber for the scrutiny of documents of the European Communities).

2. Set up on

Decision of the Federal Council of 10 June 1988.

3. Composition

Each of the eleven Länder of the Federal Republic from before October 1990 delegated one Member to the European Communities Chamber but could also appoint any number of substitute Members from Members of the Federal Council. The number of votes for each Land was governed - as in the Federal Council in plenary sitting - by Article 51(2) of the Basic Law, and thus depended on the population of the Land in question (up to 2 million, 3, up to 6 million, 4, thereafter 5 votes).

Since mid-November 1990, 5 Members coming from the 5 new Länder (the old GDR) have been added.

4. Appointment of Members

The appointment and recall of Members of the European Communities Chamber is by decision of the respective State governments.

5. Chairmanship

The Chairman and the three Vice-Chairmen are elected by the Bundesrat (without debate) for one year from among its Members.

Under an agreement between the Länder, the Chairman must come from the same Land as the current President of the Federal Council, and the Vice-Chairmen from the same Länder as the three Vice-Presidents of the Federal Council.

6. Participation of German Members of the European Parliament

There is no provision for participation by German MEPs in the work of the European Communities Chamber. Under the Rules of Procedure of the Federal Council, the Chairman may allow them to participate in the discussions of the European Communities Chamber.

7. Competences

The brief of the European Communities Chamber is to discuss and take decisions on urgent or confidential documents concerning measures to be taken under the auspices of the European Communities. This includes sending representatives to negotiations in European Community bodies where the documents concern exclusively legislative matters or the vital interests of the Länder.

Decisions of the European Communities Chamber are equivalent to decisions of the Federal Council. It can thus refer its opinions directly to the Federal Government.

8. Relations with other bodies of the national Parliament

In urgent cases, and in the case of confidential documents, the European Communities Chamber acts in the place of the Federal Council in plenary sitting which, however, may also discuss and decide on the matter itself, pending the former's decision.

As a rule, preparations for its meetings are in committee. However, in extremely urgent cases, it may take decisions even without recommendations from the committees.

9. Relations with the national Government

See under 'Competences'. As in the Federal Council in plenary sitting, Members of the Federal Government and State Secretaries are entitled, and, on request, obliged to take part in the discussions of the European Communities Chamber.

10. Relations with the European Parliament

At present, the European Communities Chamber has no specific relations with the European Parliament. Matters of mutual interest are discussed in the course of contacts between the Federal Council or its European Communities Committee and the European Parliament.

11. Relations with other Community Institutions

There are at present no such relations.

12. Other comments

None.

13. Frequency of meetings

The first meeting of the European Communities Chamber took place on 14 September 1988. As it does not meet regularly, but is only convened when it is necessary to consult it, no information can be given regarding the frequency of meetings.

14. Reports/other publications

Not specified.

15. Secretariat

Mr Günter JASPERT
Ministerialdirigent
Bundesrat
Görresstraße
D-5300 BONN 1

Tel. : (0228) 16 41 38
Telefax : (0228) 16 91 01

GREECE

VOULI TON ELLINON

1. Name

Epitropi Evropaikon Kinotikon Ypothesseon.
(Committee on European Community Affairs).

2. Set up on

13 June 1990.

3. Composition

25 Members, of which 10 are Greek Members of the European Parliament.

4. Appointment of Members

The President of the Chamber determines the constitution of the Committee at the beginning of each session.

5. Chairmanship

The Committee is chaired by one of the Vice-Chairmen appointed by the President of the Chamber. The Bureau of the Committee consists of the Chairman, 2 Vice-Chairmen (one a Member of the Chamber and the other a Member of the European Parliament) and a secretary. The Vice-Chairmen and the secretary are elected by the Committee Members.

6. Participation of Greek Members of the European Parliament

The national Members and the MEPs who are Members of the Committee have the same rights and duties concerning speaking and voting at Committee meetings.

7. Competences

The Committee's task is to monitor continuously European Community affairs and actions taken by the Greek authorities and to report on these matters to Parliament and the Government.

The Committee is particularly charged with :

- Institutional questions concerning the European Community ;
- Cooperation between the Greek Parliament and the European Parliament ;

- Matters of Community policies and official Community texts (proposed regulations, directives, decisions, etc.) which the Greek Government has to submit to the Chamber for approval ;
- Decisions by the Standing and 'ad hoc' Committees of the Parliament on matters relating to European integration policy.

The Committee considers matters falling within its competence at the initiative of its Chairman and Members.

8. Relations with other bodies of the national Parliament

The President of the Chamber can seize the Committee of any matter the consideration of which he judges useful or which is submitted to him by the permanent and 'ad hoc' committees of the Chamber or by any deputy (national or MEP).

Reports made by the Committee are presented to the Chamber and submitted, according to the subject matter, to the competent standing committee or to the plenary assembly.

9. Relations with the national Government

If so requested by the Government, the Committee, which normally meets at the summons of its Chairman, is obliged to meet in order to consider a specific matter falling within its competence. The Government informs the Committee of all drafts relating to Community policy as well as proposals of the Council of Ministers on the various items on the agenda.

10. Relations with the European Parliament

See point 6.

11. Relations with other Community Institutions

None, owing to the recent appointment of the Committee.

12. Other comments

The provisions of the Chamber's Rules of Procedure relating to the organisation and functioning of standing committees apply by analogy to the Committee unless otherwise provided for by the decision of 13 June 1990.

13. Frequency of meetings

Not provided for.

14. Reports/other publications

Not provided for.

15. Secretariat

The secretariat is provided by the Directorate for International Relations.

Mr Nicolas VLACHOS
Vouli ton Ellinon
Syntagma
GR-10021 ATHINAI

Tel. : (1) 32 38 434 - 32 39 413
Telefax : (1) 32 38 943

SPAIN

CONGRESO DE LOS DIPUTADOS

SENADO

1. Name

Comisión Mixta para las Comunidades Europeas.
(Joint Committee on the European Communities).

