

Economic Development and Transport Committee

Date: 11 January 2006
Time: 9.00 - 12.30
Venue: National Assembly for Wales, Cardiff Bay
Title: EU policy and legislative priorities for 2006

Purpose of Paper

1. This paper invites Members to agree which European Union policy and legislative issues this Committee should prioritise and focus in its forward work programme for 2006. The Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) has provided a summary of the European Commission's Legislative and Work Programme 2006 (hereafter, 'Work Programme') and its implications for the WAG - attached at Annex A.

Background

2. This Committee is being invited to select priorities for the coming year from the European Commission's Forward Work Programme. Each of the Subject Committees, the Equal Opportunities Committee and European and External Affairs Committee are being invited to do the same, with the European and External Affairs Committee maintaining a strategic overview of the process.

3. The European Commission's Work Programme was published on 25 October 2005. It lists all priority items which the Commission will propose in 2006, under the Commission's four key aims: prosperity, solidarity, security and Europe as a world partner. A further non-priority list of items is also published by the Commission – some of which may be of interest to Committees. These documents can be accessed on the Commission's website:

http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/atwork/programmes/index_en.htm

4. A summary of the programme is provided in the WAG statement on the Work Programme at Annex A. This includes their analysis of the implications of the work programme for the WAG, according to subject area.

Suggested Priorities for 2006

5. Members Research and Committee Services have sifted the work programme for items which are relevant to this Committee's remit. These are mainly identified on the basis of the Commission's 2006 political priorities and are proposed in view of their impact and relevance to Wales and taking into account this Committee's previous interests. A detailed list of the proposals can be found in Annex B and is divided into two lists, "suggested priorities" and "other items that may be of interest to the Committee".

6. There are many issues still outstanding from 2005 – either deferred to 2006 or under negotiation - which will be carried forward as priority items for the Committee. These are listed at Annex C with an update on their current situation.

7. The protocol for dealing with EU issues, as agreed by the Panel of Chairs, is attached as Annex D.

8. The following therefore are suggestions for EDT priorities for 2006, taking into account the Welsh Assembly Government's statement:

- ◆ **Action Plan on Energy Efficiency and accompanying legislative proposals:** this is the follow up expected to the Green Paper. It sets out steps to be taken in order to achieve energy savings of 20% by 2010.
- ◆ **Green Paper on a Future EU Maritime Policy:** this consultation will set out options for a more holistic and integrated approach to all sea-related policies.
- ◆ **Communication on Clean Coal Technologies:** this aims at stimulating the development of clean coal technology in the EU.
- ◆ **Proposal for a Decision on Strategic Community Guidelines on Cohesion:** this will confirm the EU's priorities in relation to the structural funds programmes 2007-2013.

On-going items carried forward from 2005:

- ◆ Proposal for a Council Decision on Strategic Guidelines for Cohesion Policy;
- ◆ Communication on the future of State aid policy;
- ◆ Revision of Regional Aid Guidelines;
- ◆ Green Paper on Energy Efficiency;
- ◆ Communication on renewable energy;
- ◆ EU Framework Programmes for Research Funding (FP7);
- ◆ REACH.

Action for Committee

9. The Committee is invited to discuss and agree its priorities from the Commission's work programme for 2006, as suggested in paragraphs 5-8, taking into account the Welsh Assembly Government's Statement at Annex A.

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Annex A: Welsh Assembly Government paper for the European and External Affairs Committee (18 January 2006)

Title: European Commission Legislative and Work Programme 2006: the implications for the Welsh Assembly Government

Introduction

The Commission work programme for 2006 feels lighter, in terms of potential impact on Wales, than its programme for 2005. Some of the most important issues for the Assembly Government during 2006 will be “carry-overs” from the 05 programme. Specifically these will include the Working Time Directive, the chemical registration REACH Directive and the Directive for a single market in Services.

Structural Funds will be at the forefront of the Assembly’s work. With the budgetary arrangements in place, the Assembly Government will be heavily occupied negotiating programmes with partners in Wales and with the Commission in Brussels.

2006 will be the year of preparation for the start of the new programme on 01/01/07. Beyond the Structural Funds, a new generation of programmes in areas like **rural development, innovation, research and education** will open up. Wales has benefited from all of these in the past and demand should remain high. 2006 is also a critical year for the Lisbon strategy for growth and jobs which reaches a key implementation stage.

In the context of **Wales’ Presidency of the Regions with Legislative Powers** (REGLEG) during 2006, the Commission’s ambitions for “Delivery and Better Regulation” will be particularly important. A reduced legislative burden, in itself, indicates part of the Commission’s response to improving regulation. The Commission has committed itself to the “rigorous application” of better regulation discipline through simplification, modernisation, consultation, and a careful evaluation of the impact of policies. Our role, with partners, is to assist the Commission in this work and to help hold them to account against commitments.

