



EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

DIRECTORATE GENERAL
FOR RESEARCH

in cooperation with the
EUROPEAN CENTRE FOR
PARLIAMENTARY RESEARCH
AND DOCUMENTATION

RESEARCH AND DOCUMENTATION PAPERS

**Bodies within
National Parliaments
specialising in European
Community affairs**

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**THE EUROPEAN CENTRE FOR
PARLIAMENTARY RESEARCH AND DOCUMENTATION (ECPRD)**

Created in 1977, the ECPRD is an organ of the Conference of Presidents of European Parliamentary Assemblies. Its two co-directors, *Mr Klaus PÖHLE* and *Mr Georges CHARITONS* are members respectively of the secretariats of the European Parliament and the Council of Europe. In each of the thirty-five member assemblies a senior official has the function of "Correspondent" of the ECPRD.

The Committee of Correspondents determines the general guidelines of the work of the Centre. A key role in the work of the Centre is played by its four working groups which have as their primary function the provision of a forum for the exchange of information and experiences amongst participating assemblies.

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PREFACE

Relations between our Institution and the Parliaments of the Member States of the European Community are becoming increasingly close. On the one hand, working meetings between Presidents and Speakers and Parliamentary committees are held more and more frequently, while on the other Members of the European Parliament are taking a keener interest in the procedures used by national Parliaments and in their political standpoints.

This situation has evoked the need to launch comparative studies on the "European" activities of the 20 Parliamentary Chambers of the Community.

It gives me great pleasure to introduce the first issue (updated following the adoption of new dispositions in some countries and completed by additional information items) of a new series of Research and Documentation Papers on National Parliaments, published by the division concerned in my Directorate General. The comparative studies which will appear in this series will be based on information provided directly by National Parliaments, in order fully to respect their authority and their freedom of decision in regard to the information which they decide to supply.

Michael PALMER
Director General

FOREWORD

As Europe has moved towards greater integration, particularly in respect of legislation within the Community, a question posed with growing frequency is the extent to which national parliaments keep a watching brief on the enactment of EC regulations and directives. The method first adopted by the German Bundestag, and then by the Belgian House of Representatives, of setting up a specific body containing a number of MEPs has also proved of interest to the parliaments of other Member States.

The European Parliament's Directorate-General for Research, with the assistance of the European Centre for Parliamentary Science and Documentation, has therefore carried out a survey by questionnaire of the committees for Community affairs in the national parliaments. Please find attached the results of the survey.^x As we have adhered strictly to the answers received, they may appear incomplete. The purpose of this survey is to give an initial, more technical overview of the situation. If necessary it could be expanded. Criticism and suggestions will be welcomed.

Klaus PÖHLE
Director

^x This study is available in English, French and German.

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LISTE DES ORGANES SPECIALISES
DANS LES PARLEMENTS DES ETATS MEMBRES DE LA COMMUNAUTE

LIST OF SPECIALIST BODIES
WITHIN THE PARLIAMENTS OF THE MEMBER STATES OF THE COMMUNITY

LISTE DER IN DEN PARLAMENTEN
DER MITGLIEDSTAATEN DER GEMEINSCHAFT SPEZIALISIERTEN ORGANE

BELGIË/BELGIQUE

Adviescomité voor Europese aangelegenheden/
Comité d'Avis chargé de Questions européennes
(Kamer van Volksvertegenwoordigers/Chambre des
Représentants)

DANMARK

Markedsudvalget (folketing)

BUNDESREPUBLIK
DEUTSCHLAND

Unterausschuss des Auswärtigen Ausschusses für Fragen
der Europäischen Gemeinschaften (Bundestag)

Ausschuss für Fragen der Europäischen Gemeinschaften
(Bundesrat)
Kammer für Vorlagen der Europäischen Gemeinschaften
(Bundesrat)

ELLAS

-

ESPAÑA

Comisión Mixta para las Comunidades Europeas
(Congreso de los Diputados/Senado)

FRANCE

Délégation de l'Assemblée Nationale (et du Sénat) pour
les Communautés européennes (Assemblée Nationale/Sénat)

IRELAND

Joint Committee on the Secondary Legislation of the
European Communities (Dail Eireann/Séanad Eireann)