2. Set up on

27 December 1985 (Law 47/1985). The structure of the Joint Committee was changed by Law 18/1988 of 1 July 1988.

3. Composition

The number of Members (deputies and senators) is established by the bureau of the two Houses, at a joint sitting at the beginning of each parliament. When it was first set up, the Joint Committee had 9 Members from the Congreso and six from the Senado. At present, it has 37 Members (including the Chairman), 21 deputies and 16 senators.

4. Appointment of Members

At the beginning of each legislature, by the bureaux of the two Houses. All the parliamentary groups and the "agrupaciones" must be represented.

5. Chairmanship

The Joint Committee is chaired by the President of the Congreso or by a Member (deputy or senator) designated by him. In fact, the Committee has always been chaired by the first Vice-President of the Congreso.

6. Participation of Spanish Members of the European Parliament

Law 18/1988 provides for the possibility to hold meetings attended by Spanish Members of the European Parliament. Several joint meetings have already taken place.

7. Competences

Law 18/1988 gives the Joint Committee the following rights and duties :

- to take note of published legislative decrees issued in pursuance of secondary Community Law (Article 82,6 of the Spanish Constitution) ;

- to be informed by the Government of legislative proposals of the European Communities relating to matters on which the Spanish Parliament has reserved the right to legislate ;
- to receive from the Government all information on the activities of the Community institutions relating to Spain's Membership of the EC ;
- to be informed by the Government of the policy pursued within the Communities and of the decisions taken and agreements concluded by the Council of Ministers of the EC ;
- to draw up reports on proposals for regulations, directives or decisions submitted to the Council by the Commission of the EC.

8. Relations with other bodies of the national Parliament

Law 18/1988 provides that the Joint Committee, in accordance with the regulations of each House, may submit to the bureaux of the Congreso and the Senado reports on any matter falling within its terms of reference. Since it was first set up, the Joint Committee has forwarded, rationae materiae, its conclusions to the relevant parliamentary committees.

9. Relations with the national Government

See under "Competences". In fact, almost all of the activities of the Joint Committee consist in questioning and hearing Members of the Government and senior high ranking public officials and officials of para-state bodies.

10. Relations with the European Parliament

Law 18/1988 provides for cooperation with the bodies of the EP. Already in April 1988, a delegation of the Joint Committee visited the EP in Strasbourg (talks with the President and a number of committees) and again in January 1989. Also in January 1989, the Joint Committee met the Committee on Institutional Affairs of the EP in Madrid.

11. Relations with other Community Institutions

Unspecified.

12. Other comments

It is to be noted that some "Autonomous Regions" (e.g. : the Basque Country, Canary Islands) have set up in their regional parliaments bodies specialising in European affairs.

13. Frequency of meetings

On average one meeting per month, at irregular intervals. However, in June 1990, the Joint Committee set up three sub-committees ("ponencias"): (1) for "Adhesion Treaty and Single European Act"; (2) for "Economic and Monetary Union" and (3) for "Political Union". These meet several times per month to receive oral information from various Members of the Government on their relevant political Community sectors. The frequency of these meetings has a tendency to increase.

14. Reports/other publications

The committee draws up, at each meeting, a report on its activities which is forwarded to the plenary.

15. Secretariat

Mr Mariano DARANAS PELAEZ
Letrado de la Comisión Mixta
para las Comunidades Europeas
Congreso de los Diputados
Floridablanca, s/n
E-28014 MADRID

Tel. : (1) 42 95 193 (Ext. 335)
Telefax : (1) 42 99 627

FRANCE

ASSEMBLEE NATIONALE

SENAT

1. **Name**

Délégation de l'Assemblée Nationale (du Sénat) pour les Communautés européennes. (Delegation of the National Assembly (of the Senate) for the European Communities).

2. **Set up on**

6 July 1979, by Law No. 79-564 and 10 May 1990, by Law No. 90-385 amending Order No. 581100 of 17 November 1958 on the functioning of the parliamentary assemblies.

3. **Composition**

In accordance with Law No. 90-385 of 10 Mai 1990, 36 Members in each assembly.

4. **Appointment of Members**

Appointed from within each House in such numbers as to reflect the relative importance of the political groups in each Chamber and to ensure a balanced representation of the standing committees.

The Delegation of the National Assembly is appointed at the beginning of the life of each Parliament to serve for its duration.

The Delegation of the Senate is appointed after each partial re-election of that House.

The term of office of delegates is co-terminous with their terms as Members of Parliament.

5. **Chairmanship**

The delegation of each House is chaired by a Chairman elected from among its Members.

6. Participation of French Members of the European Parliament

Deputies or senators elected to the European Parliament may belong to either delegation.

The two delegations may invite French Members of the European Parliament to participate, with a consultative voice, in their work.

7. Competences

The function of the parliamentary delegations for the European Communities is to keep the respective Houses informed of the activities carried out by the European Community bodies in pursuance of the Treaties of 18 April 1951 and 25 March 1957, of the Single European Act of 17 and 28 February 1986 and subsequent acts.

For this purpose, the Government forwards to the delegations, immediately after transmission to the Council of the European Communities, draft directives and regulations and other Community acts, as well as any necessary document produced by the various European Community bodies. The Government also keeps the delegations informed on negotiations underway.

The delegations examine the draft directives, regulations and other Community acts prior to their adoption by the Council of the European Communities.

8. Relations with other bodies of the national Parliament

The delegations may be consulted by a special or standing committee on any Community act or draft act, or any draft legislative text on subjects covered by the Communities.

The delegations refer the information and communications received from the bureau of each assembly to the appropriate parliamentary committees. They may, if appropriate, join their analyses with or without conclusions. These reports are published in a specific form determined by the bureau of each assembly (information reports).