The Commission Preamble

The present Commission set out some key strategic aims at the start of its mandate - **prosperity, solidarity, security and Europe as a world partner** – and its programme for 2006 is designed to reflect these themes. In the absence of a ratified Constitution the Commission has launched a communication programme – “Plan D for democracy, dialogue and debate” – to help stimulate debate on Europe’s future. The precise format of this effort and the extent of Member States’ involvement will vary.

Prosperity: the Commission will report to the spring European Council on progress towards Lisbon through the 25 national reform programmes adopted

by Member States. A European Institute of Technology is proposed and work will continue to launch the new framework programme for research from 2007. 2006 is designated the European Year of Mobility for Workers. Emphasis is placed on finalising the **internal market for energy** and work will continue to explore new technological solutions such as **clean coal and renewable energies**. The single market will be simplified in general but strengthened specifically on **postal services, public procurement** and banking. The potential for enlargement of the eurozone will be examined in the light of macroeconomic conditions.

Solidarity: the Commission will set out ideas on coping with the problem of demographic **ageing**; alongside this will be thoughts on the effective management of **migration flows**. There will be further discussions on **climate change** and proposed measures such as bringing the aviation sector into the emissions trading scheme. The sustainable management of natural resources will extend to **reform of the wine, fruit and vegetables and the bananas sectors** – this will bring the current process of agricultural reform into its final phase following the agreement on sugar reform. Soaring oil prices have under-lined the importance of competitive and secure energy supplies for Europe. **Energy efficiency and renewable sources** will be promoted and the **potential of biofuels** further explored. A new **maritime strategy** will pioneer an integrated approach to developing the maritime economy supported by excellence in marine science and technology.

Security: the cross-border nature of terrorism calls for better co-ordination between law enforcement authorities; the same applies for organised crime. A number of initiatives are planned in relation to confronting health risks, specifically in the fields of food safety and transport.

Europe as a world partner: enlargement preparations will continue for Bulgaria and Romania as well as accession talks with Turkey and Croatia. Further accession requests may be dealt with and neighbourhood action plans progressed, particularly in developing integrated energy markets. Major development commitments were made in 2005; the Union must deliver on these in 2006. The consequences of **the Doha round** of negotiations in Hong Kong will be followed up. The Union will contribute to an efficient multilateral approach to **sustainable development** worldwide.

Delivery and Better Regulation: Impact assessments are now standard for legislative and policy defining proposals. As a result of following Better Regulation principles, the Commission withdrew 68 proposals in 2005 and is committed to testing all proposals against subsidiarity and proportionality (in plain English, acting only when necessary and “in the lightest form consistent with achieving its objectives”). The Commission’s approach to value for money is thus defined: **“The EU Budget should only be used when it can offer better value for money than spending at national level.”** The Commission is committed to simplifying legislation and will focus on the automotive, construction and waste sectors during the first phase.

Below is a more detailed summary of the Commission's plans divided into work sectors that reflect Assembly organisation.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT POLICY

The Commission will concentrate its economic development brief on taking forward the **Lisbon strategy for growth and jobs**. Indeed 2006 will be a crucial year for the implementation of Lisbon measures. This will entail the adoption of a new generation of EU programmes for the structural funds and rural development as well as frameworks for research, innovation and education. The commission will report to the **Spring European Council** on implementation at the national level in respect of the 25 national reform programmes (NRPs).

The following dossiers will be of primary interest to the WAG:

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|---|---------------------------|---|
| • Proposal for full accomplishment of internal market for postal services | Legislative/
Directive | To take forward plans to establish internal market for postal services in 2009. |
| • Communication on Financing Growth | Non-legislative | To consider concrete actions to create growth for innovative SMEs. |
| • Communication on a dedicated EU rail freight network | Non-legislative | To promote development of rail freight transport network. |
| • Communication to facilitate inter-modal transport | Non-legislative | To promote development of integrated freight transport network. |

The following dossiers will be of secondary interest to the WAG:

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|--|-----------------|---|
| • Communication on automotive regulatory framework | Non-legislative | To enhance competitiveness of automotive sector. |
| • Communication on EU mortgage credit market | Non-legislative | To promote creation of EU mortgage credit market. |
| • Galileo future applications | Non-legislative | To assess feasibility of regulatory measures related to Galileo applications development. |

HEALTH & SOCIAL AFFAIRS POLICY

The main aims include the streamlining of the open methods of co-ordination in the social area, and the launch of co-operation on health and long-term care, to reinforce the support the EU provides to Member States in their efforts to modernise social protection systems and tackle social exclusion.

The Commission will set out ideas about how the EU can contribute to tackling the problem of Europe's demographic ageing; consideration of current labour law, including policies on gender equality and health and safety at work.

With regard to civil justice the programme covers areas such as divorce and matrimonial property regimes and enforcing compensation, the rights of the child in areas like family reunification, parental responsibilities and human trafficking. Enhancing health and confronting risks also important elements in the programme.