ITALIA

Commissione Affari Esteri e Comunitari
(Camera dei Deputati)

Giunta per gli Affari delle Comunità europee (Senato
della Repubblica)

LUXEMBOURG

-

NEDERLAND

Vaste Commissie voor EG-Zaken (Tweede Kamer)

Vaste Commissie voor Europese Samenwerkingsorganisaties
(Eerste Kamer)

PORTUGAL

Comissão de Assuntos Europeus (Assembleia da República)

UNITED KINGDOM

Select Committee on European Legislation (House of
Commons)

Select Committee on the European Communities (House
of Lords)

DATE DE CONSTITUTION DES DIFFERENTS "ORGANES SPECIALISES": ORDRE CHRONOLOGIQUE

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

EINRICHTUNG VON "SPEZIALISIERTEN ORGANEN" : CHRONOLOGISCHE REIHENFOLGE

- | | | | |
|-----|------------|-----|--|
| 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) |
| 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 | COMITE D'AVIS CHARGE DE QUESTIONS EUROPEENNES/
ADVIESCOMITE VOOR EUROPESE AANGELEGENHEDEN
(Chambre des Représentants/Kamer van
Volksvertegenwoordigers) |
| 11. | 27.12.1985 | E | COMISION MIXTA PARA LAS COMUNIDADES EUROPEAS
(Cortes Generales) |
| 12. | 09.10.1986 | NL | VASTE COMMISSIE VOOR EG-ZAKEN
(Tweede Kamer) |
| 13. | 05.06.1987 | D | UNTERAUSSCHUSS DES AUSWÄRTIGEN AUSSCHUSSES FÜR
FRAGEN DER EUROPÄISCHEN GEMEINSCHAFTEN
(Bundestag) |
| 14. | 07.1987 | I | COMMISSIONE AFFARI ESTERI E COMUNITARI (*)
(Camera dei Deputati) |
| 15. | 29.10.1987 | P | COMISSÃO DE ASSUNTOS EUROPEUS
(Assembleia da Republica) |
| 16. | 10.06.1988 | D | KAMMER FÜR VORLAGEN DER EUROPÄISCHEN GEMEINSCHAFTEN
(Bundesrat) |

(*) The name of this standing committee was modified in 1987 by the addition of the following terms: "e comunitari".

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.

(A Rule 100 was inserted in the Rules of Procedure of the House of Representatives).

3. Composition

10 members of the House;

10 Belgian 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 of the House: appointed by the House, at the beginning of the life of each parliament, on proposals from the political groups, in proportion to the relative strengths 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 or 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 organizes its own work and deliberates in accordance with the provisions applying to standing committees of the House.

8. Relations with the other bodies of the national Parliament

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

9. Relations with the national Government

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

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 chaired by Mr Jean DEFRAIGNE, President of the House of Representatives; the Conference, which was held in Brussels, was attended by representatives of most of the Community Member States' parliaments, as well as the European Parliament's Committee on Institutional Affairs, which sent 17 members as delegates.

11. Relations with other Community institutions

None.

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.

Before such members may take part in the work of a standing committee other than the Committee on External Affairs, prior authorization is required from the chairman of the committee concerned. For this purpose, an application to take part must reach the committee chairman by the day before the meeting at the latest and must indicate the main item on which the said member wishes to speak. The President of the House is immediately notified of such applications.

Where the committee chairman gives this authorization, the committee may nevertheless decide against. The Committee on External Affairs is also entitled not to admit the member.

(b) Work done by the Advisory Committee up to 1.9.1988

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.

14. Contacts with comparable bodies in other Member States of the Community

The Committee met the former Europa-Kommission of the Bundestag in September 1986 to discuss working methods and topics dealt with by the two bodies.

15. Secretariat

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Telefax : (2) 512.65.33

CHAMBER OF REPRESENTATIVES

Work done by the Advisory Committee up to 1 September 1988

The Advisory Committee met for the first time on 25 February 1986 when it decided to meet once a month to discuss topical subjects on the basis of reports by members who were Members of the Belgian or European Parliament:

- the Single Act amending the Treaty of Rome. The report by Mr CROUX was published on 22 April 1986 and the motion for a resolution attached to it was adopted on 10 July 1986 at the same time as the bill approving the Single European Act. The Senate also adopted this document on 24 July 1986.
- use made by Belgium of the Structural Funds and of the Community's loan facilities. Mr VAN MIERT published his report on 29 July 1986.
- application of European Community law by Belgium. Mr DE GUCHT published his report on 21 January 1987.

