

## EUROPEAN PROPOSALS OF PARTICULAR RELEVANCE TO THE EUROPEAN AND EXTERNAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE, DEPOSITED 15/4/04 – 18/5/04

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Where a document is a proposal for legislation this will be indicated at the beginning of the summary. The summary will also indicate whether the document has been, or may be, considered by other Committees.

Of particular significance

Date of deposit	Title	Summary
05/05/04	COM (2004) 256 final – State Aid Scoreboard –spring 2004 update	<p data-bbox="813 972 1507 1003">This is an update report from the Commission.</p> <p data-bbox="813 1066 1563 1591">In 2001, Member States committed themselves to continuing their efforts to reduce the general level of State aid expressed as a percentage of GDP by 2003, and to the need to redirect aid towards horizontal objectives of common interest, including cohesion objectives. Based on the latest available figures, this update states that the majority of Member States appear to be responding positively to the call for "less and better targeted State aid" which Heads of Government recognised is "a key part of effective competition."</p> <p data-bbox="813 1654 1563 1822">In addition to measuring Member States progress towards these goals, this update of the Scoreboard includes a special focus on aid for employment and training.</p> <p data-bbox="813 1885 1563 1957">The update states that disparities in the levels of aid between Member States still exist, but are</p>

diminishing as State aid, as a percentage of GDP, continues to fall in the vast majority of Member States.

COM (2004) 256 final (cont.)

In terms of State aid for regional and cohesion policy, the update stresses that State aid for regional development can only be granted if the balance between the resulting distortions of competition and the advantages of the aid in terms of the development of a less favoured region can be guaranteed.

This report may also be considered by the Assembly's Economic Development and Transport Committee. Members may wish to note the contents of this report.

COM(2004) 327 final - Green paper on public-private partnerships and Community law on public contracts and concessions

This is a Green Paper and invites comments from interested parties, to reach the Commission by 30 July 2004.

The Green Paper deals with public-private partnerships in all sectors. It notes the benefits of PPPs in offering "micro-economic benefits permitting execution of a project that provides value for money and meets public interest objectives", but states that recourse to PPPs "cannot be presented as a miracle solution for a public sector facing budget constraints".

The Commission announced that it would publish a Green Paper on PPPs and Community law on public procurement and concessions, to launch a debate on the best way to ensure that PPPs can develop in a context of effective competition and legal clarity. The publication of the Green Paper is also one of the actions planned under the European Initiative for Growth. The Paper aims to show the extent to which Community rules apply to the phase of selection of the private partner and to the subsequent phase, with a view to identifying any uncertainties, and to analyse the extent to which the Community framework is suited to PPPs.

This report may also be considered by other Assembly subject committees.

To note for information

Date of deposit	Title	Summary
10/05/04	COM(2004) 347 final - Report from the Commission on the application in 2003 of Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001 regarding public access to European Parliament, Council and Commission documents	<p>This outlines the measures put in place by the Commission to comply with Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001 (access to documents). It covers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● regulatory amendments, the development of registers and the results of interinstitutional co-operation;</li><li>● requests for access, the percentage of requests refused and the reason for these refusals;</li><li>● complaints submitted to the European Ombudsman and a description of the state of case law;</li><li>● statistics on the processing of requests for access.</li></ul>
20/04/04	COM (2004) 247 final – Assessment at 31 December 2003 of the Commission’s 2001 Action Plan – Report from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament	<p>The Commission’s 2001 Action Plan was created in response to recommendations by the European Court of Auditors. This is an assessment of progress on this Plan to December 2003.</p> <p>The assessment of progress covers financial aspects of CAP, EU enlargement, own resources, external policies, administrative expenditure, the European Development Fund, financial instruments and the European Coal and Steel Community. It may also be considered by the Economic Development and Transport Committee.</p>
13/05/04	SEC(2004) 521 final - Recommendation for a Council Decision on the European Capital of Culture event for the year 2007	<p>This designates Luxembourg and Sibiu (Romania) as European Capitals of Culture 2007.</p> <p>This may also be considered by the Culture, Welsh Language and Sport Committee.</p>

