

Better lawmaking 1998 and 1999: follow-up of the report COM(1998)0345 and report for the European Council in Helsinki

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OBJECTIVE: to submit a report on the Commission's actions on better lawmaking. **CONTENT:** The Commission reports on its application of the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality, together with measures taken to make legislation simpler and more accessible. - Current events show that there are some areas where increasing action is needed at Union level, such as food safety policy, asylum and immigration, crime, and reconstruction in the Balkans. - The results in 1999 demonstrate that the Commission has applied the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality strictly, as required by the Amsterdam Protocol. - Subsidiarity: alternatives to legislation such as the direct agreement with the motor industry on vehicle transmissions have been explored, as has self-regulation. - Proportionality: the report gives instances where Community action has been kept as simple as possible consistent with the need for effective measures. - The Commission will continue its practice of prior consultation on legislation. With regard to the growing political interest on better drafting, an inter-institutional agreement was adopted in December 1998 and published in March 1999. - The report gives instances of Commission actions to simplify legislation and of formal and informal action taken to simplify legislative instruments. - The sites on the Europa server are more user-friendly and enjoy growing success.