Simpler legislation for the internal market: review of SLIM, 3rd and 4th phases

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PURPOSE: To summarise the recommendations of the Phase III Single Market Initative (SLIM) teams, which reviewed three sectors: insurance legislation, Social Security co-ordinating rules and the Electro-magnetic Compatibility Directive and the Commission's observations on these recommendations. It also informs the Council and the EP on the progress being made towards the implementation of the SLIM recommendations arising from the two previous phases. CONTENT: The SLIM was launched by the Commission in May 1996 to identify ways in which Single Market (SM) legislation could be simplified. In March 1998, the Commission announced the launch of the third phase of the SLIM. This phase concentrated on three sectors: Insurance, Social Security and the implementation of the Electro-magnetic Compatibilitiy Directive. With regard to Social Security, the SLIM team reported on the scope of co-ordination (personal and material), the determination of applicable legislation and the co-ordination of the various categories of benefits. The Commission accepted the broad thrust of the recommendations. With regard to the Electro-Manetic Compatibility Directive, which came into force on 1 January 1996, the SLIM team recommended that revision should focus on the inclusion of definitions and key concepts incorporated in current Commission guidelines on the application of the Directive in order to provide greater legal security. In addition, a clearer definition of the protection requirements regarding such aspects as emmission and immunity is recommended. The Commission has reviewed the recommendations and endorses the majority of them. With regard to insurance legislation, the SLIM team focuses on the most important aspects of insurance directives. It concluded that nothwithstanding the complexity of current legislation, there is scope for the abolition, amendment or adaptation of existing provisions. The main recommendations concern the codification of directives on life assurance and non-life assurance and directives on compulsory thord party insurance for motor vehicles once the Fourth Motor Insurance Directive has been adopted. The Commission has reviewed the recommendations presented by the SLIM team and can endorse many of them. With regard to the implementation of SLIM Phase I, the interim report states that progress has been achieved towards the implementation of the recommendations of the SLIM teams with respect o four sectors: intrastat, recognition of diplomas, ornamental plants and construction products. Finally, with regard to the implementation of SLIM Phase II, the SLIM concentrated on the following sectors: Value Added Tax, Fertilisers, and the combined Nomenclature for External Trade, Banking Services. The recommendations presetned have been agreed by the Commission and a number of initiatives have been taken to simplify the legislation in question.