Dossiers of interest:

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|--|--------------------------|---|
| • Communication on Gender Equality | Non-legislative | To set out a road map on gender equality |
| • Communication on Health and Safety at Work strategy 2007-12 | Non-legislative | Develop current strategy to increase quality of work and productivity |
| • Green Paper on the evolution of labour law | Non-legislative | Encourage debate on labour law to help identify major issues |
| • Communication on the demographic future of Europe | Non-legislative | Bring together the results of the Green Paper on Ageing and pilots to set out further action |
| • Proposal on the applicable law and jurisdiction in divorce matters | Legislative / Regulation | To establish Community rules in this field |
| • Green Paper on the property rights of married/unmarried couples | Non-legislative | Consultation on legal and practical issues |
| • Communication on implementing children's rights | Non-legislative | Framework / Action Plan to implement children's rights, in line with UN Convention of the Rights of the Child |
| • Green Paper on drugs and civil society | Non-legislative | Working with civil society to take forward the EU Drugs Action Plan 2005-2008 |
| • Communication on tackling alcohol-related problems | Non-legislative | To reduce the health and social harm due to alcohol consumption |
| • Communication on organ donation and transplantation | Non-legislative | Measures to ensure high standards/quality/safety. |

AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT POLICY

Consolidation and implementation are the themes of this work programme. The introduction of a new **Rural Development programme** is picked out but the details of funding and associated modulation have yet to be resolved. The

Doha Development Round at the Hong Kong conference will shape Commission thinking during 2006. Following on from success in reforming the sugar regime, the Commission will be introducing legislative proposals to **reform the wine, fruit and vegetables, and bananas sectors**.

A training programme on **food safety** will be introduced and proposals are expected on **avian flu**. A review of the rules governing **animal by-products** will be proposed.

Finally, a Green Paper on a new environmentally sustainable **maritime strategy** will be presented.

The following dossiers will be of substantive interest to the WAG:

- A review of the Common Market Organisation for bananas aiming to maintain an acceptable balance at the level of marketing of the three sources of supply to the Community (EU, ACP and dollar banana imports).
- Reform of the CMO for **fruit and vegetables** aiming to improve competitiveness
- Reform of the CMO **for wine** aiming to improve competitiveness.
- A Green Paper on a future **EU Maritime Policy**.
- A White Paper on “Better training **for safer food**”.
- A review of **the health rules on animal by-products**.

ENVIRONMENT POLICY

Although the Lisbon agenda and Better Regulation underpin the policies of the current Commission, the 2006 work programme also focuses on how solidarity and social justice are critical for the development of the EU. In this context a number of environmental objectives have been outlined, in particular **climate change, resource use and sustainable development**.

The following is a summary of the environment dossiers of substantive interest to the WAG for 2006 (note that there are also important legislative issues in progress).

- **Thematic Strategy on pesticides**

As part of Sixth Community Environment Action Programme (2002) the Commission released a Communication detailing measures constituting a thematic strategy for pesticides. The Parliament responded in 2003.

The thematic strategy will aim at **controlling pesticides** rather than banning or creating a pesticide tax. The Commission will suggest defining '**pesticide free**' zones, especially in sensitive or nature areas (Natura 2000 zones).

Communication – Halting the decline of biodiversity

The EU wants to halt the decline of biodiversity through the effects of poor policy development. The Communication will map priority actions to meet EU and global objectives to halt (EU) and significantly reduce (global) decline in biodiversity by 2010.

- **Green paper on adaptation to climate change**

The green paper will identify actions needed to adapt to adverse effects of climate change; many issues already raised by previous Commission Communication 'winning the battle on global climate change'.

- **Communication – Results of the review of the community strategy to reduce CO2 emissions from cars**

The Communication will review current voluntary agreements with industry on how fuel efficiency measures are developing; proposals will follow review.

- **Revision of Directive 2001/81/EC – on national emission ceilings (NEC) for certain atmospheric pollutants**

The revision of the NEC Directive will contribute to the development of the EU thematic strategy on air Quality (October 2005). Limits will be introduced on acidifying and eutrophying pollutants. 2010 and 2020 will be benchmarks for establishing the national ceilings and for measuring reviews.

- **Directive 2003/87/EC (Modification) in order to include aviation in the EU emissions scheme**

The Commission will aim to incorporate aviation emissions in the emissions trading scheme (ETS) as part of effort to reduce CO2s.

ENERGY POLICY

The initiatives proposed in the field of energy are explained below. All measures are non-legislative:

- **Commission Communication on Clean Coal Technologies.** Aim to stimulate technological development and demonstration of new technologies at commercial level, in particular to improve efficiency of power plants using coal and open the way to carbon capture and storage.
- **Commission on the future prospects for biofuels.** The Communication, following up the existing biofuels directive, will present

ideas on measures to promote the production of biofuels, including in less developed third countries.