9. Relations with the national Government

The delegations may request to have hearings with ministers.

At regular intervals, and at least once per semester, the two delegations hold a joint hearing with the Minister for European Affairs. The two delegations also hold hearings with other ministers.

10. Relations with the European Parliament

The delegations may request to have hearings with representatives of the European Parliament. In addition, during visits in Strasbourg, they contact the committees of the European Parliament and meet representatives of the various political groups. Hearing of Members of the European Parliament is also a current practice.

11. Relations with other Community Institutions

The delegations may request to have hearings with representatives of the Community bodies.

12. Other comments

None.

13. Frequency of meetings

The Delegation of the National Assembly meets once a week when the assembly is sitting. It also holds meetings when the assembly is not sitting.

The Delegation of the Senate meets twice a month during the sittings.

The delegations may decide to hold joint meetings.

14. Reports/other publications

The Delegation of the National Assembly publishes information reports (about twenty per year). It issues a press release at the end of each of its meetings. The minutes of its proceedings are published in the Bulletin of the committees of the National Assembly. The delegation also publishes, about twice per month, a 'selection of European documents' the aim of which is to enable members to apprise themselves quickly of the main aspects of the activities and decisions of the Community Institutions.

The Delegation of the Senate adopts information reports to which are occasionally attached opinions delivered on behalf of this delegation. It publishes the minutes of its meetings in the Bulletin of the committees of the Senate.

The secretariat of the Delegation of the Senate has established a database on its proceedings which is accessible by Minitel. A corresponding table, printed out by computer, enables research to be carried out using a thematic index for conclusions and reports, a subject index and a chronological index of conclusions.

15. Secretariat

Delegation of the National Assembly

Mr Daniel HOCHEDÉZ
Assemblée Nationale
Service de la Documentation étrangère
Palais Bourbon
126, rue de l'Université
F-75355 PARIS

Tel. : (1) 40 63 86 17
Telefax : (1) 40 63 86 46

Delegation of the Senate

Mr Christian OUDIN
Sénat
Service des Affaires
européennes
Palais du Luxembourg
15, rue de Vaugirard
F-75291 PARIS Cedex 06

Tel. : (1) 42 34 26 31
Telefax : (1) 42 34 32 92

IRELAND

DAIL EIREANN

SEANAD EIREANN

1. Name

Joint Committee on the Secondary Legislation of the European Communities.

2. Set up on

The present Joint Committee was set up by Order of the Dáil on 5 December 1989 and by Order of the Seanad on 6 December 1989. The first Joint Committee was originally set up by Orders of the Dáil and Seanad in 1973.

3. Composition

25 Members; 18 from the Dáil and 7 from the Seanad.

4. Appointment of Members

At the beginning of each new Parliament, Members are appointed by the political groups in proportion to their numerical strength in each Chamber.

5. Chairmanship

The Joint Committee elects a Chairman prior to the commencement of business at its first meeting who has, to date, been a Member of the leading opposition party.

6. Participation of Irish Members of the European Parliament

Under the Terms of Reference of the Joint Committee, Irish MEPs who are also Members of either the Dáil or Seanad may be notified of meetings and allowed to attend and take part in proceedings without having a right to vote.

7. Competences

The Joint Committee may examine:

- (i) such programmes and guidelines prepared by the Commission of the European Communities as a basis for possible legislative action and such drafts of regulations, directives, decisions, recommendations and opinions of the Council of Ministers proposed by the Commission,

- (ii) such acts of the institutions of the European Communities,
- (iii) such regulations under the European Communities Act, 1972 (No. 27 of 1972), and
- (iv) such other instruments made under statute and necessitated by the obligations of membership of the European Communities

as it selects and may report thereon to both Houses of the Oireachtas.

The Joint Committee is enjoined also under its Terms of Reference to examine the question of dual membership of Dáil Éireann or Seanad Éireann and the European Parliament and to consider the relations between the Irish representatives in the European Parliament and Dáil Éireann and Seanad Éireann and to report thereon to both Chambers of the Oireachtas.

The Joint Committee is empowered to examine all domestic statutory instruments made under the Irish European Communities Act, 1977 and under other Irish statutes which implement Community obligations under the Irish European Communities (Amendment) Act, 1973. Statutory instruments may be annulled by Resolution of either House within twelve months but only if the Joint Committee so recommends.

8. Relations with other bodies of the national Parliament

Reports are laid before both Houses. From the large volume of proposals for Community legislation the Joint Committee selects texts for preliminary examination by 4 Sub-committees with defined areas of responsibility¹. The Sub-committees take evidence and frequently discuss matters with Government Departments. But, unlike the Joint Committee, they sit in private. They can seek the assistance of specialist advisers. The Joint Committee holds discussions in public session and adopts reports which are placed before both Houses and published.

9. Relations with the national Government

Government Ministers have appeared before the Joint Committee. Assistance is provided by Government Departments to the Joint Committee by the attendance of civil servants at meetings to give orally to Members factual non-confidential information. The Government Department concerned, if so requested, furnishes explanatory memoranda on Community proposals and legislation.

¹ The four Sub-Committees deal with :

- A. Economic, Commercial and Financial Affairs
- B. Social, Environmental and Miscellaneous Matters
- C. Agriculture and Fisheries Matters
- D. Statutory Instruments and Legal Affairs

Copies of each Regulation made under the Irish European Communities Act, 1973 and of every other instrument made under a statute arising from obligations as Member State of the European Communities are forwarded for examination by the Joint Committee.

10. Relations with the European Parliament

See point 6. Members of the European Parliament have attended and participated in meetings and the views of individual MEPs have been sought occasionally on selected topics. Delegations from the Joint Committee visit the European Parliament; the most recent being in the early months of 1992.