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

- the COLOMBO report (Council of Europe) on European Cooperation. The report by Mr LENAERTS was adopted by the Chamber on 1 July 1987.

The committee adopted the report by Mr GLINNE on the status of the European Parliament.

The committee discussed the following topics:

1. completion of the internal market (rapporteur: Mr HERMAN); three reports were published:
 - the Commission's White Paper (3 April 1987);
 - the lessons of the past (10 October 1987);
 - the White Paper and the Belgian banking sector (published on 6 November 1987 and presented to the press on 15 March 1988).

A fourth report, on the telecommunications sector, is now being prepared.

2. The procedure for electing Members of the European Parliament (rapporteur: Mr VANWAMBEKE).

DENMARK

FOLKETING

1. Name

Markedsudvalget.
(EEC Committee).

2. Set up on

11 October 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.

7. Competences

According to the first Committee report of March 1973:

The Government is obliged to consult the EEC Committee on market policy questions of major importance. Prior to negotiations on far-reaching Council decisions, the Government shall give the EEC Committee a verbal explanation of its initial stance in such negotiations. The Government will negotiate on this basis - if a majority is not opposed. Thus the Committee is given an opportunity to disapprove. This opportunity of disapproval must again be given to the Committee should it appear possible during the Council deliberations that a solution essentially different from that of the original stance may be reached .

However, the cooperation between the Government and the Committee must be based on mutual recognition of the necessity of respecting the influence of the Folketing as well as the freedom of the Government to act in negotiations.

The Government is obliged to keep the Committee informed and 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 of each item not being of a purely technical or administrative character.

8. Relations with the 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.

With the implementation of the European Single Act, the EEC Committee has adopted a new procedure according to which it may decide that certain Commission proposals concerning the internal market be subject to a reading in the Folketing. The nature of such a procedure corresponds to the first reading of a bill.

9. Relations with the national Government

See under "Competences".

10. Relations with the European Parliament

The EEC Committee coordinates all meetings between Folketing and European Parliament committees and between national parliamentary delegations and the European Parliament. Members of the EEC Committee often take part in such meetings along with members of other Folketing committees.

11. Relations with other Community institutions

Through its secretariat, the Committee is in contact with the Commission of the European Communities and the Economic and Social Committee which send it information on Community policies.

12. Other comments

The Committee may decide to send a small delegation to the Commission of the European Communities and/or the European Parliament to obtain information on specific topics.

13. Frequency of meetings

The EEC Committee normally meets once a week (except in August).

14. Contacts with comparable bodies in other Member States of the Community

There have been meetings with committees from the Federal Republic of Germany and United Kingdom.

15. Secretariat

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FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY

BUNDESTAG

1. Name

Unterausschuss des Auswärtigen Ausschusses für Fragen der Europäischen Gemeinschaften.

(Subcommittee for European Community Affairs of the Committee on Foreign Affairs).

2. Set up on

Constituted on 5 June 1987.

3. Composition

13 full members.

13 substitute members.

Not all the subcommittee members are also members of the Committee on Foreign Affairs. The inclusion of members of other committees is intended to ensure that the necessary degree of specialist knowledge is available in the discussion of EC proposals.

However, this is not a joint subcommittee of several permanent committees.

4. Appointment of members

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

5. Chairmanship

The chair is reserved for a particular political group in accordance with the system applied for the subcommittees of the Committee on Foreign Affairs to the groups. The chairman is appointed by the members of the subcommittee.

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 Scrutiny of Elections, Immunity and the Rules of Procedure, adopted a provisional special arrangement for this subcommittee without amending the Rules of Procedure of the Bundestag (GOBT) pursuant to Section 126 GOBT. This would grant 13 German members of the European Parliament (MEPs) - and 13 others as their substitutes - the right of admission to meetings of the subcommittee.