- **Action Plan on energy efficiency.** This will follow up a public consultation in 2005 and propose ways to rein in energy consumption, saving 20% by 2020, in response to dependency on imports and soaring oil prices.
- **Green Paper on a secure, competitive and sustainable energy policy for Europe.** The Commission will consult widely to develop a basis for a Communication later in 2006.
- **Communication concerning the Establishment of the Global Renewable Energy Fund of Funds.** This will outline key features of an innovative public-private financing mechanism for Europe and Developing Countries to (1) create affordable "patient" risk capital for renewable energy entrepreneurs and project developers, (2) increase engagement of private sector experts and investors, and (3) increase the leverage of public sector funds.
- **Communication on the development of energy markets with neighbouring countries.** This will relate to measures that will bring about a market for energy between the EU and neighbouring countries and takes into account Europe dependence on imports.

RESEARCH, ICT AND INNOVATION POLICY

In addition to the initiatives below, the Commission will work with other stakeholders to finalise technical proposal for the Seventh EU Research Framework Programme so that it can be launched in 2007.

Legislative Dossiers

- **Proposal for a Council Regulation establishing the European Institute of Technology (EIT).** This proposal will be presented to the 2006 Spring European Council and set out the main functions and characteristics, structures and budget for this potential facility. It represents a key action in promoting European technological excellence.
- **Revision of the Directive laying down a procedure for the provision of information in the field of technical standards and regulations and rules on information society services.** This represents pre-emptive action on standardisation to ensure the smooth functioning of the Internal Market for services by 2010. It will eliminate potential obstacles to the Internal Market for services before they appear and thus support the competitiveness of EU enterprises.

Non- legislative Dossiers

- **Communication Financing Growth - the European Way.** The Communication will suggest ways of spreading best practices in relation to facilitating access to finance for European innovative firms, especially SMEs and mid-sized firms. It will also propose ways to remove obstacles to cross-border investment.
- **Communication on the functioning of the regulatory framework for electronic communications and services.** This will report on the functioning of the regulatory framework for electronic communications and services and launch a public consultation on a possible review.
- **Communication on eGovernment.** This will constitute an Action Plan for 2006-2010 as part of the i2010 Communication relating to the further development of the European information society.
- **Communication on a strategy for a secure information society "Strengthening Trust in ICT".** This will propose a general framework for future activities in the field of internet, network and information security.
- **Communication on a European Cyber-security and Cybercrime policy.** This will give an update on the Commission's cybercrime policy, including issues related to protection of the critical information infrastructure, terrorist use of the internet, identity theft, pan-European admissibility of electronic evidence, combating on-line child pornography, and other issues.

EDUCATION POLICY

The principal dossier on the education side will be:

- **The Recommendation for a European Qualification Framework.**

This legislative proposal aims to improve the transparency and recognition of qualifications across the EU (The Welsh Assembly has responded to the ongoing Commission consultation on EQF and has drafted a position on behalf of the European regional lifelong learning network (EARLALL)).

The Commission will publish a **revision of the Television without Frontiers Directive**. This legislative proposal, which has the dual aim of promoting competitiveness and cultural diversity, covers new media for the first time (internet and mobile phones) and proposes modified rules to govern advertising in broadcasting.

2006 will also see the publication of the **Joint Council-Commission Interim report on education and training** which tracks progress vis-à-vis meeting the Lisbon goals in the area of education and training.

There are no specific proposals for youth and culture in the work programme but the Commission and Council will focus on implementing the **European Youth Pact** and on the **contribution of culture to the Lisbon agenda**.

Produced by:

**Welsh Assembly Government European Union Office
Brussels**

Annex B: Members Research and Committee Services' list of relevant proposals expected from the European Commission during 2006

B1 Suggested priorities for EDT

From the EC Work Programme

	Title	Brief Description
1	<p><u>Energy Policy</u></p> <p>Action Plan on Energy Efficiency and accompanying legislative proposals</p> <p>Non-legislative.</p>	<p>Following on from the debate launched this year by the Green Paper on Energy Efficiency, this Communication sets out an action plan which aims to realise energy savings of around 20% by 2020. Europe imports 50% of its energy needs – which equates to €240 million per year. If nothing is done, the Commission says that this will rise to 70% by 2030. This is why energy efficiency is one of the key Lisbon targets.</p> <p>Estimated date of adoption: June 2006</p>
2	<p><u>Maritime Policy</u></p> <p>Green Paper on a Future European Maritime Policy</p> <p>Non-legislative.</p>	<p>The EU has the world's largest maritime territory, and the maritime regions of Europe account today for nearly half of the EU's population and GDP. To maintain a sustainable, competitive maritime industry, a European maritime policy framework is being developed. Such a framework is likely to encompass all the maritime and marine sectors like shipping, ports, shipbuilding, marine equipment, dredging, offshore maritime services, R&D, inland shipping, yachting, fisheries, and could also have links with the Navies. The Commission has already published a Communication called <i>Towards a future Maritime Policy for the Union: A European Vision for the Oceans and the Sea</i>, which informed the Green Paper.</p> <p>It is very likely that issues in the Green Paper will affect Wales as a maritime region.</p> <p>Estimated date of adoption: Early 2006</p>
3	<p><u>Energy Policy</u></p> <p>Communication on Clean Coal Technologies</p>	<p>This is aimed at stimulating the development of clean coal technology and opening the door to carbon capture and exchange.</p> <p>Communication on Clean Coal Technologies</p>