11. Relations with other Community Institutions

Commission officials and Commissioners have appeared before the Joint Committee.

Delegations from the Joint Committee visit the Commission ; the most recent visit being in 1992.

12. Other comments

None.

13. Frequency of meetings

Once a month, on average, with Sub-Committees meeting every fortnight.

14. Reports/other publications

The current joint committee has published a dozen or so reports on different subjects of Community interest.

15. Secretariat

Mr Patrick JUDGE
Houses of the Oireachtas
Leinster House
IRL-DUBLIN 2

Tel. : (1) 77 74 33 - (1) 78 99 11
Telefax : (1) 78 55 34

ITALY

CAMERA DEI DEPUTATI

1. Name

Commissione speciale per le politiche comunitarie.
(Special Committee for Community policies).

2. Set up on

10 October 1990.

3. Composition

51 Members.

4. Appointment of Members

They are appointed by the Chairman of the Camera, on proposal from the political groups, so as to assure proportional representation. Beginning with the next legislative elections, Members will be appointed at the beginning of each legislature.

5. Chairmanship

The Chairman is elected from among the Committee members.

6. Participation of Italian Members of the European Parliament

Not officially specified. However, at the beginning and at the end of each semester of the European Council Presidency, a meeting with a delegation of EP Italian Members may take place. Such a delegation must be composed exclusively of Italian Euro-deputies being either Members of the EP Bureau, or of the bureau of one of the EP committees or of the bureau of one of the EP political groups.

7. Competences

The Committee is competent for the examination of the draft annual "Legge comunitaria" (national), indicating the modalities and the calendar of the translation and application of Community directives in national legislation. Furthermore, it is competent to deliver opinions on all legislative texts concerning the implementation of Community regulations. Finally, the Committee thoroughly examines Government activity on Community matters.

8. Relations with other bodies of the national Parliament

See under "Competences".

9. Relations with the national Government

See under "Competences".

10. Relations with the European Parliament

Contacts are envisaged, along the lines of those established formerly by the Committee on Foreign and Community Affairs of the Camera.

With prior authorization of the President of the Chamber, the special committee may encourage meetings with Members of the European Parliament in small delegations or individually.

11. Relations with other Community Institutions

Comments of item 10 also apply here.

12. Other comments

The "Commissione affari esteri e comunitari", the name of which was modified at the beginning of the 10th legislature (July 1987) by the addition of the words "e comunitari", continues to be so called even after the creation of the "Commissione speciale per le politiche comunitarie". However, since 10th October 1990, it is the latter which is competent in the first place for following Community policies.

13. Frequency of meetings

Two or three times a week.

14. Reports/other publications

Not specified.

15. Secretariat

Mr Claudio CESAREO
Camera dei Deputati
Palazzo Montecitorio
I-00100 ROMA

Tel. : (6) 6760 3747
Telefax : (6) 6760 2556

ITALY

SENATO DELLA REPUBBLICA

1. Name

Giunta per gli Affari delle Comunità europee.
(Committee on European Affairs).

2. Set up on

17 July 1968.

3. Composition

24 Members.

4. Appointment of Members

These are appointed by the President of the Senate at the beginning of the life of each parliament from among names submitted by the groups, in such a way as to ensure that the political groups are proportionately represented.

5. Chairmanship

The Chairman is elected from within the Committee.

6. Participation of Italian Members of the European Parliament

The Committee may invite Italian Members of the EP to provide information and even to attend one of its meetings for that purpose. Only one representative of each political group of the EP, chosen by common agreement between the Italian Members of the groups and the Chairman of the Committee, may participate in its meetings.

7. Competences

The Committee on European Affairs has general responsibility for matters directly connected with the activities of the European Communities and the implementation of Community agreements.

The Committee is responsible for delivering an opinion or formulating draft legislative proposals relating to the application of the Treaties and amendments and additions, on legislative drafts relating to the implementation of Community measures and, in general, on all bills which might be incompatible with Community legislation.

At the request of the Government or of eight Senators, the Committee on European Affairs may decide that a debate, to be attended by the minister responsible, should be held in relation to proposals by the Commission of the EC published in the Official Journal of the EC or with regard to matters relating to agreements of the Communities or to the activities of the latter and their organs.

The Committee on European Affairs considers the reports on the Communities submitted by the Government and draws up its own report for the House.

Resolutions adopted by the European Parliament and decisions adopted by international assemblies to which the Italian Parliament sends delegations which are formally sent to the Senate for information are forwarded by the President after notification to the Assembly, to the committees responsible for the matter in question or, if they relate to the Community institutions or the Community's general policy, to the Committee on European Affairs. If one of those decides to initiate a debate on the resolutions or decisions referred to above or on related matters, the committee responsible requests, through the President of the Senate, the third Standing Committee and the Committee on European Affairs to deliver opinions. Vice-versa, the Committee on European Affairs may request, through the President of the Senate, the opinion of the first and third Standing Committees.

For the purpose of delivering a written opinion on the advisability of any follow-up measures by Parliament or the Government, the committees consider the legislative acts coming from the Council and the Commission of the EC or the proposals for such acts published in the OJ of the EC or notified by the Government to the Senate; the information reports drawn up by the Government on Community procedures for the adoption of proposals and the Government's reports on the conformity of the domestic legislation in force with the provisions of Community legislation. The third Standing Committee and the Committee on European Affairs must be asked to deliver opinions, which are attached to the document drawn up by the committees responsible.

The committees and the Committee on European Affairs may adopt resolutions indicating the guidelines of the Community policy to be followed by Italy.

The Committee on European Affairs also delivers opinions on the 'economic and financial programming document' and on the draft budget.

N.B. :1st Standing Committee : Constitutional Affairs
3rd Standing Committee : Foreign Affairs

8. Relations with other bodies of the national Parliament

See under 'Competences'.

9. Relations with the national Government

See under 'Competences'.