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

They will be appointed by the President of the Bundestag on a proposal from the groups from which MEPs have drawn in European Parliament elections. The appointments must be renewed after any new European election. They are valid until the end of the legislative term of the German Bundestag.

7. Competences

- 1) Discussion of all EC proposals referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs. To this end the general competence of the Committee on Foreign Affairs for all EC affairs is assumed to apply, if
 - no other specialist committee is clearly competent in a matter,
 - an EC proposal on a matter of principle is likely to be subject to varying assessments by different specialist committees,
 - the proposal in question is one which will either hinder or promote European unification.
- 2) Examination of all bills introduced in the Bundestag to ensure their compatibility with EC legislation.
- 3) 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 to be exercised.

8. Relations with the other bodies of the national Parliament

The findings of the subcommittee may be communicated only to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

9. Relations with the national Government

Cf. 7 (3) above.

10. Relations with the European Parliament

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

11. Relations with other Community institutions

There are good working contacts with the Commission of the European Communities in Brussels, in particular with the Commissioners and their private offices.

12. Other comments

In addition to the Subcommittee of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, the Committee on Budgets has had a Subcommittee on European Community Affairs for several legislative terms. The Committee on Legal Affairs has also decided to constitute a subcommittee on European affairs. Subcommittees set up by the specialist Bundestag committees cannot claim any general competence outside their specific field.

The exceptional arrangements for the participation of MEPs, as recommended by the Committee on the Scrutiny of Elections, Immunity and the Rules of Procedure, apply only to the subcommittee of the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

oOo

In 1984 a "Europe Committee" ("Europa-Kommission") was set up with members drawn from the Bundestag and from German members of the European Parliament, with the task of ensuring that the federal Assembly is kept informed on Community affairs (it should be noted that this initiative has been followed by Belgium with the creation of the Advisory Committee on European Questions in 1986).

The "Europa-Kommission" was not re-established after the 1987 elections.

13. Frequency of meetings

Once or twice a month.

14. Contacts with comparable bodies in other Member States of the Community

- (a) with the relevant parliamentary delegations to the European Communities of the Senate and National Assembly in France;
- (b) with the Standing Committee on European Community Affairs of the Second Chamber of the Netherlands;
- (c) with the Select Committee on European Legislation of the House of Commons, United Kingdom;
- (d) with the Joint Committee on the Secondary Legislation of the European Communities of both Houses of the Irish Parliament.

15. Secretariat

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FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF 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

At present 17 ordinary members. Each of the eleven Länder of the Federal Republic of Germany has a vote in the Committee and delegates one member of the Federal Council to it; four Länder delegate a second member of the Federal Council and one Land two further members. The Land Governments also appoint representatives (civil servants), who may deputize for the members of the Federal Council in individual cases.

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 reelect the same chairman.

6. Participation of the 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 and 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 the 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 Commission. Since 1967 there have been occasional - and more recently annual - contacts and meetings with Commission officials.

12. Other remarks

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 - to prepare for meetings of the Chamber for documents of the European Community - extraordinary meetings are held.

14. Contacts with comparable bodies in other Member States of the Community

In October 1987, a deputation from the parliamentary delegation to the European Communities of the French Senate visited the Committee.

In April 1988, talks were held in Bonn between the Committee and a delegation from the Select Committee on European Legislation of the British House of Commons.

There are at present no further contacts.

15. Secretariat

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FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF 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 of Germany delegates one member to the European Communities Chamber but may also appoint any number of substitute members from members of the Federal Council. The number of votes for each Land is governed - as in the Federal Council in plenary sitting - by Article 51(2) of the Basic Law, and thus depends on the population of the Land in question (up to 2 million, 3, up to 6 million, 4, thereafter 5 votes).

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 of the Chamber and the three vice-chairmen are elected by the Federal Council (without debate) for one year from the members of the European Communities Chamber.

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 the 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. Contacts with comparable bodies in other Member States of the Community

There would at present be no bodies comparable to the European Communities Chamber in existence in other Member States of the Community.

15. Secretariat

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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 committee was changed by Law 18/1988 of 1 July 1988.

3. Composition

The number of members (deputies and senators) is established by the bureaux of the two Houses at a joint sitting at the beginning of each parliament. When it was first established, the committee had 9 representatives and 6 senators.