	Non-legislative	Estimated date of adoption: End June 2006
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4	<u>Regional Policy</u> Proposal for a Council Decision on Strategic Community Guidelines on Cohesion Legislative	This outlines the EU's priorities for the future of economic, social and territorial cohesion. Estimated date of adoption: July 2006
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B2 Other proposals that may be of interest to the Committee

List of actions expected to be adopted outside the Work Programme

5	<u>Competition Policy</u> New Community Framework for State aid for research, development and innovation Non-legislative.	To review the current rules concerning aid to research and development, and to introduce new rules on aid to innovation. Estimated date of adoption: 4 th quarter 2006
6	<u>Regional Policy</u> Règlement de la Commission fixant les modalités d'application du Règlement du Conseil portant sur les dispositions des interventions des Fonds Structurels pour la période 2007-2013. Legislative.	Sets out specific rules for the implementation of the Structural Funds regulations, in the area of financial control, information and publicity and the use of the Euro. Estimated date of adoption: June 2006
7	<u>Regional / Ag. + Rural Dev / Employment, social affairs and equality of opportunity / fisheries and maritime</u> Communication on the 4 th Cohesion Report	Update of the analysis of the situation and trends emerging in the regions, along with the main topics of the debate on the links between cohesion, competitiveness and Lisbon. Estimated date of adoption: December 2006

Non-legislative.	
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From the EC Work Programme

8	<p><u>Energy Policy</u></p> <p>Green Paper on a Secure, Competitive and Sustainable Energy Policy for Europe</p> <p>Non-legislative</p>	<p>The Green Paper will review all aspects of energy policy “that are relevant for building a coherent and ambitious approach in the light of new challenges facing Europe during a period of implementing Kyoto, volatile international energy markets and increasing dependency on imported hydrocarbons”. The Paper prepares the Communication on this subject, which will be issued later in the year. The intention is to give the widest possible consultation, in line with Better Regulation.</p> <p>Estimated date of adoption: June 2006</p>
9	<p><u>Energy Policy</u></p> <p>Communication concerning the Establishment of the Global Renewable Energy Fund of Funds</p> <p>Non-legislative.</p>	<p>The Communication will provide an outline of the key features of the proposed innovative public-private financing mechanism which aims to (1) create affordable "patient" risk capital so as to increase access to risk capital for renewable energy entrepreneurs and project developers, (2) increase engagement of private sector experts and investors, and (3) increase the leverage of public sector funds. In addition to the strong focus on Developing Countries, Europe and its neighbouring countries will also be considered.</p> <p>Estimated date of adoption: March 2006.</p>
10	<p><u>Energy Policy</u></p> <p>Communication on the development of energy markets with neighbouring countries</p> <p>Non-legislative.</p>	<p>This will relate to measures that will bring about a market for energy between the EU and neighbouring countries and takes into account Europe’s dependence on imports.</p> <p>Estimated date of adoption: December 2006.</p>

1 1	<p><u>Revision of the Public Procurement Remedies Directive</u></p> <p>Proposal for a Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Directives 89/665/EEC and 92/13/EEC as lastly modified, on the co-ordination of laws, regulations and administrative provisions relating to the application of remedies procedures to the award of public contracts.</p> <p>Legislative.</p>	<p>This aims to strengthen the internal market in public contracts, by encouraging more business across the EU to tender for contracts in any Member State, by assuring them that they can seek effective legal remedy if their interest has not been correctly considered when they participate in a public procurement exercise for works, services or supplies. The remedies directives set out the procedures to be followed if EU public procurement rules are breached. The aim of the revision of the remedies directives is to improve some of their provisions without changing the principles on which they are based.</p> <p>This has also been referred to the Assembly's Local Government and Public Services Committee.</p> <p>Estimated date of adoption: March 2006</p>
1 2	<p><u>Business and Industry</u></p> <p>Revision of Directive 88/378/EC on the Safety of Toys</p> <p>Legislative.</p>	<p>This aims to simplify existing legislation, improve the safety of toys by clarifying essential safety requirements, and improve the functioning of the internal market by developing conditions for a better common approach by national market surveillance authorities in the implementation of the legislation in force.</p> <p>Estimated date of adoption: end 2006</p>
1 3	<p><u>Education and culture / Business and Industry / Research</u></p> <p>Proposal for a Council Regulation establishing the European Institute of Technology (EIT)</p> <p>Legislative.</p>	<p>This proposal will only be presented if the 2006 Spring European Council asks for it following their consideration of a Commission Communication on the same theme. The proposal would then be developed detailing the functions of the centres and budgets. At this stage it is likely that a formal proposal would involve establishing five centres of research across the European Union.</p> <p>The proposal aims to boost research in the EU in line with Lisbon objectives, by bringing together researchers, academics and the business community. The European Commission has just finished a consultation exercise to establish the remit for an EIT, along with its aims and how the organisation would be</p>

