Better lawmaking 2000-2001: application of the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality

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The Presidency conclusions of the Lisbon European Council foresee the establishment by the European Union of a regulatory environment which is clear, effective and workable in a rapidly changing, global market place. Following the submission of an interim report to the Stockholm European Council, the Commission presented its White Paper on European Governance in July 2001, in which, inter alia, it outlines its co-ordinated strategy to simplify the regulatory framework within the European Union, as part of a set of recommendations on how to enhance democracy and increase the legitimacy of its institutions. This Communication contains a detailed analysis of the resources needed to carry out and complete the codification of the acquis by the end of 2005. In summary, EUR 67 million will have to be allocated under 2002 to 2006 budgets, which would otherwise have accrued at later stages. In this context, EUR 17.8 million have already been included in the Commission's Preliminary Draft Supplementary Budget for 2002. The Codification Project allows for considerable cost savings if implemented and concluded in line with the stipulations of this Communication. The codification of secondary legislation forming part of the acquis provides substantial benefits in terms of transparency, readability and simplicity. The Project complements Administrative Reform and facilitates future accession to the EU. The Commission therefore calls on the European Parliament and the Council: 1) to endorse the actions envisaged in this Communication and to authorise the related demands contained in the 2002 Preliminary Draft Budget, and 2) to join the Commission in a concerted joint effort, - to carry out the codification of the acquis within the period set, including, where necessary, the amendment of their internal procedures, - to prepare the ground of a more structured recourse to all legislative techniques, and in particular that of recasting, once the codification of the acquis has been completed. Lastly, according to the Commission's estimates, the total acquis communautaire currently comprises about 80 000 new pieces of legislation generated each year. In addition, according to the Commission, it would be possible to reduce the acquis by about 30 000 to 35 000 pages if it were codified. Some 70 000 pages of the acquis could benefit from this operation.