10. Relations with the European Parliament

Delegations from the Giunta regularly meet Members of the European Parliament. Following the European Council meeting in Maastricht (December 1991), a meeting was held with the EP's Committee on Institutional Affairs in Brussels.

11. Relations with other Community Institutions

See under 'Competences'.

12. Other comments

None.

13. Frequency of meetings

From the beginning of the second half of 1987 until December 1991, the Giunta held 72 plenary meetings and 78 meetings of its Advisory Committee.

14. Reports/other publications

The Giunta draws up reports and resolutions, or presents its proposals on major subjects of Community interest. During the period 1990/1991, it published a dozen or so documents dealing particularly with the proceedings of the Intergovernmental Conferences on EMU and PU.

15. Secretariat

Ms Rossella SALARI
Senato della Repubblica
Largo dei Chiavari, 79
I-00100 ROMA

Tel. : (6) 6706 2891
Telefax : (6) 6865 635

LUXEMBOURG

CHAMBRE DES DEPUTES

1. Name

Commission des Affaires étrangères et communautaires.
(Committee on Foreign and Community Affairs).

2. Set up on

6 December 1989.
(by decision of the plenary assembly of the Chamber of Deputies).

3. Composition

11 Members of the Chamber. A Member absent at a meeting may be replaced by a Member of the same political group .

4. Appointment of Members

By the Chamber at the beginning of each parliamentary session on the proposal of the political groups and on the basis of proportional representation.

5. Chairmanship

The Chairman is elected from among the Committee's Members.

6. Participation of Luxemburgish Members of the European Parliament

Luxemburgish Members are invited to participate in the work of the Committee when European matters are on the agenda. They take part only in a consultative capacity.

7. Competences

The Committee is charged with examining draft laws concerning Community affairs and with preparing reports presented in plenary sittings.

Before and after each significant meeting of ministers at Community level the Committee is informed of matters on the agenda, political decisions proposed by the Luxemburgish Government and their repercussions at national level.

The Committee has the right to take into consideration any European matter which seems to it to be of particular importance, to summon experts and to draw up reports which could lead to public debate.

The Committee's proceedings and deliberations follow the provisions applicable to the standing committees of the Chamber.

8. Relations with other bodies of the national Parliament

The Chairman of the Committee takes an active part in the work of the Conference of Chairmen of standing committees and of the 'Commission de Travail' which considers the follow-up of Parliament's activities in the field of Community affairs.

9. Relations with the national Government

The Committee may invite Members of the Government to take part in its meetings to furnish information or in a consultative capacity.

10. Relations with the European Parliament

See item 6. Contacts with the European Parliament at administrative level.

11. Relations with other Community Institutions

Periodical contacts with Members of the Commission and cooperation with Commission officials especially named for this purpose.

12. Other comments

The Committee has the right of initiative. It can seize itself of any matter which it considers important, keep the public informed by press communiqués and it may submit to the Chamber's 'Commission de Travail' proposals for the organisation on an orientation debate or a debate of current interest.

It should be noted that this Committee is not, properly speaking, a new Committee but it arises from a change of the competences of the former Foreign Affairs Committee of the Chamber.

13. Frequency of meetings

The Committee itself decides when it should meet. They meet regularly before and after important meetings of ministers at Community level.

14. Reports/other publications

Two reports were drawn up for debate in the Chamber, prior to the Maastricht Summit (December 1991).

15. Secretariat

Ms Marianne WEYER
Chambre des Députés
19, rue du Marché-aux-Herbes
L-1728 LUXEMBOURG

Tel. : (352) 466 966 310
Telefax : (352) 46 53 29

THE NETHERLANDS

TWEEDE KAMER

1. Name

Vaste Commissie voor EG-Zaken.
(Standing Committee on European Affairs).

2. Set up on

9 October 1986.

3. Composition

26 permanent Members and 26 substitutes. All the groups can be represented on the Committee. The groups appoint, as far as possible, experts in the following fields : foreign affairs, economic affairs, finance, agriculture and fisheries, transport and public works, education and science, social affairs and employment, subsidized housing, regional development and the environment, welfare, public health and culture, justice and development cooperation.

4. Appointment of Members

The President of the Second Chamber appoints the permanent and substitute Members at the beginning of the life of each parliament, unless the Second Chamber decides otherwise.

5. Chairmanship

The Chairman and the Vice-Chairman of the Committee are appointed from among its Members.

6. Participation of Dutch Members of the European Parliament

The Committee reaches agreement with the Dutch Members of the European Parliament on how to maintain contact between those Members and the Second Chamber.

The Committee asked the Chamber's Committee on Working Methods whether it thought it possible for tripartite discussions to be held between the Committee, the Dutch Members of the European Parliament and the Minister or State Secretary concerned, prior to its oral consultations with the Government.

The Chamber's Committee on Working Methods advised against such a procedure on the grounds that it was inconsistent with 'the fact that the Members of the European Parliament no longer have a dual mandate and that to accept the procedure would be tantamount to departing from the instruments of public law'. Moreover, the Committee itself was of the opinion that all formal consultations with the Government should continue to be the preserve of the Members of the Second Chamber.

Be that as it may, the Committee holds regular discussions with the Dutch Members of the European Parliament.

7. Competences

At the stage when government policy is being prepared, and for the duration of the ensuing decision-making procedure within the European bodies, the Committee consults with the Minister of Foreign Affairs and his State Secretary and plays a coordinating role vis-à-vis the other standing committees. In this context, the Committee must take all appropriate action, brief those concerned on problems to which attention needs to be drawn, provide assistance and act as a mediator.

Monitoring the implementation of Community policy is the responsibility of the European Parliament. In this context, the Committee plays its coordinating role by following the activities of the European Parliament and ensuring that contacts are maintained with the relevant standing committees of the Second Chamber and that they receive the necessary information.