13/05/04	SEC(2004) 464 final - Recommendation for a Council Decision on the European Capital of Culture event for the year 2008	This designates Liverpool and Stavanger (Norway) as European Capitals of Culture 2008.  This may also be considered by the Culture, Welsh Language and Sport Committee.
22/04/04	COM (2004) 238 final - Commission Recommendation on the 2004 update of the Broad Guidelines of the Economic Policies of the Member States and the Community (for the 2003-2005 period)	The Council adopted a recommendation on 26 June 2003 on the broad guidelines of the economic policies of the Member States of the Community for the 2003-05 period. These Broad Economic Policy Guidelines (BEPGs) constitute the EU's medium-term economic policy strategy, and focus on the contribution that economic policies can make to the fulfilment of the strategic Lisbon goal.  This Commission recommendation updates and completes the existing strategy, with a focus on the integration of the ten new Member States to the Community.
27/04/04	COM(2004) 317 final - Amended proposal for a Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on the recognition of professional qualifications	This concerns amendments to a proposal originally concerning certain craft, industrial and commercial activities, doctors, nurses responsible for general care, dental practitioners, veterinary surgeons, midwives, pharmacists and architects.
	COM(2004) 317 final (cont).	This document may also be considered by the Economic Development and Transport, Environment Planning and Countryside, Health and Social Services and Education and Lifelong Learning Committees.
27/04/04	COM (2004) 202 final – Report from the Commission – The Stabilisation and Association Process for South East Europe	This provides an assessment of the progress of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Serbia and Montenegro (including Kosovo as defined by UN Security Council Resolution 1244) within the process of stabilisation and association. The report is a key indicator of the readiness of these countries to move closer to the EU.

27/04/04	COM (2004) 257 final – Opinion on Croatia’s application for membership of the European Union	This is the Commission’s opinion on Croatia’s application for EU membership. The opinion confirms that Croatia has met the Copenhagen Criteria for membership, and the stabilisation and association process conditions established by the Council in 1997. The Commission recommends that negotiations for accession to the European Union should be opened with Croatia.
27/04/04	COM (2004) 205 final – Council Decision on the principles, priorities and conditions contained in the European Partnership with Bosnia and Herzegovina	<p>The Thessaloniki European Council of 19 and 20 June 2003 reiterated its determination to fully and effectively support the European perspective of the Western Balkan countries and stated that "the Western Balkans countries will become an integral part of the EU, once they meet the established criteria". The Thessaloniki Agenda includes an Annex, which aims at intensifying relations between the European Union and the Western Balkans, building on practices used in the enlargement process, inter alia through the introduction of European Partnerships. The Commission has been invited to submit the first set of European Partnerships to the Council for approval with the next Annual Reports on the Stabilisation and Association Process, due end March 2004.</p> <p>This paper outlines the principles, priorities and conditions for the European Partnership for Bosnia and Herzegovina.</p> <p>The Committee does not need to take any action.</p>
05/05/04	COM (2004) 204 final – Proposal for a Council Decision on the principles, priorities and conditions contained in the European Partnership with the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	As above, for Macedonia.

05/05/04	COM (2004) 203 final – Proposal for a Council Decision on the principles, priorities and conditions contained in the European Partnership with Albania	As above, for Albania.
05/05/04	COM (2004) 275 final/2 – proposal for a Council Decision on the principles, priorities and conditions contained in the European Partnership with Croatia.	As above, for Croatia.
06/05/04	COM (2004) 206 final – Proposal for a Council Decision on the principles, priorities and conditions contained in the European Partnership with Serbia and Montenegro including Kosovo as defined by the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244 of 10 June 1999.	As above, for Serbia and Montenegro (incl. Kosovo as defined by the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244 of 10 June 1999).