		<p>structured. The results of the consultation are likely to feed into the Commission's Communication to the Spring European Council.</p> <p>Estimated date of adoption: 2nd quarter 2006</p>
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1 4	<p><u>Education and culture</u></p> <p>Recommendation for a European Qualifications Framework</p> <p>Non-legislative.</p>	<p>The main policy objective is to establish – on a voluntary basis – a European reference framework that will facilitate transparency, transfer and recognition of qualifications in Europe. A set of common reference levels will facilitate the comparison of education and training provisions and be supported by principles for quality assurance, validation, guidance, key competences etc. The EQF will support the comparability and thus eventually also the recognition of qualifications, provide a framework for development of qualifications at sector level and support the lifelong learning of individual citizens.</p> <p>The immediate policy objective is to create a “co-operation mechanism” between European qualification authorities and other stakeholders.</p> <p>Estimated date of adoption: 1st semester 2006</p>
1 5	<p><u>Business and industry / Internal market and services</u></p> <p>Communication Financing Growth – the European Way.</p> <p>Non-legislative.</p>	<p>This aims to specify concrete actions contributing to the growth of European innovative firms, in particular SMEs and mid-sized firms, by spreading good practice and policy learning in access to finance.</p> <p>The Communication also outlines actions that would contribute to enhancing the single market by identifying and removing obstacles from cross-border investment.</p> <p>The Communication includes a proposal to increase the competitiveness of businesses in the EU by combining larger R&D budgets with actions that support the commercialisation of new products and services, which in turn should lead to growth and employment. The Communication also focuses on SME-bank lending relationships and how they could be improved.</p> <p>Estimated date of adoption: 1st quarter 2006</p>
1 6	<p><u>Business and industry / Internal market and services</u></p> <p>Communication on a competitive automotive</p>	<p>The main objective is to enhance the EU industry's global competitiveness and employment, while sustaining further progress in safety and environmental performance of vehicles at a price affordable to the consumer. The main policy areas involved therefore are better regulation,</p>

regulatory framework	competitiveness, environment and road safety.
Non-legislative.	Estimated date of adoption: December 2006

1 7	<p><u>Internal market and services</u></p> <p>White Paper on EU mortgage credit market</p> <p>Non-legislative.</p>	<p>White Paper on mortgage credit announcing any initiatives to be proposed by the Commission to promote the creation of an EU mortgage credit market, based on the results of wide-spread consultation following the 2005 Green Paper 'Mortgage Credit in the EU'.</p> <p>Estimated date of adoption: September 2006</p>
1 8	<p><u>Employment</u></p> <p>Green paper on the evolution of labour law</p> <p>Non-legislative.</p>	<p>As announced in the Social Agenda, the Green Paper is expected to launch a wide debate in Europe involving EU institutions, Member States, social partners and experts with the aim of establishing conclusions about the main trends in the recent evolution of labour law, both at EU and national level, and identifying the most crucial and urgent issues.</p> <p>Estimated date of adoption: September 2006</p>
1 9	<p><u>Transport</u></p> <p>Galileo future applications</p>	<p>Galileo is a European Satellite navigation system that will provide initial positioning services from 2008. The use of this technology in all sectors of modern economies will generate by 2010 a global market of some 300 billion euros, with 3 billion receivers in use in a wide range of electronic devices. It is estimated that some 150,000 highly qualified jobs would be created, contributing to the Lisbon objectives.</p> <p>This communication looks at how Galileo can be applied in the Member States. It is a feasibility test.</p> <p>Estimated date of adoption: October 2006</p>
2 0	<p><u>Transport / Internal Market and Services</u></p> <p>Communication on setting up a network for the transport of freight by rail.</p> <p>Non-legislative.</p>	<p>This makes proposals for the creation of a European rail area to facilitate the internal rail freight market, and to increase the effectiveness of cross-border rail freight traffic by reducing bottlenecks and developing international timetabling, among other things.</p> <p>Estimated date of adoption: December 2006</p>