4. Appointment of members

At the beginning of each parliament, 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 Congress of Deputies or by a member (deputy or senator) designated by him.

6. Participation of Spanish members of the European Parliament

Law 18/1988 provides for the holding of meetings attended by Spanish Members of the European Parliament.

7. Competences

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

- to study 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 to itself 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 the 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 Congress and the Senate reports on any matter falling within its terms of reference.

9. Relations with the national Government

See under 'Competences'.

10. Relations with the European Parliament

Law 18/1988 provides for cooperation with the bodies of the EP. In April 1988, a Joint Committee delegation visited the EP in Strasbourg (talks with Lord Plumb and a number of committees). In January 1989, a second visit was organized, and in the same month 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 should be noted that in June 1988 the 'Autonomous Community' of the Basque Region set up a 'Comisión de Seguimiento Vasca', a parliamentary body specializing in Community affairs.

13. Frequency of meetings

On average one meeting per month, at irregular intervals.

14. Contacts with comparable bodies in other member States of the Community

Law 18/1988 encourages the establishment of such contacts. In April 1988, during a visit to the EP in Strasbourg, a Joint Committee delegation had talks with members of the Irish 'Joint Committee' and received an invitation to visit Dublin.

15. Secretariat

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FRANCE

ASSEMBLEE NATIONALE

SENAT

1. Name

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

2. Set up on

6 July 1979, by Law No. 79564 amending Order No. 581100 of 17 November 1958 on the functioning of the parliamentary assemblies.

3. Composition

18 members in each House. A draft law tabled in December 1988 by the Chairman of the Delegation of the Senate provides that each of the two Delegations shall have 36 members. (On the date of publication of this document, the draft law had still to be examined).

4. Appointment of members

Appointed from within each House in such numbers as to reflect the relative importance of the political groups in each ('... and to ensure a balanced representation of the standing committees', under the terms of the abovementioned draft law).

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 coterminous with their term 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

The law of 1979 lays down that deputies or senators elected to the European Parliament may not belong to either delegation. The draft law tabled in 1988 provides for the two Delegations to include French Members of the EP where necessary.

7. Competences

The function of the parliamentary delegations for the European Communities is to keep the respective Houses informed of the activities carried on by the European Community bodies in pursuance of the Treaties of 18 April 1951 and 25 March 1957 and subsequent acts.

For this purpose, the Government forwards to them, as soon as it is received, any document produced by the various European Community bodies which they required and all pertinent information on negotiations underway.

The Government forwards to the delegations draft directives and regulations and other Community acts covering matters which fall within the scope of the law by virtue of the Constitution, before they are considered with a view to adoption by the Council of the European Communities.

8. Relations with the other bodies of the national Parliament

The delegations consider the information and communications referred to above and submit their conclusions to the appropriate parliamentary committees.

Every six months each delegation submits a report to its respective House.

9. Relations with the national Government

See above under 'Competences'.

At regular intervals, according to a practice which has now been established for some years, the two delegations from the Senate and the National Assembly hold a joint hearing with the Foreign Minister or the Minister for European Affairs on the latest developments in the affairs of the European Communities.

Following their adoption, the Delegation of the Senate informally forwards its conclusions to the Minister for European Affairs.

10. Relations with the European Parliament

The Delegation of the National Assembly may hold - and has already held - working meetings with committees of the European Parliament.

It hears Members of the European Parliament.

It sends its conclusions, for information, to that parliament's committees.

The Delegation of the Senate also enters into contact as necessary with the European institutions, particularly the rapporteurs of European Parliament committees, notably in the form of hearings.

Following their adoption, its conclusions are forwarded to the chairman and members of the appropriate standing committees and, for information, to the French members of the European Parliament.

It also forwards its half-yearly report to the President of the European Parliament.

11. Relations with other Community institutions

The delegations may hold meetings with, or conduct hearings attended by representatives of these institutions (the Court of Auditors, the Court of Justice, Members of the Commission or senior officials of the Commission).

The Delegation of the National Assembly forwards its conclusions, for information, to the Commission's Directorates-General.

12. Other comments

The secretariat of the Delegation of the Sénat has established a data base on the latter's work which can be accessed by Minitel. By means of a computer-generated table, it is possible to carry out research on the basis of a subject index for conclusions and reports, and index of names and a chronological index for conclusions.