When it comes to assessing the implications of European policy for the policy of the Netherlands, the Committee may have to address itself to questions of substance if other standing committees of the Chamber wish to focus on certain specific aspect of European policy or if the matters to be considered fall within the terms of reference of two or more standing committees and accordingly call for a measure of harmonization.

A further task of the Committee is to maintain contacts with the EP and, in particular, with the Dutch Members of the EP, as well as with the committees of the parliaments of other Member States with special responsibility for matters relating to the Community.

Finally, the Committee ensures that each draft law forwarded to the Second Chamber by the Government contains an article describing the relationship between that draft law and Community legislation in the field concerned.

8. Relations with other bodies of the national Parliament

The Committee maintains relations with the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs. (Before October 1986, that Committee alone had responsibility for European affairs).

Its Chairman and Vice-Chairman hold occasional talks with the chairmen and vice-chairmen of the other committees on the European policy issues which the latter are required to consider.

9. Relations with the national Government

Consultation with the Foreign Affairs Ministers, the Secretaries of State for European Affairs, and other Members of the Government.

Before - and, where appropriate, after - meetings of the Council of Ministers and the European Council, consultation is established between, on the one hand, the Tweede Kamer, and, on the other hand, the Secretary of State for European Affairs, the Prime Minister and, on occasion, other interested Members of the Government. The coordinating function is subject to restriction in respect of certain political issues.

At least once a year, a wide-ranging consultation takes place with the Government in the form of an enlarged committee meeting or an oral discussion either followed or not followed by a debate in the House.

Consultation with the Government also covers the form and content of the detailed agendas of meetings of the Council of the European Communities and the date on which these are forwarded.

10. Relations with the European Parliament

The Committee closely follows the activities of the European Parliament and forwards information relating thereto to the other standing committees which are most directly concerned.

11. Relations with other Community Institutions

The Committee may forward applications to invite officials of the Commission of the European Communities to report or answer questions on certain aspects of European policy, or may itself take initiatives in this field. Such action would, however, be taken in consultation with the parliamentary committee concerned.

12. Other comments

A report entitled 'Evaluation of the Activities of the Standing Committee on European Affairs' was drawn up in June 1988 by the Second Chamber. This report is available in Dutch (Parliamentary Year 87/88, Doc. 19336 No. 26) and, thanks to the translation service of the Secretariat of the European Parliament, in French (PE 125.097).

13. Frequency of meetings

In principle, once every two weeks.

14. Reports/other publications

Not specified.

15. Secretariat

Ms Patricia TIELENS-TRIEPELS
Tweede Kamer der Staten-Generaal
Binnenhof 1a
Postbus 20018
NL-2500 EA DEN HAAG

Tel. : (070) 318 30 02
Telefax : (070) 318 34 40

THE NETHERLANDS

EERSTE KAMER

1. Name

Vaste Commissie voor Europese Samenwerkingsorganisaties.
(Standing Committee on European Cooperation Organisations).

2. Set up on

June 1970.

3. Composition

13 Members and 10 substitutes. All the political groups must be represented on the Committee.

4. Appointment of Members

The President of the Chamber appoints the Members at the beginning of the life of each Parliament.

5. Chairmanship

The Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Committee are appointed from among its Members.

6. Participation of Dutch Members of the European Parliament

Dutch Members of the EP have spoken at a number of hearings.

7. Competences

These are identical to the competences of the other committees of the Chamber: preparation of plenary debates ; to be a 'valid representative' of the Parliament where matters involving the Community are concerned.

8. Relations with other bodies of the national Parliament

The Committee's role is to initiate, take part and collaborate. It maintains relations with the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs. Its Chairman and Vice-Chairman hold regularly talks with the chairmen of the other committees on the European policy issues which the latter are required to consider.

9. Relations with the national Government

When the Committee considers it necessary, it holds discussions with Members of the Government.

10. Relations with the European Parliament

The Committee closely follows the activities of the European Parliament but is not bound by any strict rules.

11. Relations with other Community Institutions

Members of the Committee visit the Community Institutions in Brussels, though not on a regular basis.

12. Other comments

None.

13. Frequency of meetings

About six times a year.

14. Reports/other publications

Not specified.

15. Secretariat

Mr Adriaan SPREY
Eerste Kamer der Staten-Generaal
Binnenhof 22
Postbus 20017
NL-2500 EA DEN HAAG

Tel. : (070) 362 45 71

Telefax : (070) 365 38 68

PORTUGAL

ASSEMBLEIA DA REPUBLICA

1. Name

Comissão de Assuntos Europeus.
(Committee on European Affairs).

2. Set up on

29 October 1987.

3. Composition

23 Members.

4. Appointment of Members

These are appointed at the beginning of each legislative session by the political groups in proportion to their relative size in the House.

5. Chairmanship

The bureau consists of a Chairman, a Vice-Chairman and one secretary. It is elected by uninominal vote during the first meeting of the Committee held in the presence of the President of the Assembly of the Republic.

6. Participation of Portuguese Members of the European Parliament

Law 111/88 of 15 December 1988 provides for regular meetings between the Committee and the Portuguese Members of the EP.

7. Competences

It was felt that such a Committee should be set up within the Assembly of the Portuguese Republic for the purpose of encouraging contacts between Portuguese Members of Parliament and the European Parliament and to keep a watching brief on Community policies.

The Assembly receives from the Government all the information it needs on Community matters which fall within its terms of reference and which are being examined by the institutions of the EC. The Committee draws up opinions on the basis of that information.

The Assembly may, on its own initiative, pronounce on legislative proposals and guidelines relating to Community policy. Once a year, it draws up a statement on Portugal's membership of the EC on the basis of a report from its competent Committee.

In addition, a report is drawn up on relations between Portugal and the EC which the Government must submit to the Assembly during the first quarter of each year.