2 1	<p><u>Transport</u></p> <p>Communication to facilitate inter-modal transport</p> <p>Non-legislative</p>	<p>The growth in international trade, enlargement and changes in logistics processes mean that freight transport continues to grow faster than GDP. Action that could be considered includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support the development and use of advanced ICT, - Set standards for intermodal transport and logistics systems and services, - Improve intermodal liability, - Examine means (technical, legal, financial) to promote intermodal transport more actively, - Improve logistics education and training, - Ensure fair competition between the modes, - Expand support for alternative services and innovation, - Enhance co-operation between industry, service providers and policy makers, - Ensure widespread dissemination and take up of best practice. <p>Estimated date of adoption: June 2006</p>
2 2	<p><u>Transport</u></p> <p>White Paper “European Transport Policy for 2010: time to decide” 2005 Mid-Term review</p> <p>Non-legislative.</p>	<p>The White Paper set objectives and targets for reducing transport volume, pollution and road accidents. In the context of enlargement, which has brought new transport issues to the EU, the Commission sees this mid-term review as being necessary.</p> <p>Estimated date of adoption: March 2006</p>
2 3	<p><u>Information Society</u></p> <p>Communication on e-Government</p> <p>Non-legislative.</p>	<p>This is part of the work to bring forward the “i2010” communication. It proposes an Action Plan for 2006-2010 for e-Government related activities.</p> <p>Estimated date of adoption: June 2006</p>
2 4	<p><u>Information Society</u></p> <p>Communication on the functioning of the regulatory framework for electronic communications and services</p>	<p>Provides a report on the functioning of the regulatory framework for electronic communications and services and launches a public consultation on possible review.</p> <p>Estimated date of adoption: June 2006</p>

	Non-legislative.	
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2 5	<u>Agriculture/Rural Development</u> Communication on Biofuels Non-legislative.	This presents the result of reflections on the question of measures to promote the production of biofuels, including such production in less developed third countries. Estimated date of adoption: March 2006
2 6	<u>Environment</u> Review of CO ₂ and cars strategy Non-legislative.	This is a review of the Commission's strategy to reduce CO ₂ emissions from cars. It also presents options to complement existing measures, including the current voluntary agreements with car manufacturers, with the overall aim of reaching improved fuel efficiency. Estimated date of adoption: September 2006
2 7	<u>Information Society</u> Communication on a strategy for a secure information society "Strengthening Trust in ICT". Non-legislative.	Proposes a general framework for future activities in the field of internet, network and information security. Estimated date of adoption: March 2006
2 8	<u>Transport</u> Proposal for a Directive on Minimum Maritime Labour Standards Legislative.	To extend the port standard control currently in existence to labour standards applied on board all ships calling at European ports regardless of the flag and the nationality of seafarers. Estimated date of adoption: December 2006
2 9	<u>Postal Services</u> Proposal for an internal market in postal services. Legislative.	The objective of the proposal is to progress the accomplishment of the internal market for postal services while ensuring the provision of universal postal services for all users, irrespective of their location in the Union. The scope of the proposal will include, if it is appropriate, confirmation of the date of 2009 for the full accomplishment of the postal internal market (i.e. opening of remaining postal monopolies to competition) and may include, in addition,

		<p>measures intended to ensure the provision of universal postal services, the protection of users in conditions of undistorted competition in the market.</p> <p>This has also been referred to the Assembly's Social Justice and Regeneration Committee.</p> <p>Estimated date of adoption: November 2006</p>
30	<p><u>Business and Industry</u></p> <p>Recast and Extension of Directive 98/34/EC laying down a procedure for the provision of information in the field of technical standards and regulations and rules on information society services (internal market for services)</p> <p>Legislative.</p>	<p>To ensure that the Lisbon Agenda goal of ensuring a smooth functioning of the Internal Market for Services by 2010 is achieved. To eliminate potential obstacles to the Internal Market for services even before they appear, thus avoiding a posteriori and lengthier interventions and increasing the competitiveness of EU enterprises. To adjust the standardisation part of the Directive to the latest developments in this area.</p> <p>Estimated date of adoption: 1st semester 2006.</p>

List of actions expected to be adopted outside the Work Programme (non-priority)

31	<p><u>Business and Industry / Research</u></p> <p>Communication on biotechnology in 2006</p> <p>Non-legislative</p>	<p>Will update current position of biotechnology strategy and action plan and will be starting point for mid-term review of strategy in 2006-07, which will identify potential problems and needs, update the strategy if necessary, and focus on current priority issues.</p> <p>Estimated date of adoption: September 2006</p>
32	<p><u>Energy</u></p> <p>Report on progress towards the national and community objectives on renewable energy</p> <p>Non-legislative.</p>	<p>Progress report on implementation of legislation in this area.</p> <p>Estimated date of adoption: October 2006</p>
33	<p><u>Commission Policy Coordination and legal counsel</u></p>	<p>Sets out the strategic objectives that the Commission hopes to achieve during 2007. Is the forerunner to the Work Programme for 2007.</p>

Annual Policy Strategy 2007 Non-legislative.	Estimated date of adoption: March 2006
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3 4	<p><u>Commission Policy Coordination and legal counsel</u></p> <p>Mid-term review of the Commission Work Programme 2006</p> <p>Non-legislative.</p>	<p>Assessment of progress so far in the Work Programme.</p> <p>Estimated date of adoption: 3rd quarter 2006</p>
3 5	<p><u>Commission Policy Coordination and legal counsel</u></p> <p>Commission Work Programme 2007</p> <p>Non-legislative.</p>	<p>Work Programme for 2007- follows up the Annual Policy Strategy.</p> <p>Estimated date of adoption: October 2006</p>
3 6	<p><u>Research</u></p> <p>Communication “International Scientific Co-operation: a European Strategy”</p> <p>Non-legislative.</p>	<p>Update of the EU Strategy to support European scientific and technological co-operation with third countries and opening of the European Research Centre.</p> <p>Estimated date of adoption: 1st quarter 2006.</p>