13. Frequency of meetings

The Delegation of the National Assembly meets once a week when the Assembly is sitting.

The Delegation of the Senate meets approximately 11 times a year.

14. Contacts with comparable bodies in other Member States of the Community

The Delegation of the National Assembly has maintained contacts with similar bodies in the United Kingdom House of Commons, the German Bundestag, the Assembly of the Portuguese Republic, the Danish Folketing and the Dutch Tweede Kamer.

The Delegation of the Senate has had contacts with the Select Committee of the House of Lords and has visited Bonn for talks with the Subcommittee on European Affairs of the Bundestag and the specialized body of the Bundesrat.

15. Secretariat

Delegation of the National Assembly

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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 Dail on 18 June 1987 and by Order of the Seanad on 24 June 1987. The first Joint Committee was originally set up by Orders of the Dail and Seanad in 1973.

3. Composition

25 Members; 18 from the Dail 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 Dail 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 Irish 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 Dail Eireann or Seanad Eireann and the European Parliament and to consider the relations between the Irish representatives in the European Parliament and Dail Eireann and Seanad Eireann and to report thereon to Dail Eireann.

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.

Copies of each Regulation made under the Irish European Communities Act, 1972 and of every other instrument made under a statute arising from our obligations as members of the European Communities are forwarded for examination by the Joint Committee.

¹ The four Sub-Committees deal with :

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

10. Relations with the European Parliament

See under participation of Irish members. Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) have attended and participated at 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 February 1989 at Strasbourg.

11. Relations with other Community institutions

Commission officials and Commissioner(s) have appeared before the Joint Committee.

Delegations from the Joint Committee visit the Commission.

12. Other comments

None.

13. Frequency of meetings

Twice a month, on average.

14. Contacts with comparable bodies in other Member States of the Community

The Joint Committee met with the Committee on Legal Affairs of the German Bundestag in April 1988 and at the same date with the Spanish "Comision Mixta" during a visit to the European Parliament in Strasbourg.

15. Secretariat

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ITALY

CAMERA DEI DEPUTATI

1. Name

Commissione Affari Esteri e Comunitari.
(Committee on Foreign and Community Affairs).

2. Set up on

The name of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs was changed at the beginning of the Xth parliament (July 1987), when the word 'Community' was added.

(...)

7. Competences

One of the routine tasks of this standing parliamentary committee is to examine from time to time matters which specifically relate to the European Communities.

(...)

12. Other comments

It should also be noted that a 'Comitato per gli affari europei' has been set up within the Committee on Foreign and Community Affairs with a view to maintaining links between the House, the EP and the national parliaments. A similar committee exists within the Committee on Agriculture.

(...)

13. Secretariat

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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 accord 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 and affairs of the European Communities and the implementation of Community agreements.

The Committee is responsible in particular for delivering an opinion or formulating observations and proposals on bills and draft decrees adopted under delegated powers relating to the application of the Treaties establishing the European Communities and subsequent amendments and additions, on bills and draft decrees relating to the implementation of Community measures and, in general, on all bills which might raise problems of compatibility with Community legislation, as well as for considering the matters and reports referred to hereafter.

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 European Communities published in the Official Journal of the European Communities, in cases where those proposals or specific subjects are placed

on the agenda of the Council of Ministers of the European Communities, 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 it 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. If it decides to initiate a debate on the resolutions and decisions referred to above or on related matters, the Committee on European Affairs may request, through the President of the Senate, the first and third standing committees to deliver opinions.

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 adopted by the Council and Commission of the European Communities or the proposals for such acts published in the Official Journal of the European Communities 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 principles and guidelines of the policy to be followed by Italy with regard to the activities preparatory to the adoption of Community acts, at the same time delivering their opinion on the general views of the Government on each Community policy, on groups of legislative acts being adopted with regard to that policy or on individual legislative acts of general policy which are of special importance.

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

N.B.: 1st standing committee: Constitutional affairs
3rd standing committee: Foreign affairs

8. Relations with the other bodies of the national Parliament

See under 'Competences'.

9. Relations with the national Government

See under 'Competences'.