Documents on the Communities and on matters concerning Portugal's integration into the Community are available for the use of the Members of the Assembly and, in particular, the Members of its 'European' Committee.

8. Relations with other bodies of the national Parliament

The Assembly's Rules of Procedure provided that meetings may be held between the 'European' Committee and other parliamentary committees with a view to discussing topics of joint interest. (See also point 7).

9. Relations with the national Government

See point 7. Members of the Government may participate in the proceedings of the Committee, either on their own initiative or at the invitation of the Committee.

10. Relations with the European Parliament

The committee regularly meets the members of the EP's Committee on Institutional Affairs. During the current period of office, it intends to make further working visits to the European Parliament.

11. Relations with other Community Institutions

At the present time, the committee has no formal relations with the other Community Institutions. However, during the present term of office, it intends to make a working visit to the Commission.

12. Other comments

Before the present Committee was set up, a 'Committee on European Integration' was active within the Assembly.

13. Frequency of meetings

The committee normally meets once a week, on Wednesdays.

14. Reports/other publications

Not specified.

15. Secretariat

Mr Pedro VALENTE
Assembleia da República
Palácio de S. Bento
P-1290 LISBOA Codex

Tel. : (1) 60 37 74 - (1) 396 01 41 (Ext. 402)

Telefax : (1) 60 77 71

UNITED KINGDOM

HOUSE OF COMMONS

1. Name

Select Committee on European Legislation.

2. Set up on

7 May 1974.

3. Composition

16 Members of the House of Commons (Quorum of 5).

4. Appointment of Members

Members are appointed by the House at the beginning of each Parliament, roughly in proportion to party representation.

5. Chairmanship

The Chairman is elected by the Committee from among its Members.

6. Participation of British Members of the European Parliament

UK Members of the European Parliament who are also Members of the House of Commons can be appointed to the Select Committee on European Legislation.

7. Competences

The committee is appointed under Standing Order No. 127 of the House to consider European Community documents and

- give its opinion on the legal and political importance of each document and, where it is considered useful, justify this opinion on all matters of political or legal principle which may arise;
- recommend the holding of a debate in the House or in one of the House's Standing Committees on any document which it considers of particular importance;
- take into consideration any development resulting from these documents.

The following documents fall within its competence:

- any legal proposal issued by the EC Council of Ministers,
- any published document to be submitted to the European Council or the Council of Ministers,
- any other document published by a Community Institution intended for another Institution and which does not constitute a legislative proposal,
- any other document dealing with Community matters tabled in the House by a Minister of the Crown.

In principle, the committee does not give a detailed opinion on the contents of documents submitted to it. For each document, the relevant minister presents a memorandum which contains, inter alia, the government's position on the political and financial implications. The committee may request verbal or written evidence for each document from the government or any other source.

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8. Relations with other bodies of the national Parliament

The Committee has the power to hold concurrent meetings with the House of Lords Committee on the European Communities.

9. Relations with the national Government

The committee's main influence rests on a resolution of the House of Commons of 24 October 1990 that, in the opinion of the House, Ministers of the Crown should not, save in well-defined exceptional circumstances, adopt a legislative proposal, including a common position, in respect of which scrutiny has not been completed (and may not abstain in the case of a proposal subject to the rule of unanimity) unless there are special reasons, which have to be given to the committee and, in the case of proposals awaiting consideration by the House, to the House itself.

10. Relations with the European Parliament

The committee has been visiting the European Parliament regularly since July 1976. The last visit was to Strasbourg in October 1991 (meeting with the President of the EP, the Chairmen and several members of four EP committees).

11. Relations with other Community Institutions

The committee aims to visit Brussels annually for discussions with the Commission on areas of common interest. It also makes occasional visits to other Community Institutions and to the Court of Auditors.

12. Other comments

The committee proposes visiting each Member State either during, or immediately prior to, the period when the country concerned takes over the Presidency of the Community in order to hold informal meetings with relevant parliamentary bodies to discuss matters of common interest and apprise itself of the presidency's priorities with government representatives and other interested parties.

13. Frequency of meetings

The committee meets weekly (and occasionally more frequently) when the House is sitting. The committee may meet during the parliamentary recess, if it considers it advisable.

14. Reports/other publications

The committee draws up a report after each meeting at which Community documents have been considered. Other reports are drawn up as and when necessary. These reports appear in a publication for each parliamentary session. During the 1990-91 session, the committee drew up 30 reports (published under the title "House of Commons Papers" No. 29-i/29-xxx). It has also produced a special report ("House of Commons Paper" No. 30-1990-91) entitled "The Conference of the Parliaments of the European Community".

All the reports are published, distributed free of charge to all Members of both Houses and may be obtained from Her Majesty's Stationery Office (HMSO).

The special committee has also submitted evidence to the Committee on Procedure during its inquiry on the examination of European legislation: this evidence was published by the Committee on Procedure (Fourth Report of the Special Committee on Procedure, 1988-1989 session). It has also submitted evidence to the Committee on Procedure, in November 1991, concerning the review of the competences of parliamentary committees. This evidence was also published by the Committee on Procedure (First Report of the Special Committee on Procedure, 1991-92 session).

15. Secretariat

Mr Christopher WARD
Overseas Office
House of Commons
GB-LONDON SW1A 0AA

Tel. : (71) 219 5467 - (71) 219 3292
Telefax : (71) 219 6832
(71) 219 6606

UNITED KINGDOM

HOUSE OF LORDS

1. Name

Select Committee on the European Communities.

2. Set up on

10 April 1974.

3. Composition

The Select Committee has six permanent sub-committees :

- A. Finance, Trade and Industry, and External Relations
- B. Energy, Transport and Technology
- C. Social and Consumer Affairs
- D. Agriculture and Food
- E. Law and Institutions
- F. Environment

From time to time, additional "ad hoc" sub-committees are set up (for example on links between Westminster and the directly elected EP; European Union; fraud against Community; European Company Statute). There has been one on Economic, Monetary and Political Union.

