

Comitology, follow-up to Amsterdam: procedures for the exercise of implementing powers conferred on the Commission

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In accordance with Decision 1999/468/EC, the Commission presents its annual report on the working of committees for 2006. It contains general comments on the development of the comitology system, a horizontal overview of committees' activities and an Annex with detailed statistics regarding the individual comitology committees, arranged according to the different departments of the Commission.

2006 was marked by significant **reform of the comitology procedure**. Council Decision 2006/512/EC amending Council Decision 1999/468/EC was adopted on 17 July 2006 and entered into force on 23 July of the same year. The amendment to Council Decision 1999/468/EC is intended to meet the longstanding requests by the European Parliament to improve its rights to scrutinise implementation of legislative acts adopted under the co-decision procedure. The amendment introduces a **“regulatory procedure with scrutiny”** (PRAC), which is added to the existing procedures (advisory, management, regulatory and safeguard).

In a joint statement, the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission agreed on a list of basic legal acts that must be urgently brought into line with the PRAC. The 26 corresponding proposals for this priority alignment were adopted by the Commission on 22 December 2006. All other basic legal acts adopted under the co-decision procedure, which are not listed in the joint statement of July 2006, also have to be aligned. The Commission has committed to reviewing all existing legal acts and, whenever necessary, to make relevant proposals for their alignment before the end of 2007.

The October 2000 bilateral (Commission/European Parliament) agreement on procedures for implementing the Comitology Decision has to be revised to be brought into line with the statement on transparency/updated register, the new regulatory procedure with scrutiny and, whenever possible, to streamline current arrangements. The revision of this agreement is foreseen before the end of 2007.

As in previous reports, this report gives **global figures** on formal opinions delivered by the committees and the subsequent implementing measures (legal acts, administrative and financing decisions) adopted by the Commission. These figures describe the concrete “output” of the committees. The total number of opinions delivered by the committees in 2006 was 2 933 (compared with 2 582 in 2005), and the number of implementing measures adopted by the Commission was 2 862 (compared with 2 654 in 2005).

The large number of implementing measures adopted in certain **policy sectors** – Agriculture (1 576), Health and Consumer Protection (328), EuropeAid (297), Research (212) and Information Society (73) – again reflects the intensity of work delegated to the Commission in these areas via the comitology procedures. When compared with the previous year, a significant increase can be noted for EuropeAid (124 in 2005), whereas a decrease can be noted in the sector of Enterprise and Industry (10 in 2006 compared with 55 in 2005) and of Taxation and Customs Union (7 in 2006 compared with 47 in 2005).