10. Relations with the European Parliament

A meeting between the chairman of the Committee and a Vice-President of the EP was held in Rome. In March 1989, a Committee delegation was received by the Committee on Institutional Affairs of the EP in Brussels.

11. Relations with other Community institutions

See under 'Competences'.

12. Other comments

None.

13. Frequency of meetings

The Committee held 18 meetings in the period running from the beginning of the second half of 1987 to January 1989.

14. Contacts with comparable bodies in other Member States of the Community

A meeting with the 'Vaste Commissie' of the Dutch parliament is scheduled for the first half of 1989.

15. Secretariat

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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

27 permanent members and 19 substitutes. All the groups have to be represented on the committee. The larger groups appoint 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.

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 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 aspects 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.

The committee must also ensure that the Chamber and the appropriate standing committees receive all the requisite information and documentation concerning European policy.

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 the 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-chairmen hold regular 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 between the State Secretary 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 set up between the State Secretary for European Affairs on the one hand and the Prime

Minister and, on occasion, other interested members of the government on the other. The coordinating function is subject to restrictions 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, or a meeting of the full 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. In March 1988, the committee had talks with the President of the EP.

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.

In 1987, meetings were held with the President of the Commission and with the Commissioners responsible for the budget and for agriculture.

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. Contacts with comparable bodies in other Member States of the Community

The committee proposes to hold talks every six months with its counterpart in the Member State holding the Presidency of the Council. Discussions have been held with the French National Assembly delegation and the specialized committees of the Bundestag and the House of Commons, and talks with the Spanish 'comisión mixta' and the 'giunta' of the Italian Senate are planned.

15. Secretariat

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THE NETHERLANDS

EERSTE KAMER

1. Name

Vaste commissie voor Europese samenwerkingsorganisaties.
(Standing Committee on European Cooperation Organizations).

2. Set up on

June 1970.

3. Composition

15 members and 9 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 the 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 government where matters involving the Community are concerned.

8. Relations with the other bodies of the national Parliament

The committee's role is to initiate, participate and collaborate. It maintains relations with the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs. Its chairman and vice-chairman hold regular 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

Approximately six times a year.

14. Contacts with comparable bodies in other Member States of the Community

None.

15. Secretariat

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PORTUGAL

ASSEMBLEIA DA REPUBLICA

1. Name

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

2. Set up on

29 October 1987.

3. Composition

25 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 two secretaries. 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 the 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 committees, either on their own initiative or at the invitation of the committees.

10. Relations with the European Parliament

In December 1988, a meeting was held with the EP's Committee on Institutional Affairs in Brussels. A delegation from that committee visited Lisbon in February 1989. In March 1989, a committee delegation held talks with the EP's Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs and Industrial Policy in Porto. A visit to Strasbourg is planned for 1989.

11. Relations with other Community institutions

In 1989, the committee is due to meet members and senior officials of the Commission of the EC.

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 meets once a week.

14. Contacts with comparable bodies in other Member States of the Community

To date (February 1989), no contacts have been established. However, the committee plans to arrange meetings as soon as possible.

15. Secretariat

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UNITED KINGDOM

HOUSE OF COMMONS

1. Name

Select Committee on European Legislation.

2. Set up on

May 1974 (by Standing Order No. 127).

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 a member of the Committee.

6. Participation of UK 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 a Standing Order of the House, and according to its interpretation of its terms of reference its task is to use its political judgment to identify which of the European Commission's proposals for Government legislation submitted to the Council of Ministers or the European Council or other documents are of sufficient political or legal importance to justify their being brought to the special attention of the House of Commons, with or without a recommendation for debate.

The Committee takes the view that it is not its task to offer opinions on the merits of the documents before them.

8. Relations with the 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 30 October 1980, that in the opinion of the House, Ministers of the Crown should not, save in exceptional circumstances, consent in the Council of Ministers to the adoption of a legislative proposal which has been recommended for debate by the Committee before that debate has taken place; and that where the Minister does decide that for special reasons agreement should not be withheld, he should at the first opportunity explain these reasons to the House.

10. Relations with the European Parliament

A first visit to the European Parliament in Luxembourg took place in July 1976. Recently, in February 1988, a delegation of the Select Committee made a visit to Strasbourg where it met the President of the European Parliament and several Members of six E.P. Committees.

