# Better lawmaking 1994-1996: application of the subsidiarity principle. Report to the European Council

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The Commission's third report on the application of the subsidiarity and proportionality principles, 'Better lawmaking', describes the main measures and developments noted during the first six months of 1996. As in 1995, the Commission's initiatives have been guided by two main lines of action: - new legislative proposals which meet the tests of rigour, clarity and transparency: thus confirming the trend towards limiting the number of new proposals, giving preference to framework directives, rationalizing the legislative framework while taking steps to prevent fraud, making greater use of alternatives to legislation, encouraging prior consultation and improving the interplay between national legislation and Community legislation; - review of existing legislation and more accessible instruments: the review process already underway is continuing. A new simplification technique has been put in place in the internal market context (SLIM). Many simplification and consolidation exercises have been launched. Lastly, results have been achieved with the programmes of both formal and informal consolidation of Community legislation. In order to facilitate implementation of this new legislative culture, the Commission adopted 'general guidelines for legislative policy' in January 1996. These internal operating instructions are designed to improve efficiency in the legislative function through coordination, programming and evaluation. The Commission has also issued instructions to its departments to be mindful of fraud prevention when drafting legislative instruments. Lastly, the Commission stresses that better lawmaking is not only a matter for the Commission but also for the Member States. It is essential that the Member States respect their undertakings to promote a culture of simplification of legislation.