The Select Committee has 24 Members and has co-opted a further 56 Members to serve on the sub-committees.

4. Appointment of Members

The Committee and its sub-committees are appointed at the beginning of each parliamentary session, normally annually in November. Almost all Committee Members, with the exception of the Chairman, serve on one or more of the sub-committees. Among the peers participating in the work of scrutiny can be found peers having held Ministerial office, former civil servants and diplomats, industrialists, trade unionists, university heads, farmers, engineers and scientists.

5. Chairmanship

The Committee's Chairman is always appointed as a salaried Officer of the House (Principal Deputy Chairman of Committees). Sub-committee "E" is customarily chaired by one of the Law Lords.

6. Participation of British Members of the European Parliament

Lords who are Members of the EP are encouraged to attend, when their timetable permits.

Members of the EP, both British and of other nationalities, are frequently invited to give evidence to Lords' sub-committees.

British Members of the EP have been given a degree of access to the Palace of Westminster, for instance to make it possible for them to attend debates.

7. Competences

The Committee has the following terms of reference:

"To consider Community proposals whether in draft or otherwise, to obtain all necessary information about them and to make reports on those which, in the opinion of the Committee, raise important questions of policy or principle and on other questions to which the Committee consider that the special attention of the House should be drawn".

The terms of reference of the Law sub-committee read as follows:

"To consider and report to the Committee on:

- (a) any Community proposal which would lead to significant changes in UK Law, or have far-reaching implications for areas of UK law other than those to which it is immediately directed;
- (b) the merits of such proposals as are referred to it by the Select Committee;
- (c) whether any important developments have taken place in Community law; and
- (d) any matters which they consider should be drawn to the attention of the Committee concerning the vires of any proposal".

8. Relations with other bodies of the national Parliament

The House of Lords is in close touch with the work of the House of Commons Committee on EC Legislation. Leave to confer was granted in June 1974, and a regular exchange of papers has followed.

9. Relations with the national Government

EC Commission proposals are published when they are submitted to the Council, and at this point copies are supplied by the Government to both Houses of Parliament. The appropriate Government department prepares an explanatory memorandum, summarising the proposal and indicating its legal and policy implications and the likely timetable of its consideration by the Council. This memorandum is signed by a minister and is submitted to Parliament, usually within a fortnight of the deposit of the proposal.

There are perhaps two main reasons for this close cooperation between the Committee and Government departments. First, parliamentary work on EC legislation differs fundamentally from its role in domestic law-making. In EC terms, its work is essentially pre-legislative, preceding as it does the final, private session of the Council of Ministers. The House cannot amend the text in front of it; it can only seek to influence the minister as to his course of action in the negotiations ahead. Second, the linchpin of Government relations with both Houses over EC scrutiny is the undertaking originally given in 1974 to the effect that ministers would not, except in special circumstances, agree to the adoption of any EC proposal in Council if it still awaited a recommended debate in either House.

10. Relations with the European Parliament

The Committee has maintained informal links with the European Parliament. Papers are exchanged between committees in the two Parliaments and Members of the EP are frequently invited to give evidence to Lords sub-committees. Members and staff of the Committee visit the EP during its sessions in Strasbourg or during its committee meetings in Brussels to maintain direct links.

11. Relations with other Community Institutions

On studies of major EC policies, representatives of the Committee and the sub-committees visit the headquarters of the Commission of the EC in Brussels. Commission representatives (sometimes Commissioners, but more often officials) assist the sub-committees with evidence and discussion (sometimes private and informal) at Westminster.

Visits are occasionally made to other EC Institutions in Brussels and Luxembourg.

12. Other comments

The number of proposals deposited is far too large for the Committee to give detailed scrutiny to all of them. The Chairman of the Committee decides whether to sift a proposal as A-type (thought not to require special attention) or B-type (requiring further consideration or conveying important information). B-type proposals are remitted to the appropriate sub-committee, which then chooses which proposals should be the subject of a full enquiry leading to a report to the House. About half of the Committee's reports include a recommendation for debate in the House.

The following table summarizes the work of the EC Committee from July 1987 to October 1991:

Total proposals considered:	3745
Proposals sifted A-type (not for scrutiny)	2646
Proposals sifted B-type (for scrutiny)	1099

No of reports: 90
No of debates: 43

The progress of the Committee's work on all proposals is charted in the Progress of Scrutiny document which is published fortnightly.

13. Frequency of meetings

The Committee meets twice a month and its sub-committees each meet once a week.

14. Reports/other publications

The committee publishes at regular intervals reports containing comments of experts on the subject under discussion (including those of Members of the European Parliament). Twenty or so reports were published in the 1990-91 session.

15. Secretariat

Ms Fiona MARTIN
House of Lords
GB-LONDON SW1A OPW

Tel. : (71) 219 6412
Telefax : (71) 219 6715

Useful addresses:

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT
Directorate General for Research
Documentary Liaison with national Parliaments

Klaus POEHLE (Directeur Général a.p.)
Bureau 6/23 - Bâtiment Schuman
L - 2929 Luxembourg
Tel. : (352) 4300-2118 Luxembourg
88 17 4118 Strasbourg

Francesco PERRONI
Bureau 6/8 - Bâtiment Schuman
L - 2929 Luxembourg
Tel. : (352) 4300-2907 Luxembourg
88 17 4571 Strasbourg

Monique SZARY/Marie-José MARCHETTI
Bureau 6/21 - Bâtiment Schuman
L - 2929 Luxembourg
Tel. : (353) 4300-2328 Luxembourg
88 17 5924 Strasbourg

Telefax : (352) 43 00 25 06
(352) 43 40 71