11. Relations with other Community institutions

Not on a regular basis.

12. Other comments

None.

13. Frequency of meetings

The Committee meets weekly when the House is sitting.

14. Contacts with comparable bodies in other Member States of the Community

On visits abroad, the Committee seeks to arrange meetings with Committees having similar responsibilities to its own. It has recently met with bodies specialising in European Community Affairs of the Second Chamber of the Dutch Parliament and of the German Bundestag.

15. Secretariat

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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 began work with a membership of 17, with five sub-committees, on which an additional 21 peers were co-opted to serve.

Membership of the main Committee now stands at 24, co-opted members number 56 and there are 6 sub-committees¹. From time to time, additional sub-committees are set up ad hoc (for example on links between Westminster and the directly elected EP; European Union; fraud against Community). This extended involvement enables the House to deploy to advantage the expertise within its ranks. Among the peers participating in the work of scrutiny can be found peers having held Ministerial office, former civil servants and diplomats, university heads, farmers, engineers and scientists.

Almost all members, with the exception of the Chairman, serve on one or more of the Committee's six sub-committees.

4. Appointment of members

See under "Composition".

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.

¹ These sub-committees are :

- 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

6. Participation of U.K. 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".

EC Commission proposals are published when they are submitted to the Council, and at this point, with certain exceptions, copies are supplied by the government to both Houses of Parliament. The appropriate government department then 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.

The number of proposals deposited is far too large for the Committee to give detailed scrutiny to all of them, and many are of comparatively small importance. 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. About a third of the proposals now deposited are sifted as B-type. More often than not sub-committees take note of proposals sifted to them and decide not to give them further consideration. The proportion of proposals which is the subject of Reports to the House is not more than about a tenth. About half of the Committee's reports include a recommendation for debate in the House upon a proposal or group of proposals.

8. Relations with the other bodies of the national Parliament

Sub-committee "E" terms of reference 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".

o0o

See also under "Other comments".

9. Relations with the national Government

See under "Competences".

In addition to the supply of explanatory memoranda mentioned earlier, the government have undertaken to provide written and oral evidence, as requested, and further information as a "follow-up" to the recommendations contained in Select Committee reports.

There are perhaps two main reasons for this close cooperation between the Select Committee and government departments. First, 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. Secondly, 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.

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 EC 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 EC institutions in Luxembourg.

12. Other comments

The following table summarizes the work of the EC Committee from 1974 to January 1988 :

Scrutiny of EC Proposals (1974/Jan 1988)

Proposals sifted A-type (not for scrutiny)	6,969
Proposals sifted B-type (for scrutiny)	3,132

	10,101

On average, 71 Community documents are deposited each month.

oOo

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

13. Frequency of meetings

The "Select Committee" meets twice a month and the six "sub-committees" once a week.

14. Contacts with comparable bodies in other Member States of the Community

Sporadic contacts may take place, more particularly during public hearings organized by the "Select Committee" or one of the six "sub-committees".

15. Secretariat

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Excerpts from the resolution adopted by the European Parliament

on 16th February 1989

on relations between the national parliaments and the European Parliament

The European Parliament,

"...

- Considers it necessary in particular for the national parliaments to monitor the proper application of the Single Act by the relevant national representatives in the Council of Ministers and the European Council and to ensure the speedy incorporation of directives, particularly those affecting the internal market, into the national law of the Member States, and for this reason will see to it that the national parliaments are kept informed, particularly about the state of development of the internal market;
- Welcomes the setting up in the national parliaments of select committees, subcommittees and commissions responsible for European Community affairs; and considers particularly useful the practice whereby certain national Parliaments invite Members of the European Parliament to participate fully in these committees as a step towards more structural cooperation between the national parliaments and the European Parliament;
- Believes that members of these bodies should be entitled to attend meetings of European Parliament committees in a consultative capacity and considers that regular joint meetings should be held between representatives of these bodies and the European Parliament's standing committees;
- Recommends to this end that the national parliaments appoint liaison officers in their committees to be responsible for contacts with the European Parliament and its committees and that these officers meet regularly with the members of the corresponding EP committees for consultation and exchanges of views;

..."

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