Annex C List of ongoing issues from 2005 Work Programme

<p>Proposal for a Council Decision on Strategic Guidelines for Cohesion Policy</p>	<p>The draft Guidelines were circulated to Members when they were adopted in July. The Clerk received no comments.</p> <p>EDT has received two updates from WEFO on arrangements for the Structural Funds 2007-2013.</p>
<p>Commission Communication on the future of State aid policy</p>	<p>The State Aid Action Plan (Roadmap) was issued for consultation on 7 June 2005. EDT considered the Road Map on 14 July and submitted a letter to the Commission in response to its consultation. EDT has also had regular updates from WEFO.</p>
<p>Revision of Regional Aid Guidelines</p>	<p>The final guidelines have now been adopted by the Commission.</p> <p>EDT has received regular updates from the Assembly Government on the draft guidelines. There was a Plenary debate on State aid / Regional aid in December 2005.</p>
<p>Green Paper on Energy Efficiency</p>	<p>EDT will be taking evidence and considering a response to the Green Paper at this meeting.</p>
<p>Communication on renewable energy</p>	<p>This was published on 7 December 2005. It makes proposals for how to increase the energy from forestry, agriculture and waste materials and outlines measures in three sectors: heating, electricity and transport (in particular, biofuels).</p>
<p>EU Framework Programmes for research funding for the period 2007-2013 (FP7)</p>	<p>This is currently being considered as part of EDT Committee's review of science in Wales.</p> <p>The European and External Affairs Committee has taken evidence on FP7.</p>
<p>REACH</p>	<p>The Commission proposed a new EU regulatory framework for the Registration, Evaluation and Authorisation of Chemicals (REACH) on 29 October 2003.</p> <p>EDT and EPC held a joint meeting to discuss REACH and other EU environmental</p>

	<p>proposals in June 2004.</p> <p>The REACH proposals have been the subject of lengthy negotiations in the Council and the Parliament. Both have now reached individual agreements but there will need to be further negotiations to conclude the process.</p>
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Annex D Protocol for committee scrutiny and action on EU policy

This protocol was agreed by the Panel of Chairs in April 2005.

1. The key to influencing proposals is to engage with the right players at the right time. This is a suggested general approach to European issues, Committees may wish to consider some or all of the following in order to maximise their effectiveness:
 - i. Inviting the Welsh Assembly Government to explain the impact of a proposal on Wales, to give its response to the proposal and explain how it is making its views known to the UK government and Commission.
 - ii. Inviting a Commission representative, UK government officials or MEPs for a direct exchange of views.
 - iii. Inviting Welsh or UK organisations to the committee or expert witnesses to give their views on any particular issue, (e.g. business representatives, ASPBs, Welsh Local Government Association, social and environmental NGOs, universities).
 - iv. EU proposals may sometimes cut across several committees remit and will therefore require co-ordination of views and perspectives. In such a case, it may be appropriate for one committee to take the lead.
 - v. Having agreed its position on an issue, Committees may wish to promote this to the key institutions in the decision-making process, and other relevant players, as follows:
 - vi. The European Parliament: for example, by communicating this to Wales MEPs and inviting them to pursue the issue in the European Parliament. Channels open to MEPs to do so include:
 - influencing relevant EP committee rapporteurs;
 - tabling amendments;
 - tabling questions to the Commission and representatives of the Council of Ministers;
 - influencing the position of their EP political grouping.
 - vii. The European Commission:
 - by responding to Commission consultations;
 - inviting the Commission to Committee meetings or engaging in dialogue with the Commission through other opportunities, such as European conferences;

- write to the relevant Commissioner responsible for the policy to promote the Committee's view.
- viii. In addition to scrutinising the WAG's position, the Committee may wish to write to the relevant UK government Minister to make its view known.
- ix. Other potential players include:
- the European committees of the Houses of Parliament, for example, submitting evidence to House of Lords' enquiries;
 - Assembly Members of the Committee of the Regions may table amendments to the CoR's reports;
 - European associations on which the Assembly is represented and other networks of like-minded regions and organisations. Forming a pan-European coalition on an issue is important for having a wider impact and takes the debate beyond national boundaries.
- x. Monitoring the progress of the proposal through the decision-making process, either through updates from the Welsh Assembly Government in particular on the outcome of Council meetings (Minister's report, for example), or through European update briefings from the Members' Research Service.
- xi. In the interest of transparency, the Committee Chair should request that WAG systematically brief committees on the outcome of Council of Ministers meetings which are relevant to the committee's remit.
- xii. It may be necessary for the committee to re-assess its view in light of the evolving negotiations and to issue a further response at a later stage.